

N'APA 265

July 2023



The Official Organ

#265

Next deadline: September 15, 2023

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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.

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Brandy Hall Issue 1 (July 2023)

Brandy Hall 1 is produced for N'APA mailing 265 (July 2023) by Mark Nelson.

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This is West Riding Press Publications ??? This is West Riding Press Publications (Australia) 12

For my first issue I have decided to follow in the spirit of Garth Spencer (*BROWNIAN MOTION* 1, mailing 263), but rather than discussing my involvement in SF fandom (which would be exhausted by the end of the page) I cover my involvement with non-SF fandoms. Before going further, I should point out that I moved to Australia in May 2000. I'm writing this mostly from memory, with a few nuggets gleaned from web-pages. After I moved to Australia, the vast majority of my fanzine collection (c. 90%) went into the municipal tip.

I don't remember when I saw my first fanzine. It was probably late 1983 or early 1984. I also don't remember its title. It might have been *The Journal of the Senseless Carnage Society* or *Tempestuous Orifice* or some other title. But I can be certain that it was a fanzine devoted to role-playing games. At the age of 15, role-playing games were an obsession. Unlike the USA, the UK had developed a RPG fandom. The US has always had *Alarums and Excursions*, but during the time I was involved with RPG fanzines I only recall one other US RPG fanzine being reviewed.

Why had the UK developed a RPG fandom where the US hadn't? (Perhaps we had wrong and the US developed its own RPG fanzine culture, but if it did our RPG fandoms were ships passing in the night). A contributing factor may have been Games Day, a RPG convention that started in 1975 and ran into the 1980s (and onward). The UK is compact and public transport leads to London. Games Day had a fanzine stall and this provided a yearly focal point for the selling of fanzines and, equally importantly, for editors to meet up. Games Day was run by the folks at Games Workshop, who also published *White Dwarf* which in those days was a general RPG magazine (we didn't use the word 'prozine' in the RPG hobby). *White Dwarf* didn't dirty its hands by reviewing fanzines, but it did have a small ads page and notices for fanzines were often to be found there.

My impression, based upon gut feeling, is that the average age of RPG fanzine editors had been decreasing since the first RPG fanzines appeared in the 1970s. (The very first UK RPG fanzine may have been Hartley Patterson's *News From Bree*. Although this started life in 1970 as a newsletter for the UK Tolkien Society, by its 16th issue in 1975 it had morphed into a RPG fanzine. It's rate of production subsequently slowed down, with issue 29, it's last (?), appearing in 1988). Based upon what I read or heard, I believe that in the early 1980s editors were more likely to be 16-18 and perhaps even university students, but by the time I started receiving RPG fanzines their age range had dropped to 14-16 and there were very few RPG fanzines being produced by university students – I don't think any of the ones I initially received were. I was part of a 'large' cohort of new fans entering RPG fandom, not through chance encounters with the fanzine stand at Games Day or by replying to small ads in *White Dwarf* but through a second British RPG magazine: *Imagine*.

Before discussing *Imagine* I digress. An important exception to my observation that RPG fanzines were not produced by editors in their twenties is Paul Mason's *IMAZINE* (pronounced I'm A Zine). This was the highest quality RPG fanzine of the 1980s in terms of attention to artwork, design, fonts and layout. I stopped reading it in the late 1980s, but according to one web page issue 28 appeared in Autumn 1997 and the final issue was issue 38. That makes it the longest running British RPG fanzine (to my knowledge), at least in terms of the number of issues.

Imagine, published by TSR (UK), ran from April 1983 through to October 1985 (thirty issues). One of its differences with *White Dwarf*, for this account of RPG fanzines, was its active promotion of fanzines. It had a fanzine review column (covering both RPG and postal gaming fanzines), it had a column discussing games being run by post, and it even had a RPG fandom politics column. This created a very positive view of fanzines that encouraged 'many' people, myself included, to take the plunge and become involved with RPG fandom. (Actually, the first RPG fanzine I ordered was a Tunnels and Trolls fanzine that advertised in the small ads column of *White Dwarf*. By the time I contacted the editor, the zine had folded). This created a corresponding increase in the number of RPG fanzines. Unfortunately, the positive publicity in *Imagine* didn't seem to lead to a significant increase in the number of people wanting to buy RPG fanzines; the increase was substantially in the numbers wanting to publish them. (I was in the group of people rushing in to publish their own zine, when a better course of action would have been not to. Luckily, we had not evolved the KTF style of zine review). The cancellation of *Imagine* by its parent company TSR, Inc came as a bolt from the blue. The official reason given was that *Imagine* was losing money. However, the reason that many in UK RPG fandom believed was that it was showing up *Dragon* – TSR's own prozine. *Dragon* pushed an old-fashion view of AD&D adventuring, *Imagine* was more inventive.

One of the problems of the RPG fanzine world was that many zines had only one, or perhaps two or three issues. Very few editors stuck around. Interest in publishing RPG fanzines was transitory, which is easy to understand given the age demographic of the editors. Very few fanzines, very very few fanzines, made it into double figures. The dominant zine for a time was Jeremy Nuttall's *Demons Drawl*, which produced at least 22 issues. (It changed its name to *Telegraph Road* with issue 16 (?). Issue 22 appeared in January 1987.)

According to one source, at its peak the print run for *Demons Drawl* was 400 (I thought it was 500). There were 80 subscribers plus some unknown number of trades. The remaining copies were sold through shops. If the subscriber base for the most prominent zine was 80, this suggests that the RPG fanzine community was small. This leads me into the big argument that riveted RPG fandom sometime in 1985/early 1986. Originally, the driving force behind *Demons Drawl* was a triumvirate who attended the same school. There was a falling out and one of them, Dave Robinson, split off to run his own, needless to say short-lived, zine *Theatre of Pain*. During this process, which could not be described as a conscious uncoupling, he revealed that *Demons Drawl* was printed on the school photocopier and that the school charged them a minimal amount – something of the order of five pence. Thanks to google images, I see that issue twelve (June 1985?) was sold for 45 pence. The calculation in one part of RPG fandom ran along the following lines: the profit per copy was forty pence, 400 copies per issue gives £160 profit per issue, six issues a year gives £960 profit a year. The conclusion? It's not fannish to be running your fanzine for a profit of £960 a year.

Looking back, almost forty years later, I suspect the real reason for the gnashing of teeth was that other editors were not running their zines for such a profit. In any case, I doubt that the profit was so large. There was no profit made on copies that were traded. And shop keepers surely did not sell copies for no profit. Finally, did the price include postage for subscribers? In any case, as a member of the triumvirate, Dave Robinson evidently had no problem with the concept of running *Demons Drawl* for a profit – his problem was that he was not receiving his share.

Some time passed... gradually, a cohort of editors who had stayed the course folded their RPG fanzines. They'd found publishing a RPG fanzine too limiting, they wanted to spread their literary wings wider. Instead of publishing a RPG fanzine, they published a personal zine. These zines sometimes had RPG content lurking in a corner, but RPG games were no longer the primary purpose of the zine.

Over the early 1980s there had been a noticeable change in one aspect of RPG fanzines. Due to the influence of *Imagine*, some RPG fanzines ran, or had waiting lists for, postal games. This was pointless, as they folded so quickly. This interest in running games continued into the personal zines. My favourite of these, the one I was most active in, was Nick Edwards *Iron Orchid*. In fact, this was the first fanzine for which I tried to write a loc every issue. (By July 1986 our friendship had ended in tears, or rather a strong disagreement. Looking back, I was a teenager with dogmatic opinions on most matters, and having disagreements with people I'd formerly got along with was regrettably par for the course.)

The folding of *Imagine* in 1985 sent a shock wave through RPG fandom as it eliminated a large source of positive publicity. Around 1987 *White Dwarf* changed from being a general RPG periodical to one that only covered Games Workshop games, initially *Warhammer* (originally published in 1983) and then *Warhammer 40,000*. (These are not role-playing games, they are miniature wargames. In a sense, Games Workshop were returning to one of the starting points of role-playing games). As part of this transition the small adds were removed from *White Dwarf*. (As an aside, Issue 77 of *White Dwarf* (May 1986) has some intentionally amusing titbits, if you can find them. The most famous is the hidden acrostic on the table of contents.)

The folding of *Imagine* wasn't quite the final nail in the coffin for the (UK) RPG fanzine hobby because in April 1986 a new RPG magazine appeared: *The Adventurer*. This was short-lived, the eleventh and final issue (?) appearing in June/July 1987. *The Adventurer* carried a (RPG) fanzine review column written by Ben Goodale, editor of the well regarded RPG fanzine *Utter Drivel*. This lasted for 17 issues (1985-1990). The first issue of *Utter Drivel* was subject to the short and inaccurate review "It is". (Ben was one of the few editor's whose fanzine survived first contact with university life.)

At this point I should qualify my short history. Although I subscribed to a few RPG fanzines, I was never part of the mainstream of RPG fandom. Most of the zines I liked were exceptionally short-lived, even by the standards of RPG fanzines. Perhaps more to the point, although I was happy to buy them and read them I didn't write letters of comment except for the aforementioned *Iron Orchid*. By late 1987, if not earlier, I'd lost touch with the world of RPG fanzines.

Before leaving RPG fandom I'll mention two UK RPG APAs. The first is Pete Lindsay's long running *Drunk & Disorderly*. As this was the first APA that I contributed to I'll talk more about it

in a future issue of *Brandy Hall*. Pete was introduced to RPGs through their coverage in postal diplomacy fanzines in the mid 1970s and started playing at his university wargames club in 1977. He started *Drunk & Disorderly* in 1979. I don't believe *Drink & Disorderly* engaged much with the rest of RPG fandom, but then there was quite an age gap between Peter and other editors. The final issue was number 33 in 1988. Pete Lindsay had run a postal diplomacy fanzine in the 1970s, *Bron Yr Aur*, and was one of the few people to enter into RPG fandom from that direction. (There were 46 issues of *Bron Yr Aur*, with the first appearing in February 1977 and the final issue appearing in March 1981).

Going off on a digression, I love digressing. Remember Hartley Patterson, the man who possibly ran the very first UK RPG fanzine *News From Bree*? In May 1971 Harley took over *War Bulletin*, which was the third UK postal diplomacy fanzine. He published issues 11 through 65, folding in December 1975. Along with Pete Lindsay, Hartley Patterson went from postal diplomacy fanzines to RPG fanzines. The original editor of *War Bulletin*, Dave Berg, had independently invented the idea of running diplomacy by mail. He wasn't aware that the first British postal diplomacy fanzine had been started by Don Turnbull in 1969. Don had actually started the first two UK diplomacy fanzines, which is why *War Bulletin* is the third. These were *Albion* and *Courier*. The former was the first fanzine (July 1969). In October 1970 Don started *Courier* to run the postal diplomacy games from *Albion*. I'm not just digressing for the sake of digression. (Or am I?) For who was the person who was hired to manage the UK operations of TSR, Inc, the company responsible for promoting Dungeons & Dragons in the UK? Yes, it was Don. In 1980 Turnbull became managing director of TSR UK Ltd. I vaguely remember that he had a column in *Imagine*.

The second British RPG APA I want to mention is Nick Edward's *Hyperactive*. Nick is listed as the editor in the sources that I've found, but my recollection is that there were three people associated with it. At this time some in RPG fandom were concerned about the rush to publish new fanzines, often poor quality fanzines, by newbies with little prior contact with RPG fandom. The idea behind *Hyperactive* was to provide a gentle introduction into the world of fanzine publication. Instead of writing a whole fanzine, you were asked to write a mini-fanzine containing $4n$ pages (where n is a natural number). All of the mini-fanzines received before the deadline were packaged into an issue of *Hyperactive*. It didn't matter if your contribution was a crud zine, you would receive supportive feedback from the editorial team and the editors of the other APA zines. The intention was that prospective fanzine publishers would develop their skills in *Hyperactive* before finally launching fanzines. I don't know how many issues of *Hyperactive* were produced. It was a good idea, but probably the kind of person who would have most benefited from engaging with *Hyperactive* was the kind of person who was just going to rush into pubbing their ish.

In 1985 I subscribed to a postal gaming fanzine that had been reviewed in *Imagine*, Rob Wilson's *The Mouse Police*. There was an interesting game running. I couldn't make neither head nor tail of the adjudications, though it was obviously a fantasy game. When a replacement player was needed I put my hand up despite not knowing anything more about The Song of The Night than I have just mentioned. When I received the rules it was evident that I wouldn't be able to understand them without first reading the rules to a game called Diplomacy, for The Song of The Night was a diplomacy variant and its first rule was something like "The 1971 rules of Diplomacy apply, except where modified below". I asked Rob to send me a copy of the rules for Diplomacy. From little things...

I published my first fanzine in 1985, which was reviewed in *Imagine* 27 (June 1985), so it must have been published a couple of months before.

*“Another new zine which takes the same approach to production ((The previous zine reviewed was *Faster Than Light*. Each copy of FTL was printed on the computer which cut down production costs and in theory printer delays.)) is VOOM VAT. This is edited by Mark Nelson, who intends to run some postal games through the zine with Judge Dredd being the only one on offer initially. Most of this issue is taken up by a new guild for RQ2, some new skills, and an AD&D game article on elves. Mark calls the zine a FanSheet rather than Fanzine, and he promises to publish any interesting articles anyone sends him on just about anything so here's your chance to see something of yours in print.”* (Mike Lewis, *Imagine* 27, page 55).

Mike reviewed my zine in the postal gaming section of his reviews, rather than the role-playing game section. However, I would have classified it as a RPG fanzine that offered postal games and that's how it is in my memory: it's feet were firmly placed in the RPG camp. I then transitioned into running a (RPG) personal zine that offered postal games before moving my zine into a general postal gaming fanzine. Finally, the zine morphed into a standard postal diplomacy fanzine; albeit one that an unusual emphasis on articles about the game of diplomacy and a focus on diplomacy variants. Along the way I frequently changed the name of what had become my *primary* fanzine, although when changing the name I did not reset the numbering back to 1. It's final name was *The Mouth of Sauron*. The final issue available on Doug Kent's Postal Diplomacy Zine Archive is Volume 8 Issue 1 (September 1992). (I have a complete collection of my own fanzines in a box somewhere in the garage. There are many boxes in the garage. Perhaps the next time we move home the box with my fanzines will surface and I'll discover if that really was the final issue.)

The postal diplomacy hobby took up increasingly large amounts of my time until... I'm not sure when. But sometime in late 1994 or early 1995 I woke up and no longer had any enthusiasm for it. No enthusiasm for producing fanzines. No enthusiasm for running games. No enthusiasm for playing in games. No enthusiasm for writing articles. No enthusiasms for writing locs. No enthusiasm. I should have put out a short zine to say that I was folding, offered to help someone to take over the games I was running, and gracefully dropped out of any games that I was playing in. Guess what? I had no enthusiasm to publish one more zine. My alternative solution was to open a travel bag and every time a fanzine or letter arrived, deposit them in the bag unopened. After months of not putting out my own zines and not sending in orders for the games that I was playing in, the supply of items to put into the travel bag spluttered to an end. The only exception to the rule of putting mail into the travel bag was Richard Sharp's *Dolchstoss*. This was the only zine I *subscribed* to, rather than traded with. And I wanted to continue receiving it.

Dolchstoss was the perfect fannish retirement home. Although it had been a central hobby zine during its first incarnation in the 1970s, during its second incarnation it was at the periphery of the hobby. Richard didn't write zine reviews and ignored the ebb and tides of the contemporary hobby. Why did I want to continue reading it? Richard was an excellent writer and *Dolchstoss* a good read. I didn't play games in *Dolchstoss* and I didn't write any locs. I was happy to pay for it, to read each issue and enjoy my retirement. It's location on the outer rim of the Hobby was also attractive.

Several decades past. *Dolchstoss* folded, the final issue that was widely distributed was 275 (March 2002). It wasn't the only zine that I was receiving at this stage. But years past without me either

playing games or writing articles and with only the occasional loc. Slowly, my hobby muscles thawed. Now I'm receiving as many as seven diplomacy fanzines. I'm writing locs on a more regular basis and I've even started a subzine. In postal diplomacy, a subzine is not a SUBscription fanZINE as it means in science fiction fandom (historic usage only I guess). No, in postal diplomacy a subzine is to almost all intents and purposes a fanzine in its own right. It has a name. It has a number. It has an editor. It may run games. It may have a letter column. It may have articles. But it's not quite a fanzine in its own right, as it's distributed as part of another fanzine. The attraction for the subzine editor is that they did not need to copy a fanzine and mail it out. (Not many diplomacy fanzines are distributed as only hard copy these days.) Another attraction is that you do not need to find your own readers, you piggyback from the readers of the main fanzine. What are the attractions for the editor of the main fanzine? You have additional content. Maybe different games are offered. Maybe there's a different kind of reading material. The downside for the editor of the main fanzine is that you have a larger fanzine to copy, probably pushing up the costs of mailing out your fanzine. (Again, not many editors physically mail zines these days).

I declare that the above account may not be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But it is some approximation to the truth, as I remember it almost forty years after the facts and with no access to the fanzines in question. I hereby end Part One of my odyssey through the world of fanzines. Perhaps, I'll continue with Part Two next time covering my very limited involvement with (SF) fandom. But many things that have a part one, or an issue one in the case of RPG fanzines, never have a part two, or an issue two.

The Mathom House

INTERMISSION 131 (Ahrvid Engholm)

I enjoyed your account of "Heirs of Bergman". What a great idea to have a one minute film competition. Your comment that "The future is a hell where citizens are kept sedated in pleasant drug-sleep" reminded me of a Blakes 7 episode watched long ago in which the Federation used a drug to make the inhabitants of rebellious worlds docile. (After a quick internet search, that was the episode Traitor – the third episode of the final season).

Thanks for translating the Sam Lundwall article. I enjoyed reading it, though the font size was a little small for my aging eyes!

INTERMISSION 132 (Ahrvid Engholm)

Congratulations to Sweden for winning Eurovision Song Contest 2023. The last time I watched the ESC was 1982. I see that the Germans won that year, though I have no recollection of their entry. Easy enough to listen to it on YouTube if I were that way inclined. One performance that I love watching on YouTube is ABBA performing at Brighton in 1974.

"Putin... ((uses)) a second line to shoot unwilling gun fodder soldiers if they retreat."

I believe this was a standard operating protocol for the Soviet Union, so nothing new.

Brownian Motion 2 (Garth Spencer)

It's easy when not paying attention to type fanac.com rather than fanac.org. I had not realised that you could search fanac.org by country. That's proven to be very useful for me to identify all the Australian zines. I'm slowly flicking through these to identify the ones that existed as fanzines *proper* rather than as APA zines.

Ryct to Kevin Trainor Jr.

"Can U.S. conventions, or at least Vegas conventions, really find affordable hotel venues so easily?"

Hotels in Vegas offer very good deals for conventions because they plan on making back their money (and more) due to the delegates gambling. (I'm sure you didn't need me to tell you that.) I don't know if the following happened, or if it's a folklore story in the mathematics community...

Once upon a time a mathematics conference was held in Vegas. At the end of the conference the organisers were told, in no uncertain terms, never to bring their conference back to Vegas. You see the hotel had lost a great deal of money on their conference package because the conference delegates seriously under-gambled compared to typical conference delegates. Who would have guessed that attendees at a mathematics conference would keep their hands in their pockets?

Snow Poster Township 10 (Heath Row)

Of the twenty-five items in your NEFFO table I've done fourteen of them at some stage of my life. There are eight that I'm not interested in doing. That leaves three that I'm interested in, one of which is *"Submit a [...] fanzine review to one of the Nefzines"*.

One of my retirement projects is to try and read all the novels that have won the BSFA Award for Best Novel. That will probably never happen. In fact it's odds on that I won't even start the project. I'm always coming up with ideas for projects that I would like to take on when I retire (hopefully not anytime soon). However, your positive review of Iain M. Banks' *Excession* means that I am more likely to read that one sometime in the future. Don't know where, don't know when...

Samizdat 19 (Samuel Lubell)

"I saw the original Avatar in 3D and thought the special effects were amazing but the story wasn't. I did not see Avatar II."

Almost ditto, except I don't remember if I saw the original Avatar in 3D.

I do not remember ever reading Frederick Pohl. Based upon your recommendation I have ordered *Platinum Pohl*. Thanks!

Your list of Balticon Panel Ideas provides a ready source of ideas for any editor short of inspiration. I will pick one and provide some short answers. Before doing so, I should say that I appreciate and enjoy the provocative nature of the questions which are designed to elicit a response.

Down with the Classics! — *Should we just kick the older, classic writers out of the way and forget about them?*

No! The premise of this question, and some of the ones that follow, is that the presence in print of 'the older, classic writers' is preventing younger writes from being published. Given the large

numbers of books published each year, this premise is not based in reality. We might also ponder who the `we' are in your question and what `power' they have over publishers.

How important or useful is it to remember and honor the older writers, many of whom have passed beyond the veil?

What do you mean by “remember and honor the older writers”? It’s also useful to clarify *who* it is that is remembering and honouring the older writers. I do not think that general fans of SF need to remember and honour the older writers, you do not need to engage with SF novels from all periods of its history. If you only want to read contemporary writers then that is fine. But *someone* should remember and honour the older writers. There is place for knowledge about the historical development of SF as a field.

What’s the problem with tossing them to the side and completely focusing on new blood?

I don’t think there’s a problem with an individual deciding that they only want to read “new blood”. But should that choice be imposed upon everybody else?

Should they be removed from bookstores to free up space for the living or retained as long as people want to read them?

No, they should not be removed from bookstores! Is there any evidence that removing them from bookstores would free up space “for the living”? As long as enough people want to buy their books, then they will remain in print. When their sales diminish past a certain point they will go out of print – perhaps to return at a future date if fashions change. Who will be responsible for removing the older writers? I would say that it sounds very Orwellian, but perhaps that choice of adjective is unadvisable because 1984 itself might have been removed from the bookstores.

Is it necessary to read the older authors to understand the new ones?

No! Most literature stands on its own merit. Knowledge of the development of the field may provide an additional level of appreciation. A particular group of authors may develop by exchanging ideas and influences between their books. Knowledge of such developments may increase your appreciation for a text, but they are not required. Thinking about this question, leads me to ponder the concept of the canon. What is the SF canon? Alternatively, what’s the minimum collection of texts someone should read to consider themselves well-informed about SF? What books would you want someone to read if they took a one-semester subject on “The SF novel”?

Let me take this idea further. Suppose that you were going to teach “The SF novel” across three subjects. Let’s call them: “The SF Novel 101”, “The SF Novel 201”, and “The SF Novel 301”. What books would be covered at each level? Would you develop your coverage thematically or chronologically? Would you only focus on US writers? Now, this might give you an idea for a panel for your next convention... I presume that there are institutions of higher education which offer subjects in “Science Fiction”. Do you know of any?

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 265

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1 July 2023

Comments:

Cover: Public Domain Space Art.

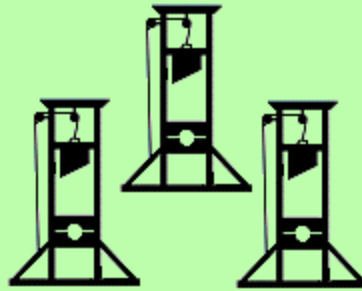
Ahrvid Engholm: Not fun, losing an entire file of hard-wrought data! I wonder what could have caused the glitch! I can't think of anything to say about the FilmFest, but it sounds intriguing.

Fun "History Corner," with notes on unusual expressions in Science Fiction. I'm one of the fuddy-duddies who never much liked the "New Wave," although, paradoxically, John T. Sladek, one of the New Wave mavens, is one of my favorite writers.

re Heath Row, I, too, have a fondness for short stories over novels. A story, as you note, is just the right length to explore "An Idea." Novels must be about a larger number of things, and sometimes they get in each other's way.

Garth Spencer: Funny sociological map of Canada! Particularly amusing that Manitoba didn't get a funny label!

I love the project to scan and preserve old fanzines! Sad to think of how many of these labors of love have been lost forever. History is highly entropic!



re Native American assimilation schools, I believe the ideal is a good one, even though the practical application was a stinking disaster. The ideal is to make the advantages of modern society -- like medicine! -- available to everyone on earth. Think of a kid in a small remote tribe in the middle of Brazil who has myopia. He can't see. An ordinary pair of eyeglasses would give him his eyesight back, but he is denied this because his people are isolated. Assimilation schools tried to right that wrong...and, in the way of humans everywhere, created a hundred other, worse wrongs in the attempt. It doesn't mean the ideal is bad.

I admire the idea of the universe being the result of different creators, collaborating and/or competing. There is a sort of "patch-work" appearance to reality, and, as you note, occasional ragged edges where it looks like a creator ran out of ideas or energy.

re Ahrvid Engholm, yes, there certainly is a "three stooges" aspect to UFO aliens, as they have come to us in popular culture. Kidnapping and molesting people, buzzing airplanes, mutilating cattle, etc. Not the behavior of an advanced civilization!

Ahrvid Engholm: Erdogan is certainly being a bully and a boor, and it looks good for him in tomorrow's (as I write this) election. At least Turkey appears to be having an actual election, as opposed to the fraudulent piece of bad theater that Russia had to endure.

Banning the opposition party is not the act of a nation that respects democracy.

Fun History Corner. It's always impressive when reading people's predictions of the future, what a strange mixture we find of correct and incorrect forecasting. Futurists almost always get ^something^ right, and they almost always get other things quite wrong!

Fun notes on Emmanuel Swedenborg. It is heartening to know that he has inspired societies and meeting-groups to go over his ideas. Everyone ought to have a fan club!

re:ct Henry Grynsten, I'd side with Henry, here: Asimov's fiction was fairly good, but his character development was too scanty. I agree with you that some writers produce "lengthy internal psychological babble," but there is room for a middle ground. Asimov was too far to the left on the bell curve, and what you describe is too far to the right. Poul Anderson, just as one sterling example, did a better job than Asimov in characterization.

Disagree with your concluding line: masquerading, plastic swords, and games are all for real SF fans! All to the all! ^Everything^ is good for real SF fans! Reject Sturgeon's Law! Ninety per cent of everything is actually interesting!

John Thiel: "Synergy" would appear to be difficult to define!

re:ct Ahrvid Engholm, I like "world building." One of the fun activities at a SF convention was a two-session world-building workshop, where the audience put forward suggestions and ideas, which the panelists/moderators assembled, creating a world. The first session build the basic world and the intelligent life-forms, and the second session build their civilization and society. It could very readily provide the basic setting for a successful SF novel!

Near-Earth space flight has proven remarkably safe. No one has (yet) died in orbit. Compare it to the early days of airplanes, and space comes off very favorably. You specifically said "outer space flight," and one could argue we haven't actually done that yet, except for robot probes. Still, the robot probes tend to survive quite well. Space flight hasn't proven very dangerous for them. Alas, the time will come when someone dies in orbit, and there will be a great re-examination. I hope we do not retreat from space the way the Imperial Chinese retreated from the sea.

Heath Row: How odd that FaceBook delisted your group's events as violating community standards. This is the downside of responsible moderation in social media content: "false positives." I remember, early in the cycle of social media development, discussions of "breast cancer" were banned, because of the word "breast."

Fun that you get to preserve and screen old fan-made films! I once had the joy of being at a party where a whole bunch of student films from Cal Arts were being shown, and the inventiveness and creativity were amazing and truly beautiful!

I hope you enjoy Ensign Flandry as much as I did!

Fun Game/Way of Life "Neffo!" I can put a happy x-mark on slightly more than half the spaces, but, by mischance, I don't fill any rows, columns, or diagonals! Gotta fix that!

Samuel Lubell: re:ct me, the book on the early intelligence ear was "Sub Rosa, the O.S.S. and American Espionage" by Stewart Alsop and Thomas Braden. A little more emphasis on the bureaucracy -- the renaming and splitting of the branches -- and not enough "spy stories," but it is a history, not a thriller.

Fun spotlight on Frederick Pohl. Pohl is the author of the short story "The Midas Plague" which is one of the most relevant

and insightful of all SF shorts, clever and intelligent and very, very funny.

Excellent list of panel topics for your convention! If we still had conventions in San Diego, I would so be stealing those!

George Phillies: Yes, alas, the N3F is dwindling, and this is tremendously sad!

Nifty that Rick Norwood is reprinting all of Alley Oop! I have read a fair amount of Oop in Norwood's "Comics Revue."

reassuring, for now, that AI-produced fiction is bad, awful, and really rotten! But it will improve, and the challenges will be profound.

Short but sweet segment of your book, Of Breaking Waves. Always good to see Eclipse again! You leave us with a bit of a cliffhanger!

"Threading" in Prose Fiction

Poul Anderson's "Flandry" novels and stories have been kicking around here a while, and serve as a good model for "Single-Threaded" prose fiction. Basically, in each of the novels and stories, Anderson shows us the action from Flandry's point of view. It's as if the camera is fixed to Flandry's shoulder, and we see what he sees. And what he does.

In contrast, take a typical thriller by, say, Frederick Forsyth. Here, you'll jump and hop and skip and bounce, moving from one p.o.v. to a completely unrelated viewpoint. You'll have a CIA clerk in Langley looking at some file intercepts, then jump to a housewife in California wondering at what her neighbor may be up to, then jump to an Egyptian diplomat reading directives from his secret masters in the Kremlin, etc. Bouncy bouncy!

I used to write in the Forsyth model, with several plot lines and several points of view, with relatively short sub-chapters -- chapterlets -- usually only three or four pages (as published in a paperback.)

One day, my old literary agent, Ashely Darlington Grayson (is that a cool name, or what?) suggested I try writing "single-threaded" prose, and I gave it a try. It was the best advice I've ever been given! It ^{^worked^} for me, and made my stuff (in my opinion) a whale of a lot better. It gives a tighter focus, and gives you a symp-athetic character you can really get to know well. It builds suspense, because you worry that bad things will happen. Yes, we all have the meta-knowledge that the p.o.v. character is going to live -- we can never really be ^{^too^} afraid for Indiana Jones in a scary death-trap -- but avid readers, who "get into" the thrill of a thriller can suspend this knowledge and read a book ^{^as if they didn't know^} that the prot-agonist is not going to die. Meanwhile, there are plenty of other bad things that can happen to our hero.

(In "A Knight of Ghosts and Shadows," Poul Anderson does some truly hideous things to Dominic Flandry. The novel is absolutely brilliant, and is the titanic climax to the whole Flandry saga, but, fair warning, Flandry suffers. It is a hard book to read. Poul Anderson was a genius...)

There aren't any universal truths in prose fiction. What works for me would certainly not work for Frederick Forsyth. Kipling famously said, of different ways of writing, "Every single one of them is right." But for those of you thinking of starting writing a novel, give some thought, at least, to the matter of single-vs multi-threaded plot structure. May you find an answer that satisfies you as much as my answer has satisfied me!

R.I.P. Joshua Quagmire

Joshua Quagmire was the professional name of Richard Lester, a comics artist and writer. He created the iconic “Cutey Bunny” character, as well as a handful of supporting characters. He published under the title of “Army Surplus Comics,” and had a number of different titles. Much of what he did was sexually suggestive, and almost all his output was “Not Safe For Work.” Some of his work was explicitly erotic. All of his work was ^funny^! He had a sense of humor that just wouldn’t quit! His jokes varied from the clever and subtle to the downright scandalous.

I met Quagmire at a San Diego Comic Con, in, I believe, 1983. I was introduced to him by Mark Merlino, one of the creators and founding fathers of “Furry Fandom.” Unfortunately, what Mark said was, “This is Richard Lester.” Quagmire absolutely burst a gasket. He roared, “My professional name is Joshua Quagmire,” and he proceeded to holler at Mark at high volume for several minutes. Quagmire had a temper, and he had some difficulty getting along with others in the professional sphere. He was booted from at least four different publishers. He had a nice deal with Richard and Wendy Pini, the creators of ElfQuest, for a comic they would publish, but the deal fell through, not least because Quagmire, alas, was too hard to deal with.

His most recent project was an ongoing Webcomic named “Bunz and Katz,” featuring two aliens, one mostly human-looking and the other a strange vaguely cat-shaped robot. They were agents of the nefarious Negafleet, with instructions to destroy the earth. They stumbled along ineptly. This allowed Quagmire to play the Swiftian game of social satire, portraying our world as it might be seen to alien outsiders. His satire was remarkably good-natured and even a bit loving. He portrayed humanity as goofy and feckless -- and who’s to say he wasn’t right?

Joshua Quagmire passed away in May of 2023.



Cutey Bunny being heroic!

BROWNIAN MOTION #3

An apazine by Garth Spencer

For NAPA #265, July 2023

Learning Experiences

There were several events and learning experiences in May and June that I didn't mention. Mainly, I learned that I am too easily talked into things, like lending money, or volunteering to arrange SF society meet-ups. Well, hell, I knew that already; last summer I was talked into a relationship when I wasn't really ready for one.

At least that didn't last too long.

§

By the time you read this I will have attended Pemmi-Con, the 2023 NASFiC, and hopefully represented Canadian fandom graciously and positively.

§

The recent involvement with a would-be conrunning group in Vancouver is actually a bit more painful than other experiences. (In an effort at charity I will not name the group, or the con they wish to revive.) Apparently one member flipped out just because I used the word "meeting" instead of "meet-ups," and thought I was committing the Board to formal extraordinary special meetings with, like, obligatory attendance, and agendas, without consulting them.

Having been jerked around before – and come to think of it, I didn't exactly volunteer for the position of meet-up scheduler – I announced that I would return the signs and stuff. If they've actually got the moxie to organize a convention at all, they can damn well organize their own meetings.

§

Just to figure out what I was missing, I have become a bit fanatical about scheduling, planning, and budgeting and generally coordinating my activities, both mundane and fannish. It is as if I were applying the lessons learned at work to my private life and projects.

The result is that I have a write-on/wipe-off wall calendar hung over my computer desk, filled with almost illegible appointments and deadlines; at the end of each month, I make up a paper draft calendar with all the appointments and deadlines on record somewhere, so as not to miss anything; I try to do the

same with my expected paydays and expenses; and all my activities, mundane and fannish, end up in a list numbered by priority.

Now, I am trying to extend this to a graphic format, in order to complete a full circle of all the activities and abilities I should encompass, in order to be a well-rounded man.

Today, I gather that most people just don't feel that way, as if lack of context or orientation doesn't threaten them. How odd.

§

Reading another APA reminded me how little I know about role-playing games. In fact, I realized that I have played almost *no* games at all, in the past thirty-odd years. This, and my alienation from all sports, probably helps explain why a lot of ordinary thought and behaviour lies outside my ken.

An Excerpt from *Confabulation* (Garth's 2020 fanthology):

Cider: Our Friend and Yours

by Don H. DeBrandt

(first published in *The Daily Blurp*, V-Con 17's daily convention zine, and reprinted with the author's permission)

Cider has grown in popularity these last few years, especially in British Columbia. In 1986, we consumed 6,939,000 litres of this tasty beverage, about the same as we had for the previous three years; the next year it jumped to 8,491,112! The reason?

Some say V-Con did it.

It's true that this drink, with an alcohol content ranging from four to seven percent, is a perennial favourite with our American visitors, perhaps because until Prohibition, cider was considered the national drink of the U.S. Since then, it has been replaced by other liquids, notably coffee and wine coolers.

Perhaps it's because of our orchards in the Okanagan, which produce fruit with a relatively high acidic content, perfect for concocting this fruit wine. Cider is made from the pulp of apples or pears and fermented in much the same way wine is but there is even a champagne cider, fermented a second time in the bottle. There are, however, some misconceptions about cider which should be cleared up.

First, flavoured ciders, such as apple-lime or strawberry, are not made from fermented berries or citrus fruits - they have these flavours added to an apple

cider base. Other popular flavours include peach, blueberry, root beer and kokanee. The berries used in kokanee cider grow only in the Kootenay mountains, and are sometimes called "sasquatch berries" because of their heavy brown pelt.

Second, the bubbles in cider are not carbon dioxide, as in other sparkling beverages, but methane, which gives cider its distinctive aroma. Trained Smurfs are fed a special diet of burritos and sodium bicarbonate, then added to the fermenting mixture, which they stir briskly by performing synchronized swimming routines from old Ethel Merman pictures. Most Smurfs are good for seven or eight hours before they absorb enough alcohol to go belly up. Don't worry, it isn't as bad as it sounds; at this point they are fished out, dried, shredded, and used as artificial blueberry colouring. Kittens are occasionally added for extra sparkle, flavour, or just for the hell of it. Dead winos that have been found in the gutter and are too smelly to bury are sometimes used to enhance fermentation, and an age-old tradition in the cider business, passed on from father to son, is "straining the vat for spare change". Leper's underwear is ...

(continued on page 72)

Mailing Comments

Intermission #131 – Ahrvid Engholm

By the time I settled down to write this, you had informed me that your laptop had packed up. Bad news. I hope by the time you read this, you are equipped to produce *Intermission* again.

On to #131.

Reading about Sweden's Short Film Festival, and your space-related interests, I found myself imagining silly things. "CSI: Luna," a pastiche forensic-procedural show set in the first lunar city. "NCIS: Space Force," yet another spinoff of the NCIS franchise, set in the operations of the semi-imaginary U.S. Space Force. The titles just write themselves.

Re your comments to Henry Grynsten: At different times, different communities lean towards expecting everyone to be an independent, self-reliant Rugged Individual, or towards expecting everyone to need some degree of assistance towards self-reliance. Right now, my part of the world practices a range of assistance called a social safety net, while preaching stark self-reliance, as witness the fifty-year-old fashion for austerities, outsourcing, trickle-down economics, globalism – in short, making life harder for people who were self-reliant workers, before their jobs were exported.

All of this raises questions about the costs of job/career opportunities, and whether the costs are being arbitrarily increased out of reach, but I don't know if anyone is talking about this issue.

I am trying to see the humour in this sort of thing. It isn't easy.

Re your comments to Heath Row: It has occurred to me that maybe my story ideas are easier to conclude, in a short-story format. I'll have to try it; I have a little free time coming up.

Re your comments about ABBA and Eurovision – has anyone performed an entry in Esperanto? (I've always wondered why Esperanto, or some more recent constructed lingua franca, hasn't been seriously used in European business, science, diplomacy and broadcast media.)

Re your comments to me: whether intellectual property is just a government concession to public perceptions is hard to argue. On the other hand, there is strength to the argument that people have real rights in properties ranging from songs, inventions, original stories, and industrial processes to pictorial art and circuit designs. (You can tell I used to work for trademark agents, and that I tried to keep up with the copyright issues involving original fiction.)

I have issues with the trend to registering gene sequences, or even modified species, as proprietary products: this leads to agricorporations patenting heirloom crops that indigenous people depend on, or issuing lawsuits against people whose crops were accidentally seeded with proprietary strains.

Onward. No, I can't honestly say that "*all relevant legal barriers are removed for gender, age, ethnicity etc.*" in industrialized countries. Some people have *tried* to remove the barriers, but any number of blacks, Jews, Hispanics, and First Nations citizens can testify to discrimination against them. I gather that similar discrimination occurs in Europe against Saami, Romany, Travellers and Muslims.

Humans are tribal and discriminatory. The tendency is strong and persistent, despite educational efforts.

Archive Midwinter – Jefferson P. Swycaffer

Thank you for the big hello!

After the last decade or so in Vancouver, I truly have to wonder when and how different fandoms will appreciate each other. Right now, we have a situation where different fandoms hold different conventions, and I am not aware when or if the participants meet and talk to each other.

Intermission #132 – Ahrvid Engholm

Maybe Putin should enter the Eurovision contest with a rendition of “I Did It My Way?” In his absence, sane Russians can quietly take over the government and Putin can seek asylum in Canada, or some other place demented or charitable enough to take him.

Re your comments on Swedenborg: Clearly I have a lot of fun reading ahead of me, if I delve into his belief system.

Synergy #45 – John Thiel

Re your comment to *Intermission #129*: At one point I tried to enliven *BCSFazine*, a local clubzine, with articles such as my essays on building a world on paper – just the astrophysical elements, that’s all – and on constructing a language. No visible response followed. I will see if people are interested in chapbooks based on these and other essays.

Re your comment on *Brownian Motion*: Thank you for your welcome!

Re the taking of life: these days I am entering a belief system in which the value of life is what you learn, or how you grow in character. As a result, I would rather have the god-like power to face someone with the realization of what they are – in character, in personality, in the record of all their actions, in foreseeing all the consequences – than extinguish the last spark of their potential. Very *Christmas Carol*, much *It’s a Wonderful Life*. It’s a large assumption to make, that someone cannot redeem themselves or attain some worth. But then I’m not in a dark alley facing an armed mugger with some unarmed relatives behind me.

Re your comments to *Ye Murthered Master Mage*: How many people here are investigating the undeveloped inventions of Nikola Tesla? Or Charles Reich’s orgone boxes?

Re your comments to *Esmiralda County Line*: Typewriters have become kitsch decorations in Vancouver. There are several boutique stationery stores that use typewriters as shelf and window decorations. And to think, these were the mainstays of office and school document production, for generations.

Snow Poster Township #10 – Heath Row

Facebook has been getting less and less satisfactory a forum for many fans and groups. I have suggested a few times that some enterprising fan could reasonably set up and market a competing social network. There have been no takers.

For a while I attempted to set up a presence on other networks. I have a Discord account. But I never really developed these avenues.

Re your comments about me, and Brownian Motion: I see you recognize, and share my frustration with the lack of communication between Fandom Classic and Fandoms Contemporary ... You are very concise in pointing out where the communication gap lies. And still, we have no solution.

Samizdat ... Ish #19 – Samuel Lubell

Thank you for your welcome!

Since I entered a number of small interest groups at the same time as I entered SF fandom, I had some context, for a change, in which to understand the behaviour I found. Most importantly, I found that there is not, after all, a social consensus anymore.

People will try to apply their norms and mores and standards to you, but since the 1960s, they're not as universal as people like to think. So much for my efforts to track down the mysteries my folks called "common sense." There isn't any. And there seems to be a tacit agreement not to compare notes and acknowledge this publicly. In this way, fandoms reflect mundane social developments; and I suspect this is an historical theme, repeating itself.

The way you and I are describing fandom may end up in my natter at Pemmi-Con.

CONRUNNING – I was interested to read your notes about Balti-Con, and especially about your projects, including con-chairing. As you may have gathered, the longest-running SF convention in Vancouver has been suspended, and the active, popular conventions here are held by gaming or media-franchise fandoms. The issue, as I am told by one of the last VCON chairs, is that hotels in the Greater Vancouver area now charge much higher fees and make greater demands, with less flexibility for negotiation, than in any previous years. Naturally the question arises, how does this compare with the hotel industry in other cities, or in other countries?

Ye Murthered Master Mage #264 – George Phillis

To reply to your first remarks in this apazine, the SF group I joined in Vancouver is certainly not recruiting.

I appreciate your responses to my contribution.

INTERMISSION #133

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA and other astronaut candidates. Follow ed's newstweets from @SFJournalen. Today Maths, space opera, Eurovision, the oldest film club, the famous History Corner, etc. Beaver...Beware of Typos! Early June 2022

Editorially: Eurovision, History, Amateur Film, AI

Everybody are nuts over AI! I'm not worried about being turned into a paperclip - yet. AI takes a lot of computer power and our computer's aren't powerful enough just yet to create AIs of general superintelligence, who may decide that humans are superfluous and of better use as paperclips. It may be the case that an AI could evolve itself to higher intelligence, but it reaches a definite stop when the hardware simply isn't there. However, AIs are likely to evolve according to Moore's Law (double in IQ every 18 months) as their hardware should evolve at that speed. I heard a professor describe the present state of AI: "The human brain has 100 trillion neural connections. The best AI presently has the equivalent of 1 trillion, with the difference that they work faster." To reach the equivalent of 100 trillion connections should with Moore's Law take ca 10 years.

What would Asimov have thought about it?

Presently music sites are reported to be overwhelmed by AI-created music. (Search Youtube for "AI music" and you'll be surprised!) It seems that the music industry will be the first to see the effects of AI. Which takes us to Eurovision, which was arranged in Liverpool, UK, in May. As I told you in last issue the Swedish entry had a good chance to win – and did! I said not to worry about the Finnish entry, but it was that we had to beat with the last votes coming in. The Finns sent so called "rap", which to me isn't music, just sounds. It's incomprehensible that some - mostly kids I understand - listen to something as stimulating as hearing a washing machine run. In my Eurovision coverage below I'll try to find some stuff of sf or fantasy connection.

We are all waiting for the Ukrainians to seriously kicking some Russian ass. I saw that the Swedish CV90 IFVs, Leopard tanks and Archer artillery are now on site. A month ago we had our biggest military exercise for decades named Aurora, 26000 troops from 14 countries - including 3-4000 Ukrainians, who combined it with training on this equipment. Our new government has decided to invite Ukrainian pilots to "evaluation training" on our Gripen jets. (I doubt we have any to give Ukraine, but Slovakia leases a Gripen squadron that may be transferred if they get replacements. Who knows?)

And don't miss the exciting History Corner. You wouldn't believe what raving mad things people did back in history! The ish ends with some uninteresting mailing comments - for most of you, but do a zine and join an APA to make it interesting! We must have more fanzines to keep the true and genuine fandom alive! But now I have a few words to say of a friend, Maths who now isn't among our numbers any longer

Maths Claesson 1959-2023

Leading fan and CEO of the SF-Bokhandeln ("SF Bookstore") chain, Maths Claesson has passed away, 64 years young. Below the short obituary I had on File770.com (I'll add just a few details in footnotes): <https://file770.com/bicycles-fans-and-a-propeller-memories-of-maths-claesson-1959-2023/>

I've known Maths Claesson for - if I calculate it correctly - 43 years. He was an energetic fan, a BNF if there ever was one, a major fanzine publisher cranking the Värnamo (his original hometown) fandom Khuken Olsson mimeo, long time SF-Bookstore pillar (the last few years the chain's CEO) and also author of the YA book series about a boy named Linux longing for riding a rocket to space.

But some my adventures with him was on bicycle. Out of many episodes, here are two.

The first time I met him was when he and fannish friends Glenn and Thomas took their Volvo to an sf con in Stockholm, August 1980. As the fannish tradition is to find non-locals free crash space (it's a proud, lonely and economically challenging thing to be a fan) I could arrange for our bunch to stay the

night in the SFSF HQ, at legendary 45 Pioneer Street, also housing the first SF Bookstore. I was on bicycle and they followed in their car. I rode the wheels like a rocket and Maths complained they had a hard time to keep up! I had a beanie and they could see its propeller spinning wildly at a distance...

Another memory. Sweden has a state-owned alcohol monopoly. At the time their shops closed at 6pm and during weekends. If you missed the hours, you were out of luck. We a group of fen planned a weekend sailing excursion in the Stockholm archipelago. Friday at ten to six we found that the Hornstull blog shop to our horror had a computer error and couldn't sell us the hot dog grilling accessories! Me and Maths hit our bikes for a Tour de Fans dash to save the weekend! We reached it 5:59 breathing heavily. I remember having some Hungarian Tokaj as the sun set on the island and the fire glowed and crackled. *

His demise of cancer at the much too young age of 64 (May 7, survived by wife and two genetical offsprings) was

deemed important enough for national TV's "Culture News" to cover it (ca 5 minutes in; use a VPN).

Just a short note: Maths did a lot for sf and fandom**, but the SF Bookstore he didn't found. It started already in 1977 by the Scandinavian SF Association (involving eg Stieg Larsson!) on Pioneer Street, the legendary place of fannish lore, where we headed that August evening...

* A thing censored here - some could get inappropriate ideas! - is that on our way back from the sailing weekend, me, Maths and one of the ladies who took a swim naked in the Djurgårdsbrunn canal in the middle of the night, on the edge of downtown Stockholm. Memorable days. Maths then stole some wine from me.

** Let's fill in some of it. Eg Alvar Award winner 1984, in editorial board (with me too) of Nova magazine, publisher of fanzine review zine Konturer, active in the SFF APA, one of the editors of Göteborgs Faanvheckliga, with that grand #21 of 200 pages. Also small press book editor and the one going through all the 332 issues of 1940's Jules Verne Magasinet for Jan Myrdals 1993 anthology. (Maths probably the only one who after 1940-1947 have read through that magazine run - ie beside me. I went through them in the 1980's as I slowly gained a complete colledition.)



From national TV's "Culture News". Many newspapers also covered it.

Bertil Falk's Space Opera Prize

As our greatest advocate of space opera today May 21st (when writing this) turns 90 years, talking about Bertil Falk of course - writer, reporter, editor, scholar, translator - I've taken the initiative to announce a space opera prize, named in his honour.

It's aimed at Swedish writers, but here's an idea for others: run your amazing space opera story through a translation service, those are getting very good these days with AI help! It'd be interesting if someone would experiment with it. (It won't be disqualified.) *Bertil Falk's Space Opera Prize* offers eternal glory, a diploma and an as yet unknown cash prize. (The prize will be crowdfunded. Another experiment...)

Bertil has done just about everything since he had his first story published in the *Stockholms-Tidningen* newspaper in 1946 when he was 12!

His "Trip to Space" is available here, also in English translation:

<https://file770.com/bertil-falk-from-a-space-hobo-to-finnegans-wake/>

Beside translating the "untranslatable" James Joyce classic *Finnegans Wake*,



Bertil translated and published *Cpt Future!* It was also made into a mini musical by Swedish fans!

** Yes, I asked him. He wishes the prize good luck and says space opera is worth more attention.



he's written a heap of books (recently a huge 3 volume history of Swedish sf), worked as publisher, magazine editor (JVM, DAST Magazine), journalist and more.

But his first love as a little boy was those silly, daydreaming - as school teachers complained loudly! - space stories in our local pulp Jules Verne Magasinet, especially the colourful adventures of Captain Future, here known as "Kpt Frank" and very popular (JVM reaching 85 000 copies" (+1% of the population, proportionally as if *Astounding* had sold 15 million copies!). A local Cpt Future club was active up to the 1980's, Bertil published Cpt F and a cassette zine came with a mini musical. In 1975 Bertil visited Leigh Brackett (herself a master of space opera!) and Edmond Hamilton, the main culprit behind Captain Future. He often mentioned and wrote about this



Cpt Future was hugely popular in 1940's, here known as Kpt Frank.

"Wizard of Science".

An additional reason for a space fiction prize is that so much is happening in space right now! NASA returns to the Moon. SpaceX builds the biggest rocket in history (also reusable) ultimately aiming for Mars. Europe builds a new telescope with an eye big as a hockey rink as the Webb space telescope meanwhile take the sharpest pictures ever. China builds a space station, and also aims for the Moon (with India, Japan and others to follow). We have rovers on Mars, take

pictures of Black Holes, crash into comets, seen Captain Kirk take a real space jump, have AIs to find ET phoning home. Even little Sweden now builds a launch pad for satellites, with first shot expected within a year.

Space fiction of yesterday is becoming reality! To enter Bertil Falk's Space Opera Prize contest, send your space opera story (simply defined as a

science fiction story set in space) nomination to spaceoperaprize@rocketship.com no later than September 21. Any length admissible. It must have been published in 2022, but yet unpublished work may also be nominated - in that case you must attach it. A

jury will be formed, and it will also on its on accord look for stories that may be awarded.

You can also apply for a jury job to the E-address. Recap your connection to space and if you have been into writing space fiction yourself. At the same time all space fans are urged to make a small donation to (though I believe it'll be more complicated or foreigners) my Handelsbanken account 330 334 578 and tell ahrvid@hotmail.com that. Donors will be officially thanked, but may be anonymous if you wish.

And Bertil, congratulations! Your space dreams from boyhood are turning real.

Ireland 7 - Sweden 7

We scored an equaliser! Ireland had seven wins in the Eurovision Song Contest. In Liverpool, May13th Sweden got its seventh too. And not only that, by now legendary Queen Loreen took her second win with her entry "Tattoo"



Ed Hamilton and Bertie Falk. See http://www.bewilderingstories.com/sue477/falk_interview.html



Finnish entry didn't make me green with envy.

In 1969 Bertil relaunched Jules Verne Magasinet.



Bertil likes space...and India! Here with Indira Gandhi. His bio of her husband Feroze, the Unknown Gandhi, caused a stir: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/mind-the-gap/is-feroze-the-forgotten-gandhi/>



nearly Nearly NC-17 rated. The Israeli entry finished third and

I can imagine why many voted for them... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3mlcCIIJXY>

Norway let a Viking valkyrie invade the British Isles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt7U0-N1mlk> Germany, finally, dressed up as some sort of deamons, as Lords of the Lost singing about "Blood and Glitter", a heavy metal number that unfortunately ended last. (The UK was second to last. Not their day.) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyGR4YWIPes>

There was, as you can see (follow the links!) a lot to enjoy in this years Eurovision. BBC did a very good production with - as it should be as they took over due to the war - a lot of material and music from Ukraine. I learn that BBC also offered Ukranian refugees in the country heavily discounted tickets. Well



done!

Where in Sweden next ESC is too early to say. This far Stockholm has had three, Malmö two and poor Gothenburg only one. Statistics and some sort of "fairness" would point to Gothenburg, but Stockholm had the best venue in Friends Arena which easily seats 30 000 (50 000 for football games). That'd give Eurovision fans more tickets.

Anyway, let's hope 2016 sensational hosts Måns and Petra return. We want them because of eg this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuszTGJIRoo>

We also want Lynda Woodruff

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?=6PXa45WG0q> to guide and confuse us and Edward af Sillén to write the script.

Edward and Måns Zelmerlöw (2015 ESC winner) were Swedish commentators for the Liverpool Eurovision, having many funny comments, though with a certain bias with the LGBTQ comments in every third sentence. (If you need to push your agenda you just admit your position is weak...)

If we get those people next Eurovision Song Contestis sure to be something to look forward too! And yes, it's 50 years after ABBA and "Waterloo". Why not borrow the Voyage abbatars? Välcom Europäische!



Loren met by 10 000+ proud Stockholmers in the Royal Gardens when returning. (From the TV coverage.)

Probably the Last Enthusiasts...

SVT shows a charming documentary - titled "A group of amateurs" - about possibly the world's oldest amateur film club. Dive into SVTplay before you regret it!

<https://www.svtplay.se/video/eDmdWgw/dox-ett-gang-amatorer>

The club is called Bradford Movie Makers and started in 1932 under the name Bradford Cine Circle. But the club must have arisen from a more informal group that started meeting as early as 1926! Initially, they filmed in 16 and 9.5 mm, the latter an early special format that was very popular among amateurs as it gave good image quality because the film width was used more efficiently through more frugal perforations. Regular 8 mm eventually took over and later, of course, video, whereby the name was changed to Bradford Cine and Video Club, later Bradford Camcorder Users Group, and the current name Bradford Movie Maker has been used since 2010.

This extracted from the club's website, <http://bradfordmoviemakers.com/>, which also states that it is "one of" the world's oldest amateur film clubs. But I don't know anyone who is older and still active - let me know if you know! * The clubhouse around which everything revolves has housed the film club since 1935. The wing beat of history gives extra spice to the documentary.

"A Bunch of Amateurs" as the original title reads, is made by Kim Hopkins, known from previous documentaries on BBC, Channel4, National Geographic and others: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt10869834/> She followed the club for a longer time, until forced pause due to some small microorganism. (A strange virus spread so the politicians closed schools, pubs, theaters, etc., ordered people to stay at home, held admonishing press conferences, etc - maybe you've heard of it?)

We get to follow the daily grind and gnat of the aging club members. They have met every Monday evening since 1932. But all is not well. The economy is non-existent. The clubhouse needs to be refurbished, although they have not been able to afford the rent for five years. Concerned brows are furrowed at member meetings where the chairman hopefully suggests public film nights, because they have some fine old color films that should attract people. You can get 60 people in and at £5 entry that means a whopping £300 in profit!

We also get to see the members' beautiful painting of the walls, littering in the backyard and filming. We accompany you on home visits among ailments and memories. There is a quiet melancholy over the gang. We drop in on ongoing recordings. A group of hens cackling at a specter in white make-up. A wizard blanes cards. The corpse rushes past a video camera. Someone wants to make a Western movie, singing on a rocking saddle against a green screen.

During its 90 years, the club has made at least 300 films! Many snippets from the past flicker by, with traces of both ambition and quality. The Home Guard's flamethrower demonstrated in a film from 1939! Captain Marvel moves a car. Old film galas are shown.

The heyday of this happy bunch of amateurs was in the 1960s, before video came and ruined everything - and now mobiles have ruined even more. (Not everyone may agree, but old timers probably do! Solid amateur filming is reduced to pulling a lump of plastic out of your pocket, pressing a button, and then connecting to 100 million existing YouTube creations.)

Suddenly I see a familiar face when the Bradford amateurs' existential crisis is aired at a meeting: Jim is sitting on the other bench! I recognize his gray hair and beard. For years we've met at sf and fantasy conventions, but I didn't know he was ensconced in

such fine film company! (Emailed Jim. We're will to meet in Uppsala on Eurocon and then we'll definitely get to talk about movies!)

We contacted the club to hear how it went after the documentary.

"The documentary has increased awareness of our club, especially locally," club secretary Andrew Cockerill says and exemplifies that they were commissioned to film the Sikh New Year parade through Bradford.

"Old members get in touch, some with films," he says and the club already has a large archive of 300 films on celluloid, the earliest from 1934, and on their website some of the more recently recorded films can be enjoyed.



Their clubhouse. It just need some paint and a little love!



Inside the clubhouse. Note that many wear coats, perhaps because they can't afford too much heating. Jim is in the back (grayhaired).

There are about 20 members, many of whom are older (member Colin turned 90 recently), not counting a "handful of new ones" who came from the documentary.

"But many who have visited us have said they would join the club if they lived in the area," Cockerill says, who adds that the economy is now much better thanks to thousands of pounds (tens of Swedish kronor) in covid grants and donations. Filming continues. May 22 is the club's annual awards banquet, which is held at Bradford's Ukraine Club.

"A Bunch of Amateurs" is an unusual and warm-hearted



Bradford's own Superman to the rescue!

documentary, which made one reviewer on IMDB.com both "shed tears and laugh hysterically". The film has been shown in several cinemas, festivals and on the BBC with several TV channels (now SVT). It's rare that we get to see anonymous and unassuming cultural workers like these come into life! They are enthusiasts who operate on the periphery of the official, publicly funded and driven cultural activities. As the show explained: These are probably the last enthusiasts... **

As with all good stories, all's well that ends

well. In the final scenes, it is announced that that strange virus has qualified the club for a generous so-called corona grant! And as the credits roll, Bradford Movie Maker's own Superman flies off to save the world.

*. After combing Google I find that there is a Los Angeles Cinema Club, started in 1931, possibly an older one that way! <https://www.laweekly.com/the-l-a-cinema-club-and-the-rise-of-amateur-filmmaking/> The 2002 article mentions that many members are elderly, so it is difficult to know if they are active 21 years later. AND: <https://www.zoominfo.com/c/los-angeles-cinema-club/354283035> suggests converting to a company with 11-20 employees - in which case it doesn't count.

** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTZljUktrAA>



Test flying a drone indoors. Jim watching, a bisquit in hand.

History Corner

Uncle Hugo Gernsback was really One To Forsee For Us. During Xmas in the 1950's he mailed thousands of copies (6 000 is mentioned) of his mini-magazine *Forecasts* to contacts, primarily in the

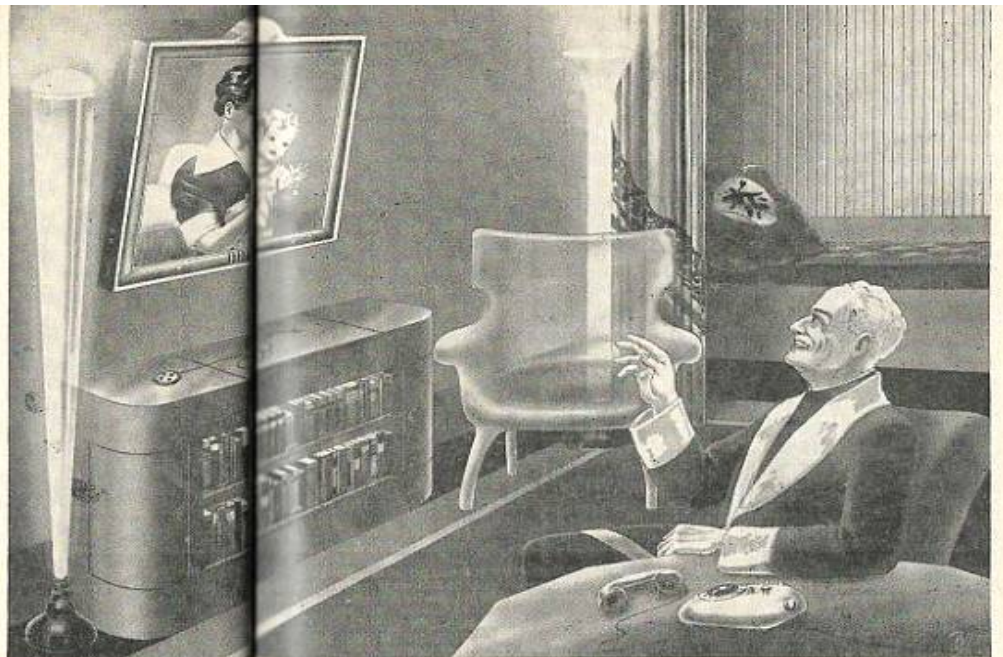


THE technical world never stands still. As new know-how, new inventions, new facts and new techniques evolve, they are seized on immediately to improve present-day devices of every kind, whether pens, automobiles, floor mops, radios, corkscrews or television sets. Nothing is ever perfected; improvements, like evolution, never stop.

● This has been ever true in the radioelectronic industry, famous for rapid changes. No sooner has the latest model been announced, than its designers have already scrapped it in their minds and have moved on to next year's designs. This trend is even more common in television where the leading manufacturers bring out new and more modern designs throughout the year.

It follows that the television

receiver of the future will bear little resemblance to present-day models. This becomes even more apparent when we reflect that television has been with us only a comparatively short time—8 years:



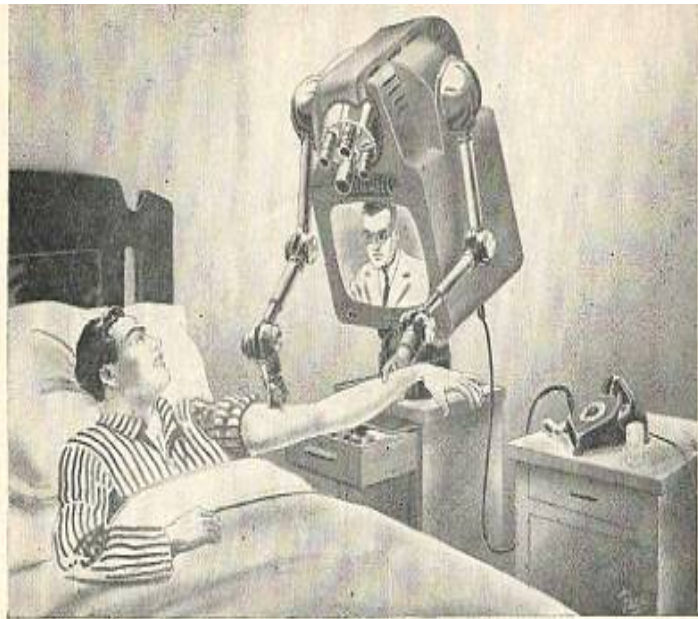
TV set of the future has no functions. Has no aerial. Is three dimensional. Has picture tube. Hangs flat on wall. Sees and hears our telephone, long dis-

tance. Transmits to other house sets. Pushbutton operated. Brings live Broadway shows by subscription. Turns off and on automatically. Is its own burglar watchdog.

It is still in its swaddling clothes. For that reason, we should not be overly surprised at the radical and perhaps fundamental changes that lie ahead for the new art. And as television is intimately

fused with its parent, electronics—the latter itself of recent origin—*anything* is possible in the future. Here are a few ideas on television as your children will know them in times to come.

electronics industry. In the 1955 issue he made some pretty good forecasts. Here he writes about a teledoctor, things that can be and have been done today.



In the near future patients will be visited by doctors via television. The distant doctor can do almost everything with his electronic Telehands.

PROJECTION of the senses over a distance began early in the animal world. The cries uttered by alarmed prehistoric reptiles, saurians or birds were transmitted over a distance to warn others. A highly developed and sensitized olfactory sense brought the smell of an enemy creature to

the nostrils of early mammals who could then flee promptly, thus avoiding destruction. The sense of sight, too, became sharply developed in many animals and especially birds which could then observe potential enemies—or their own prey—often from a point many miles away.

projection of the self at a distance. This means nothing less than the possibility now dawning for man to be in two places at the same time.

● I will give here but one example of this revolutionary concept, which, incidentally, is NOT in the future—it can be realized today, with the technical means available now.

The average medical doctor today is over-worked and short-lived. There are never enough doctors anywhere, for the world's constantly multiplying population. Many patients die because the doctor cannot reach them in time, particularly at night and in remote or isolated regions.

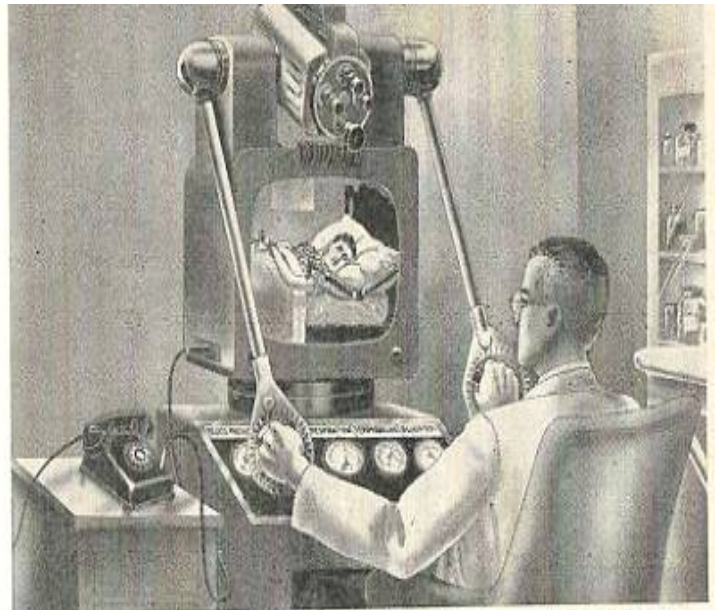
Furthermore, the doctor wastes a terrific amount of time visiting patients in person—he can see only a few during a day. With increasing traffic congestion, many doctors refuse to make personal calls—except in emergencies. Even then they arrive often too late. Much of this dilemma will be archaic in the near future, thanks to the *Teledoctor*.*

I imagine this innovation as follows: Incorporated as an integral part into a combination television camera and receiver is

a set of *mechanical hands*. The latter are now routinely manufactured by General Electric and other manufacturers. These incredibly sensitive hands are primarily used in atomic plants where scientists handle dangerous, "hot" atomic substances from a distance, without personally exposing themselves to danger. With these *telehands*, the scientist can do almost anything at a distance—writing, weighing, pouring liquids, unscrewing covers of "hot" containers—yes, even diapering a baby, miles away, including putting on the safety pins. *The sense of touch has been projected over a distance!* The action, of course, is watched via television.

● *The teledoctor of the near future now becomes an actual projection of the doctor.* In front of his television transmitter-receiver is a panel with a number of instruments which indicate blood pressure, pulse, respiration and other data routinely required in most examinations of patients.

Now let us see how you, the patient of tomorrow, "visit" your doctor, 15 miles away. Suppose you come down with a fever. You or your wife make a call to the local druggist, who is the agent for the teledoctor corporation which stocks the special TV



Patient and distant doctor are connected by telephone and closed circuit TV. Doctor can treat ten times as many patients via teledoctoring as in person.

Modern man, with new scientific techniques, has greatly improved the projection of some of his senses, not only over a few, but over hundreds and thousands of miles. By telephone, we can hear and speak to distant friends around the world. Via television, we can see across continents.

As I have pointed out in earlier articles, it will be possible in the future to smell and taste half-way around the globe—and further.* But science does not stop with this. There is the far more important conception of the

*See "Television," *Forecast 1952*, page 22.

transmitter-receiver equipped with its telehands.

These instruments are never sold, only rented to the sick, say for \$3.50 a day. They are used only for closed-circuit work. The rubber-wheeled mechanism is delivered quickly to your home and rolled in front of the bed. Located in the drawer of the cabinet, right under the TV set, you will find a thermometer, blood-pressure appliance, sterile bandages, prescription blanks, fever chart (with instructions), tongue depressors, adhesive tapes and other items routinely found in every doctor's black bag. A cord with a telephone plug attached to the teledoctor instrument is now plugged into a special jack on your telephone. Future telephones will be provided with this facility. The TV signals and telehand electronic signals, etc., will all travel over the closed circuit telephone lines.*

● Next you dial your physician's telephone number. He or his nurse takes the call. You give your name and state that your teledoctor instrument is plugged

**Technical note.* At the present state of the art, it is not possible to transmit a 525 line TV signal over existing telephone lines. A good picture of 250-350 lines, however, can be phone-transmitted today. Such a picture would give sufficient definition for the proper operation of the teledoctor.

in and ready. The doctor now plugs his own set into the telephone and in a few seconds two-way communication is established. The doctor by electronic telecontrol moves your instrument into the best position, raising or lowering your set, which has a swiveling mechanism for that purpose.

The *color camera* is now trained on you and the doctor looks you over. He listens to your heart—not with a stethoscope, but with the back of his right telehand. This has a sensitive microphone which the doctor places over your heart. He hears your heartbeat, now strongly amplified, over his loudspeaker.

● He next takes your blood pressure, looks into your throat or examines any part of you. If he wants to inject you with penicillin or other medication, he will ask you to place a prescription blank into a holder arranged for this purpose. He picks up a special pencil from the drawer and writes out a prescription, then signs it. You are to get this from your drugstore as soon as feasible. When you have received it, you call the doctor once more. He places the special injection cartridge, now on the market called *Busher*, into his telehand

Cont below...

*See also article on the same subject: "The Radio Teledoctor" by H. Gernsback, *SCIENCE & INVENTION* magazine, Feb. 1925, page 978.

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THE ELECTRONIC DUEL

niece, started a chain reaction by taking a minor position in the Laboratories' accounting department.

● It came as a surprise to no one that Gigi's scintillating black eyes, her high-Gauss personal magnetism, her low-decibelle audio voice, her sine-wave curvacious chassis, and her wondrously fine, 50 AWG gauge, glistening black hair completely short-circuited all Frank's and Jed's willpower. Their capacitance for further resistance was totally punctured as well.

thenticated cases of lightning striking simultaneously in two places, wreaking havoc in the process.

Frank and Jed, within two days of Gigi's flamboyant entrance into the Laboratories, quite naturally had fallen in high-potential love with her. They began dating her continuously, if not furiously. The love-making, too, was in the upper regions of volatilizing fission.

In a few short weeks, the two male lovers had almost completely exhausted their passion-voltage, which approached zero level. Their love capacitance, too, had sunk to a low current ebb—down in the milliamperes reaches.

Frank was so exhausted that he caught a severe case of full-wave virulent virus that put him hors de combat. Jed, however, played it smart. He laid low for two days, not out of fairness to a sick friend, but to boost his

The timekeeper counts the seconds.

A deadly duel is fought by electronics, the weapons: two flashlights. No skill of arms is required in this amazing encounter and more surprising ending.

WHEN the two boyhood friends, Frank Wallace and Jed Carrel, graduated from college as electronic engineers, they landed lucrative positions with Electronda Laboratories. Being brilliant young men, they

advanced rapidly. The head of the Laboratories predicted great achievements for both of them. The future looked electrifying indeed until that fateful day when the high-tension, sexually explosive Gigi Garnier, the boss's

History abounds with many a routine in all standard duels—in vain tried to persuade the two former friends to abandon their mad project, only to be met with

less and painless death. Frank and Jed personally tested the circuits. Then one of the seconds flipped a coin, de-

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And that's not all. He also forecasts future TV sets reasonably well. Yes, it will be flat (and in fact, there are sets that can offer 3D). Most screens will have a camera, you can set up for video conferences, security surveillance etc, it will show many types of shows, have no aerial - because content comes through cable (via subscription he predicts), though he says it'll be "connected to your telephone". The picture will be excellent because it "will be 'steered' by atomic auto-transistors"! In the same publication he also urges tele-education of engineers, fearing that the USSR is about to overtake the US in this area. (Really?)

Unfortunately, Hugo wouldn't be Hugo if he wasn't totally whacky at times. Read the story of two rivals to the same girl, who decide to fight it out to the death with electric chairs, light sensors and flashlights! It is told almost like a short story, and he offers no less than five outcomes of the duel.

In the 1955 edition of Forecast we also see the fine medal and diploma Hugo received from his homeland. He became an *officer of the Grand Ducal Order of The Golden Oak*, bestowed by The Grand Duchess Charlotte after a report by her Foreign Minister and due deliberation by the government, as a "savant and man of letters". Luxemburg knew how to honor a prominent expatriate, unlike a Worldcon (soon to be hijacked by Chinese communists, alas) where some moron probably will rise, declare that Hugo "is a bloody fascist!!!" and demand the Hugo award is renamed the Social Progress and Conscience award. Just you wait!

A dictionary tells us that a savant is: 1. A learned person; a scholar. 2. An idiot savant, or 3. A man of learning or science. Have your pick. None of the definitions says "fascist". It's hypocrisy to invent "Codes" off Conducts claiming all attendees must feel "comfortable" but allow aggressive, lying personal attacks on genre figureheads from the main stage, as in Dublin in 2019.

This cultural research journal has previously reported about several contests held in 1953 - the year of skiffy breakthrough in Sweden - to find a local name for the genre. "Science fiction" doesn't sound

cluding which duelist should occupy chair 1 and who should sit in No. 2.

The men then seated themselves, pale but composed. It had been agreed that both Frank and Jed were to dangle their right arms over the backs of their chairs in the now darkened room, the flashlights turned on, but pointing to the floor.

One of the witnesses was to tick off 25 seconds, counting the time back from 25 to zero. At zero, both duelists were to point their flashlights at each other as quickly as possible, each trying to be first in training the light rays on his adversary's photo cell for a certain death.

The left hands of the rivals were taped to the backs of their chairs so neither contestant could possibly cheat by placing his left hand over the photo cell which would then not function because the flashlight's rays could not operate the light-sensitive cell.

All final preparations made, the duelists sat grimly facing each other in the dark, both flashlights lit, illuminating the floor with two ghostly circles. The quiet was ponderous and nerve-wracking in its intensity, as Franz's methodic and clear voice droned the fleeting seconds... 18... 17... 16... 15... 14... 13... 12... 11... 10... 9... 8... 7... 6... 5... 4... 3... 2... 1... 0.

Here I find it necessary—and I apologize for the interruption—to point up a most disagreeable problem.

You see, I have become beset by grave doubts about this most interesting account, and, quite frankly, I don't know just how to proceed. I have carefully weighed some very dramatic finishes, but the more I ponder them, the less sure I become. Let us therefore inspect the proposed endings, one by one:

No. 1. *The Popular Ending.* Obviously, Frank is a dirty cad. He besmirched willfully and knowingly the fair damsel Gigi's reputation. The reader knows well that this was a dastardly trumped-up calumny of a bad loser. So, let's electrocute Frank, and our true and vindicated lovers will live happily ever after.

That's what you think! What about Gigi? Will she just swallow all this gaff and never reproach Jed for having killed her former lover in cold electronics? After all, he knew how to make love, too! Won't she, in a sacred moment of passion, hiss at Jed, with a "Go away, you murderer! Don't touch me with your yellow electronicized hands!"

No. 2. *The Doubtful Ending.* All right. Let's kill Jed, her hus-

band. So Frank, the rat, survives triumphantly, if cynically. Naturally he hotfoots it to the widowed Gigi and tries to console her, pleading that the whole thing was an unfortunate accident. In time, this vile snake in Gigi's perfumed garden will of course marry her. Brrrr—what a mismatch! No, this won't work.

No. 3. *The Clever Ending.* Remember 'way back we planned that lightning gag, striking in two spots simultaneously? Well, why not? We kill the two heroes simultaneously! Fortunately, with electronics—a form of lightning—this is child's play, easy as pie.

As any electrical engineer will tell you, it works. So now we have both boys good and dead. But that emphatically does not end it. We still have Gigi on our hands, and I can't see how we can kill her, too—or can we?

Is she heartbroken and prostrated? Gad, no! Not Gigi. For she glibly tells reporters that she was sick and tired of these persistent electronic hot-finger boys anyway. She really married Jed only in desperation, knowing full well that she had been spliced to a supercharged hot wire. No more of such nonsense. She's packing and flying down to her own New Orleans—pronounced *Nu Orleón*—from where she escaped

to get away from Jean Pierre Coquemar, her boyhood friend, now *sous-chef* at Antoine's Restaurant. "At least," says Gigi with aplomb, "he can cook—and how!"

No. 4. *The Surprise Ending.* When Jed leaves Gigi on that fateful evening of the duel, after kissing her goodbye and pleading an important business meeting, something in his manner disturbs her. She is perturbed by his unusual tenderness and the long-lingering hot-incandescent-cathode kisses.

After he is gone, her feminine short-wave intuition signals an electronic danger warning. She calls up her uncle-boss, but he knows of no business meeting. Then she calls up Frank—but there is no answer. Thoroughly alarmed, she takes a bus to the Laboratories. But there are few buses in the late evening and she loses much valuable time. Finally she arrives at her destination and tries the main entrance—fortunately it isn't locked. She runs from one office to another and finally locates Frank's. She bursts in just at zero second and in the dim light shining through the door, she sees both Frank and Jed slumping in their chairs—both dead. (See Ending No. 3).

With a curdling ten-decibel shriek, she throws herself on Jed, grasps the hand that still clutches the 50,000-volt charged flashlight, kisses Jed full on the lips with a low heartbreaking moan—the kiss of death for her. The two witnesses, Franz and Philip, who had no time to turn off the lethal current that energized the death-dealing transformers, lose their heads when they see the three corpses and flee in panic.

Patently, such an ending, where the three principals of the story are cooked—though electronically—at the end, is hardly appropriate. The public would not stand for it. No movie mogul would deign to buy the film rights for such a gruesome tale.

No. 5. *The Corny Ending.* Somebody dreams the duel and wakes up screaming. These dream finishes are the hackneyed finale of many misguided authors. They are too silly for words, the dreams, that is.

I could go on to tell you at least four more interesting endings, but, unfortunately, none pan out right. Yes, there is even one where Gigi had a black-sheep-of-the-family twin sister named Giga, who could be dug up and palmed off on that lowviper Frank. But these skeleton-in-the-closet relics—even if they are as gorgeous as Giga—are odious and down-right corny. And who in these spaceless days has a closet big enough to store a skeleton? They don't build them that big anymore!

So you see what I'm up against. I started out blithely with a sure-fire elegant idea. But what happened? It imploded like a punctured TV picture tube—a complete internal collapse. I know when I'm licked—I give up. I really should stick to my forecasting...

Right: "Teledoctor" continued

and presses it against your skin. By spring action, the medication is shot into the arm quickly.

The doctor then gives you whatever other instructions are required and promises to "visit" you again early in the evening. When you are well again, phone your druggist who will call for the tele-doctor instrument.

It should be noted that, short of a serious operation, the doctor of the future will be able to do almost anything by teledoctoring that he can do in person. He can remove your bandages after an operation, bandage you, remove stitches post-operationally, swab wounds, all at a distance.

In the more distant future, he will even be able to perform emergency long-distance operations, provided a nurse or nurses can be secured to assist him.

Soon, your doctor will be able to see far more patients with infinitely greater efficiency. He will not only save untold lives, and generate better health for his patients, but his own life will be made far easier and he will himself live longer and so serve suffering humanity far better than was ever possible before.

Detta är science fiction!

Efter ett flertal dygn av kvalificerat grubbel har prisnämnden stannat för att översätta science fiction med "teknodikt". Det förslaget har tillfört dr Josef Almqvist ett första pris om 50 kr. Han är expert inom området och har flera andra goda förslag som hjälpt till att tjäna ihop förstapriset åt honom. Ett andra pris har tillfogats Sture Lönnnerstrand, också han branschman i teknodikt, för hans förslag "faktasi", en nätt och brukbar nybildning mellan fantasi och fakta. Han har 25 kr att motse.

Tredje pris, bestående av böcker från Eklunds förlag, där science-fiction-serien getts ut, har utdelats till tio förtjänta förelagsställare, några av dem har i likhet med förstapristagaren föreslagit "teknodikt", andra har annat att komma med. Som litterär riktning vill hr Lars-G. Lindahl kalla science fiction för "vevernism" efter allas vår spåda barndoms Jules Verne. Signatures Gil har från djupfilmens 3 D hittat på att kalla science-fiction-litteraturen för 4 D ("fyr-de"). Ingenjör G. V. Nordensvahn har funnit beteckningen "teckare" i analogi med deckare. Ytterligare bokpriser har med rund hand tilldelats fru Alice Norén i Bromma, hr Gunnar Skogmark i Oskarshamn, hr Filip Gröning i Uppsala, signaturerna "Göteborgaren 29.11.53", yr hr Harry Westerlund i Uppsala, folkskollärarinnan Britta Carlsson i Risala och ingenjör E. Berg i Jönköping. Signaturerna skall vara snälla och ge sig till känna så att vi vet vad de är för ena. Tillhoppa har det kommit ett hundratal förslag.

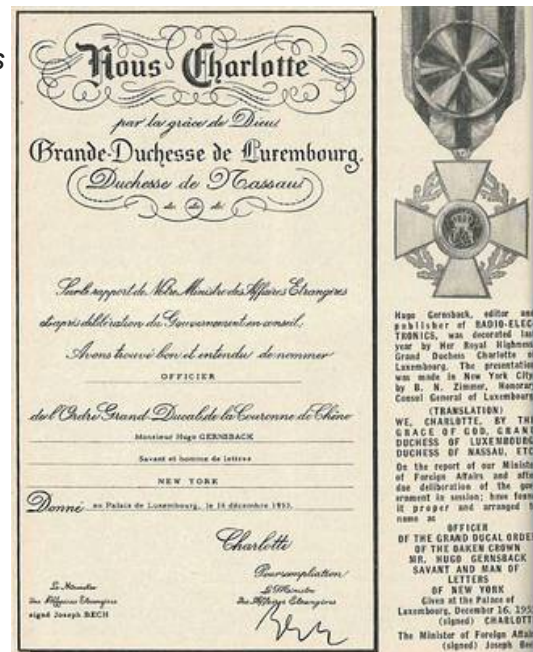
very Swedish, after all. Lots of linguistic creativity ensued, but science fiction it remained (though Bertil Falk likes the suggestion "faktasi" which Sam J Lundwall registered as domain for his last publishing operation). I think I missed reporting what publisher Bonniers attempt resulted in, her in Expressen 20 feb, 1954: *It's said...Swedish have a new word: teknovision.*

That's the result from a competition the Bonnier book magazine Bonniers Nyheter launched together with Teknikens Värld about the best Swedish word for science fiction, that you today stumble upon. There were two first prizes, Karl-bertil bergman, engineer in Huddinge with teknovision and Hans-Erik Persson, Åstorp, with Futurama.

Newspaper Aftonbladet also had a competition to find a Swedish name for skiffy, one of at least three the autumn of 1953. Dec 16 they announced the winners, "This is science fiction":

After several days of qualified thinkin the prize jury has decided to stay with translating science fiction to "teknodikt". "dikt"=poetry or fiction! That suggestion has given Dr Josef Almqvist the first prize of SEK10 /ca USD10/ He's an expert of the field and has several other good suggestions that helped giving him the first prize. The second prize has been attached to Sture Lönnnerstrand, also a man in the field of teknodikt, for his suggestion "faktasi", a neat and useful neologism of fantasy and fact. He can expect SEK25. The first prize consisting of books from Eklund publisher, where sf literature has been published, has been awarded ten deserving suggestions. Some of them have just as the winner suggested "teknodikt", others have oteher suggestions too. As a literary genre Mr Lars-G Lindahl wants to call sf "vevernism" from the Jules Verne /sic/

from our delivcate youth. From "deep films" the signature Gil s found out to call sf literature "4D" /"fyr-de"/. Engineer GV Nordensvahn has found the phrase "teckare" analogous with "deckare" /popular term for crime



fiction/. More book awards have generously been handed to Mrs Alice Norén in Bromma, mr Gunnar Skogmark in Oskarshamn, Mr Filip Gröning in Uppsala, signature "Göteborgaren 29.11.53", Mr Harry Westerlund in uppsala, teacher Britta Carlsson in Risla, Engineer E Berg in Jönköping. Those using signatures please get in touch so we know who you are. Altogether arundd 100 suggstions have arrived.



When his phone failed him, a speedy pen came to the rescue!

Over to an infamous history episode over here, though newcomers may not be aware of all details. It's about finding a new word for fraud. One could try embezzlement, theft, hoodwinkery...or simply the SEFF scandal. Some wonderwhy so many Swedish fen gafiated in the late 1980's. Here we'll summarise the answer: the evening om July 15th 1987, two persons – we can call them John-Henri Humbug and Anders Belly - forged 34 ballots in the Scandinavian-European Fan Fund to defraud the ca 250 voters of around \$5000 in today's value, causing huge shame and resentment in local fandom (the reason for much gafiation; Getting Away From It All, GAFIA, leaving fandom, as you should know). As I found the evidence of it, the 34 fake "ballots", with the aim to give Mr Belly that fan fund money, and published it in

Rösterna på Bellis, insamlade av JHH enligt telefinansiering

- 1 Daniel Åkerblom 3
- 2 Anders F. Forberg
- 3 Gabriel Åberg
- 4 Johan Eklöv
- 5 Kjell Johansson
- 6 John Hall
- 7 Lena Johansson

fallet 70c -

my sf newsletter i of course became a target from waves of slander and libel by the culprits Humbug and Belly. Belly had attacked me for a long time, and my stake in it was that it was I who founded SEFF (to no good, the fan fund collapsed after their doings). It so happened to work for Mr Humbug and simply found the incriminating documentation in a drawer (sloppy to leave evidence behind, but so it was). Here we find for example exhibit A (right) which is simply a handwritten list of names claiming "Votes for Belly, collected by JHH by phone".

Claimed "Votes on Belly collected by JHH on the phone." No ballots with signatures in sight...

You see, the fraudsters claimed to have power of attorney for proxy votes "by phone", which mr Humbug to eyebrow-risingamong the law savvy claimed was from "Swedish tradition" - we have microscopic "traditions" of election tangling in the world, stricts laws about it, voting "by phone" is unheard of and besides there were less phones and more "voting by pen, paper and imagination". The ballot required the voter to give his/her signature. A vote on a blank paper was admissible, as long as there was a signature by the voter (and of course, name on the candidate was clear).

870715
KÄMRADE RÖSTAR
ANDERS BELLIS
FÖLJANDE PERSONER FÖR
SEFF-OMRÖSTNINGEN:

CONNY SANTON (FR SVECON 85, AKTIVITET)
JOANNI SANTON (FR SVECON 85, AKTIVITET)

HELENA JANDER (LÖSTE BLA O VA RÖRAN 1981, IAS ÅREVA-BUNDET)

TON ERIKSSON

JE OICA SANTESSON

PÄR NILSSON

STAFFAN OLSSON (VIA MOLLE KAMMERS VÅR INTYGA AKTIVITET)

FR HERR O SANTESSON

Anders Belly
ANDERS BELLIS, 1987



Mr Belly, great at making lists...of defrauding nonsense.

This is what happened: as I had been collecting votes myself (all properly signed, of course) I was phoned up just a few hours before deadline with fising attempts to know how many votes I had gathered (I was just about to go over and deliver the last ones). Humbug and Belly realised they had far too few votes. They began trying to phone people for "votes", a thing that is hopeless in July which is our vacation month and ca 3/4th of the population is on vacation, abroad, in the summer house, away from phones (and this was many years before mobile phones).

Unfortunately the "adminstrator" also worked for Humbug and was probably threatened being fired and/or thought no one would find out. (I of course have the documentation in better resolution of your intrested.)

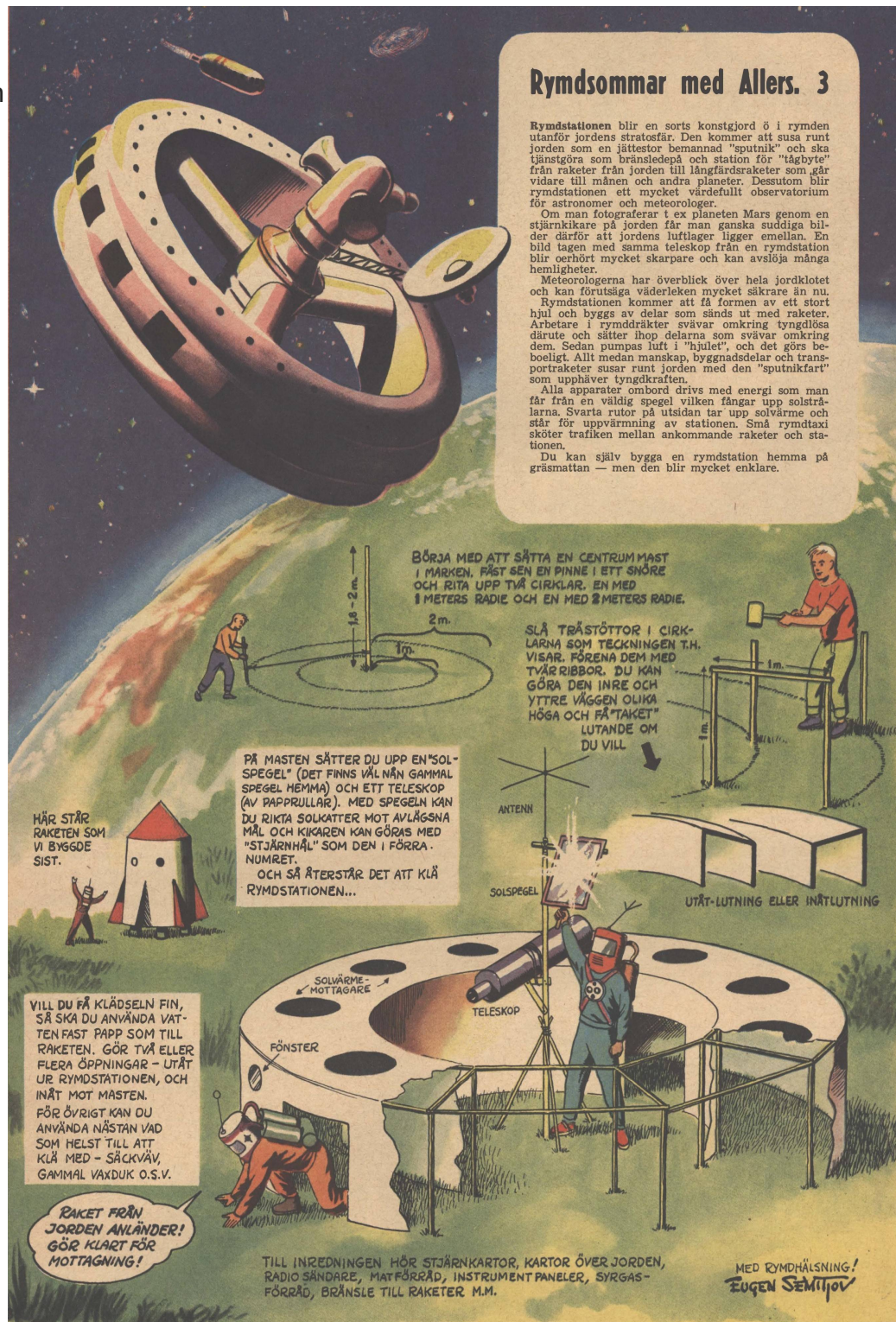
So wrong! It it the biggest scandal in Swedish and probably Scandinavian fandom. 1) A record number of fans (about a quarter off a thousand voters) were affected. 2. More money embezzled than any other affair I know of. (By th 1987 exchange rate a little over \$1 000. That equals five times today's puchasing power, or about \$5 000), 3) The spite, gall and shamelessness by which the deed was done, 4) The effects, the hail of slander and label being vomited from Humbug and Belly (since all was documented and obvious, they tried the classic stunt of trying to shoot at the messengers, and you still see traces of it), and that others haad shame – when they lacked it – and thus said bye-bye to fandom. I'd estimate that the numbers of active fen dropped by about 2/3 rds after the fraud.

A little afterthough. I remember the 1978 fight over fanzine reviews in the SFSF clubzine. I andothers collected power of attorney documents (real ones, with personal signatures of course) to try to get another clubzine editor, since the sitting onewanted to scrap the fanzine reviews.)As you not, I though fanzines were important alreay back then!). I think we had about a dozen such PoAs, but at the very business meeting out jumped John-Henri Humbug with over 20 PoAs. Thinki about it later, I realise that it could have been a prequel to later deeds, his conveyer-belt imagination document production. I you hear anything about JHH and voting, get away, run!

Whatever it was in SFSF in 1978, in SEFF in 1987 he DID forge dozens of votes and befrauded fandom of all that money and caused enormous damage to Sverifandom. And if you hear anything from his relating to this, he only lies when his lips or fingers move.

From stupidity exploding like a Nova in space, to Eugen Semitjov telling kids how to build a play spacestation. You can probably place the captions correctly, to *Space Summer with Allers* (weekly, #27, 1958):

The space station becomes a sort of artificial island in space outside Earth's stratosphere. It will run around Earth as a giant, manned sputnik and will serve as a gas station and a place to shange from rockets coming rom Earth to long-



distance rockets going to the Moon and other planets. The space station will also become a very valuable for astronomers and meteorologists. If you photograph e g Mars through a telescope from earth you get a rather blurry image since layers of Earth's air is in between. A picture taken from a telescope on a space station becomes much more sharp and may reveal many secrets. Meteorologists may survey all of earth and can forecast weather more certain than now. The space station will be shaped like a big wheel and is built by parts launched by rocket. Workers in space suits float around weightless out there. Air is pumped into the "wheel" and it's made livable. All while people, parts and ferry rocket go around Earth with three "sputnik speed" that repels gravity. All equipment onboard is powered by energy you get from a big mirror that catches sun heat, which also heats the station. Small space taxis handles the traffic between incoming rockets and the station. You can build a space station on you lawn – but it will be much easier. // Begin with placing a central pole in the ground. Attach a rope with a stick and mark two circles, one with a 1 metre radius and one with 2 metres. // Bury wooden pins in the circles as shown in the drawing to the right. Join them with wooden slats. You may make the outer and inner ring of different heights to make the "roof" slanted if you wish. // Salted inward or outward. // You lace a mirror on the pole you place (you should have an old mirror at home) and a telescope (made from paper rolls). With the mirror you can target the sun at distance objects, and the telescope can be made with "star holes" as told in last issue. Remains to dress up the station... // Antenna. Sun mirror. // If you want to cover it well, use water-resistant cardboard like with the rocket. Make two or more openings – outwards from the space station and inwards towards the pole. You may use just about anything to cover it with, old burlap, old wax cloth etc. // Here's the rocket we built last time. Window. Sun heat receptor. Telescope. Sun mirror. // To the interior belongs star maps, maps of Earth, radio transmitters, stored food, instrument panels, oxygen supply, rocket fuel, etc.

Bertil Falk, the conqueror of CaptainFuture, James Joyce and Indira Gandhi had a column in the evening paper Kvällsjournalen in the 1990s, where he promised to answer any – you could even e-mail him in the mid-90s. In "Ask Bertil" nov 10, 1996, he replied to "Why is it called science fiction") the picture is a cover of Swedish Galaxy, showing an issue where "faktasi" was launched as a genre name):

Fråga Bertil

e-post: bfalk@sbbs.se

FRÅGA OM VAD SOM HELST

Redaktör Bertil Falk tar reda på svaren och publicerar ett urval varje söndag. Skriv till GT/Kvällsposten SÖNDAG, 205 26 MALMÖ. Märk kuvertet "Fråga Bertil". Eller faxa till Bertil på nummer 040-48 54 18. Du kan också skicka e-post. Se adressen längst till vänster.

HJÄRTLIGT VÄLKOMMEN



MORGONDAGENS TIDNING REDAN IDAG!

Galaxy

SCIENCE FICTION



Varför säger vi science fiction?

SPRÅK

Fråga: Varför använder vi det engelska ordet science fiction? Finns det inget svenskt ord?

Språkets väktare var: Science fiction kan löst översättas som "vetenskaplig skönlitteratur", vilket knappast gör någon glad eller också med "vetenskaplig fiktion", vilket möjligen är en kvarts grad bättre, men ordet "fiktio-n" är inte speciellt lyckat, eftersom det på svenska trots smittan från USA snarare betyder "inbillning, påhitt" än "skönlitteratur". I nr 4, december 1958 i den svenska upplagan av sf-tidskriften Galaxy utlyste ansvarige utgivaren Sten Möllerström en tävling som gick ut på att hitta på ett nytt ord så att vi slapp säga "sajens ficktjen". Vid en tidigare tävling hade ordet "teknovision" vunnit, men därefter försvunnit ur hanteringen. Och Tord Hall använde sig ofta av begreppet "vetsagor". Bland de förslag som kom fanns det roliga "vetefan" och "vetasi" liksom "futurologi", "teknodikt", "framtidism", "utopiskildring" och "vetenskapsdikt".

På Galaxy's redaktion misströstade Sten Möllerström: "Vad ska vi då göra med de 200 kronor, som övertecknad så lättsinnigt utlovade i nummer 4?"

klagade han i nummer 8, 1959 men då "dök ordet FAKTASI upp. Insänt utan motivering av Carl-Göran Tengvall i Johanneshov. Vi tyckte det var en rolig kon-tamination som vi försökte glömma. Men vi upptäckte att ordet liksom stannade i hjärnan."

Faktasi är alltså en fyndig sammandragning av orden fakta och fantasi, men tyvärr inte bara stannade begreppet i hjärnan på Galaxy's redaktion. Det tycks dessutom ha stannat kvar där och har knappast hörts av sen dess. Science fiction är helt enkelt så fast rotat att det är svårt att slå ut. Men medge att "faktasi" är ett bra uttryck.

...science fiction can loosely be translated as "scientific literary stories", which won't make many happy, or "scientific fiction", maybe slightly better, but the word "fiktion" in Swedish isn't satisfactory as it in Swedish despite influence from USA rather means "figment of imagination". In the Swedish sf magazine Galaxy /local edition of US mag/ in No 4, 1958 the editor-in-chief Sten Möllerström announced a contest to find a new name so

Galaxy, nr. 8, april 1959 där det nya ordet "faktasi" lanserades som en svensk ersättare av begreppet "science fiction".

we didn't have to say "sajens fictjen". In an earlier contest the word "teknovision" won, but had since disappeared. Amd Tord Hall often used the concept "vetsagor" /vet refers to science or "to know"/ Among the suggestions arriving were the funny "vetefan" /"who-the-heck-knows."/ and "vetasi", "teknodikt", "framtidism"/futurism/, "utopiskildring" /utopia portrayal/ and "vetenskapsdikt" /science+poem or tale/. Sten Mölleerström felt gloomy sitting there in the Galaxy office. "What should we do with the SEK200 that he so easily promised in No 4?, he complained in No 8, "but then the word FAKTASI turned up, submitted by Carl-Göran Tengwall in Johanneshov. We thought it was interesting combination that we tried to forget. But we found that the word sort of stayed in the brain." Faktasi is the merge of fact and fantasy, but it only remained there in Galaxy. It seems to have stayed there and to never been heard of again. Science fiction is so rooted that its hard to beat. But admit that faktasi is a good expression

But Bertil is wrong, or rather: Swedish Galaxy was. "Faktasi" was up before, already in 1953 when the first naming contests were (as reported here). It was Sam J Lundwall who took over the Jules Verne Magasinet that Bertil revived – Bertil in fact early on said he'd be glad if someone with more resources would take up the mag. And that was publisher Askild & Kärnekull, where Sam J had arrived after a stint as TV producer, airing great plans: *skiffy would conquer the world!* A&K and Sam had great plans, big format, four colour cover and distribution by the national newsstand chain. The outcome didn't live up to expectation so they soon had to downsize and finally Sam left the publisher, started his own Delta pub house and took JVM with him. His career has been several times – music, records, TV etc – and recently Jörgen Jörälv released *Delta SF – History and Bibliography*. Beside listing all the contents of JVM, all books Sam's Delta pub house did it's also a short bio of Mr Lundwall himself. Though he had trouble finding material - Sam for instance burned all letters and left over paper from Delta when the publishing house was shut down – it covers more of Sam J than I have seen anywhere (but for selfish fanhistory reasons I would have liked more on the early 60's Fannish War). A piece of news from this book's release earlier in May in the SF Bookstore: Sam J is writing again. He has a "giant blockbuster of a novel" almost finished. A thing



Jörälv mentions but doesn't expand on is microfiche, where Sam J may have been a pioneer among Swedish publishers. DagensNyheter wrote Dec 31 1997, "Three Books on a Card But You Need Your Own Reader":

As we stand before a new year here's news to present, that is Camille Flammarion's book *Fantasy and Reality*, published in 1865. It was the first book about sf literature, from Lucian /of Samosata/

Jörgen Jörälv and his book on Sam J and on, but not Jules Verne as he had then hardly began publishing sf Lundwall and his publishing.

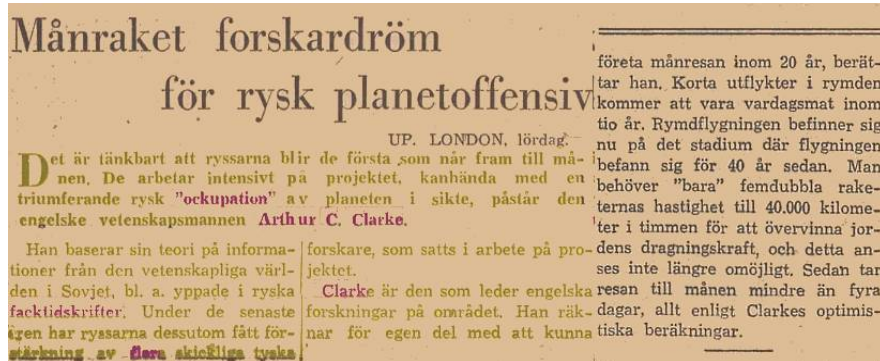
books. The news with this book is that it now can be bought on three tiny microfilm cards, or microfiche as the term is. But to read it you must have access to a reader, ie a TV like contraption that you may have seen been used in banks. Banks, libraries and archives have increasingly been collection their knowledge on small negative cards, ie white text against black background, but you read Flammarion positive with illustrations and everything. A reader costs SEK400 at least, but you can get one much more expensive too. If you own one you may at this time in Swedish only buy Flammarion and also the world's first sf magazin, Swedish Hugin, published 1916-21, 85 issues collected on 20 cards, plus Jules Verne Magasinet 1940-43, 167 issues on that number of cards. To this, you may also subscribe to JVM for the same price as ordinary readers. 50 of around 3000 do this. Publisher of all this is Delta Publishing Inc where we find the try-everything-maniac Sam J Lundwall. If you go abroad there is more to find. An English microfiche publisher has collected every English weekly magazine, everything, from the 1700 hundreds to 1860. It's just to order it. Researchers have for a time been able to get rare magazines and their things this way, but now it looks like fiction and more could be available for the public this way. As the microfiche is slightly cheaper to



make than a book you can do it in smaller printruns. The microfiche Delta publishes has 96 book pages oneach card, reduced 12-17 times, depending on the quality of the iriginl. "But," we protested, "you can't have a reading device in the bed." Yes you can, Lundwall says. "The smallest reader i sbattery powered. You can take that into the bunk" One thing is sure, book shelves becomesmaller if this development continues. (Caption: Sam J Lundwall – first in the field.)

Let's go back in time. Long before Sputnik, one Arthur "Ego" Clarke foresaw that the Russians aimed for space, as we saw in the same newspaper, May 28, 1950! "Moon Rocket a Research Dream for Planetary Offensive":

It's possible the Russians will be the first to reach the Moon. They work intently on the project, perhaps a triumphant Russian "occupation" of the planet, claims the English scientist Arthur C Clarke. He bases his theory on information from the scientific world in USSR, eg said in Russian science journals. During the last few years the Russians have gained help from several skilled German scientists put in work on the project. Clarke is the on eleadingg English research in the area. He counts on being able to make a Moontrip hmself in 20 years. Short escursions in space will be common within ten years. Space flight is now in the position ordinary flight was 40 years ago. You only need to



quintdodouble therocket speeds to the 40 000 km/h needed to overcome Earth's gravity, and it's no longer considered impossible. Are tha the trip to the Moont it takes less than four days, all accorring to Clarke's optimistic calculations

Well, the leader of English rocket science wasn't too far off. Satellites came within seven years, man in orbit within 12 years and the moon within 19 years.

The main Swedish fandom achievement award is called the Alvar, after early fandom super enthusiast Alvar Appeltofft. Sadly enough he gafiated himself in 1977, just 31 years old. (One background I learned was his ba relations with his parents. Who one day too and destroyed his sf and fanzine collection, so he "would concentrate on his school work". An extremely bad move who made Alvar mad! It may be out of bad conscience tha parents with the help of Denis lindbohm instigated the Alvar Appeltofft Memorial Foundation, that's now behind the prize.) But perhaps the Award could instead have been called the...Hugo! Because his full name was Alvar Gunnar Hugo, see

Alvar Gunnar Hugo Appeltofft	
Birth	9 Apr 1942 - Halmstad, Halland, Sverige
Death	Dec 1976 - Amiralsgatan 48, Malmö, Skåne, Sverige
Mother	Ellen Gunhild Appeltofft
Father	Hugo Karl Fredrik Appeltofft

<https://www.ancestry.com/genealogy/records/alvar-gunnar-hugo-appeltofft-24-hj1qy4> And BTW here's the obituary (sf fans should perhaps av *obituaries!*) in Dagens Nyheter Jan 2 1977:

Alvar Appeltofft, herr Alvar Appeltofft (Mr ScienceFiction) have passed away at the age of 31 years. He was born in Halmstad, son to BA Hugo Appeltofft and his wife Ellen, nee Linden, high school teacher. After high school exam in Halmstad in 1961 he studied at Lund University He's been editorially involved in sf-magaazinees Häpna! And JVM and acquired the honorary title "Mr SF". The Alvar Award iven out inthe sf movement is named afer him



The 1977 award was given..to Alvar himself (posthumously), I guess because it was brand new and they didn't really know what to do with it. The first "real" Alvar in 1978 was thrown in my direction...not that I deserved it, I add with a blush. Not then. I had only been in fandom for 2.5 years, done a few smudgy crudzines (my very first, *Fanarkistisk Skrivelse* June '78 wasn't total crap, though). But I suppose I've since made up for being under-qualified at the time. Making up to now 133 *Intermissions* (it's not even my longest issue run) and doing a fandom history research corner column for many years should count for something.

And if Alvar had chosen to use another of his names, I'd be a Hugo winner!

Mailing Comments

This zine also goes to a couple of APAs - here comments to first latest EAPA, then N'APA - to reach intelligent readers (not you!). If you want to raise your, do zines, join an APA. Scientific studies from the Von Donnegan Institute shows that doing a fanzine raises IQ by 10! Joining an APA gives you 8 points more! But donning a costume or building a plastic USS Enterprise model lowers IQ by 13...

Garth Spencer: I think I have heard of several other cases of cultural identity theft. This is what some will do because others go on with "cultural appropriation" and quotas and such. You will get privileges if you can claim to belong to a supposedly "discriminated" group. // People saw or though they did strangethings flying much earlier, like Ezekiel in this funny story book called the Bible. // // I'm also running a short story competition. This year for the 24 th time! // Dictionaries don't agree that groping is "assualting", though certain ideologies would like to have it so. We must be careful how we use the language and not go into orwellian newspeak, ie to distort language to promote certain politics. If grooping would be "assualt", then real assault becomes no worse than just grooping - so Putins "grooping" on Ukraine won't be such a big deal...

Henry Grynsten: I'm not sure employment decide the value of people. I for instance do a lot of work not paid for. I think it has value, though its difficult to measure! Inequality isn't the problem. I disagree with politicians wanting to fight numbers of official "unemployment", getting "jobs" according to their definitions. We should strive for getting machines, automats, computers, robots and AIs to do all work! // Absolute poverty, not relative poverty, is the problem. Strife for "equality" causes problems! It slows growth and requires oppression. // A person of today may be weaker than a Cro Magnon from 25K years back, but is

healthier and live much longer. I think a modern man is smarter, though a Cro Magnon may have slightly more brain cells – those cells haven't been trained to be smart! // An argument for why AIs won't "take over": they are dependent on the hardware we obident humans can provide, and our ability to do that has limits. If an AI works with hardware at a level similar to a 100 PruttiFlops computer (those

FRED
FRIEDEN
PEACE
PAIX
MHP
BABBA
KUCKE



"Is it for real?" "No, it's only culture."

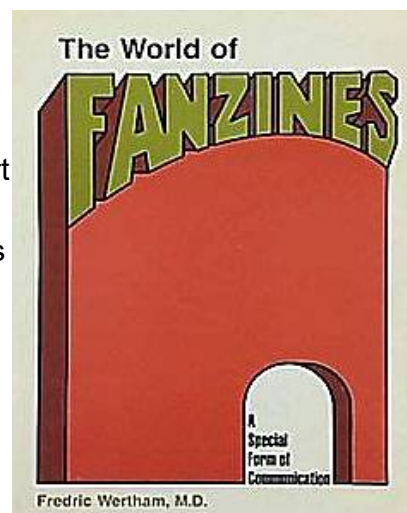
don't work the same, but I did say "similar to") it can't get more IQ if the very max that can be used is those 100 PruttiFlops. // Interesting speculative story, thinking about Jimi Hendrix in an alternate universe. (I happen to know that Henry is a big Hendrix fan. He once sent me a sound cassette – Do anyone remember, sound caught on thin plastic - with Hendrix songs. I did listen to it, and it wasn't too bad.)

Heath Row: No comment. (I'm starting to sound like a politician...)

Jefferson Swycaffer: What "transgender rights" are you talking about? There are some claims I'm doubtful about. I'm against that any person should have the right to dictate to others what they MUST say, which means that no one has the right to REQUIRE anybody else to use any of those dozens of silly suggested "neutral" pronoun. I'm the one who decides over my own language, thank you. Secondly, I don't think it's a good idea to let transers encourage gender confusion among children. Over here there are reports about how what has been labeled "dysphoria" has increased ten-fold in the last decade, gender confusion that in many cases lead to irreversible hormone experiments (the basis for using those drugs iare thin, experimental hypotheses) and even surgery. It does enormous damage! // We had David Brin as GoH on a con here in the 1980's. He seemed nice enough. // Forced diversity is discrimination, agains all that are "diversified" away today. //Books are groing in length, getting more padding and meaningless "characterisation" has grown beyong any reasonable limits. Eternal internal monologue (what is called "erlebte Rede", aprox "experienced rcapitulation") keeps babbling, they constantly repeat what they think, comment evrything in the environment and so on. A few days ago I read a crime novel that to at least 2/3rds what that. Let me say that 2-3 sentences is enough to present an ordinary character, the protagonist a bit more (but not 100 pages of internal monologue!) // Have a nice time at NASFiC.// A simple suggestion for Fanac.org and eFanzines.com: make the fanzines available as PDFs too! To have them as single pages in HTML is hopeless. I want to be able to download a document to read on any device, anytime.// If the Swedish langauge seperate physical processes and the math behind them? Don't know, but suspect it isn't very different from English, and besides I don't understand the question. // As for flying saucers: you forgot to mention misuse of kitchenware. You should take it up with Belgium's ambassador to Canada.

John Thiel: Wertham also wrote the book *The World of Fanzines* which was quite positive to the things we folks do. // Yes, space flight isn't a walk in the park. But it's done by volunteers and it gives a lot of potential value back! Apart from basic science (in itself of extreme value!) it widens out horizons and creates spin-off technologies of great value and use on Earth. One example is that NASAs demands for lighter, more reliable elctronics in the 1960s pushed the infant integrated circuits industry forward by an extra decade. At times NASA bought half the world production of ICs. And that kickstarted the computer industry. A leap of 10 years for computers was *extremely* valuable, worth much more than the Apollo program. And today: we want high-capacity batteries and solar cells. Much of the basic tech here comes from making those for space probes! // We should back Ukraine to stand up for basic human, democratic principles. Besides, it's much cheaper for US taxpayers to let Ukranians degrade and destroy Putin's military capacity, than to be forced to have the US Army, Air Force and Navy do it later. // Facebook deleting N3F video meeting stuff? They are bullies and idiots. It shows I'm right deciding not to be on Facebook. (I think I'll have a look at those films, if they are still on Youtube. As evident from articles in *Intermission*, I'm interested in amateur films!) // I've become aware of that California is a dandy place for wintersports...up in the mountains! High enough mountains always have snow. (There are fine slalom slopes in Africa! In the Atlas mountains in Morocco.) // Neffo looks like a useful fannish game. Did you invent it? // development accelerate it seems. Someone from 1823 would think he has come to a Magic Kingdom if arriving to 2023! // Fine summary of Pohl's life. He was a buddy of Sam J Lundwall and came to Stockholm once and I met him on a meeting we arranged. Nice man. I followed his blog too.

George Phillies: The last half year I've noticed the newspapers write about AI every single day, sometimes several pages daily, in any subject (news, economics, culture,etc). It's an amazing breakthrough! We will hear much, much more on AI - guaranteed! // Time to call it a zine. Se ya'!



Слава Україні!

Ye Murthered Master Mage 265

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N3F

A club that does not recruit is dying. This means us!

With the latest issue of Tightbeam I circulated a poll on our magazines. I will also be polling on the bureaus we do have and the bureaus that we could add if we had people with a love for the idea that Bureau, but that will be with a different magazine. Meanwhile, your thoughts on getting us a better N3F are most welcome.

It does appear that we will have a new editor for FanActivity Gazette. Mindy Hunt will be familiar to some of you from her work atSciFi4Me and in particular her contribution of the convention list.

Jason Hunt, also atSciFi4Me, propose to me several things that we could be doing as a club. One would be to publish more short story collections. We did one some years ago, A Sea of Stars Like Diamonds, that had moderate sales. The virtue of electronic publishing, of course, is that your book stay in print indefinitely, so we are still getting sales. It is likely that someday we will pay off the quite minimal cost of the book cover.

I am looking forward to reducing some of my other activities so that I will have more time to invest in the N3F. Part of that is passing along various responsibilities such as editorships to other members. I would like to get back to writing my novels, on which I do occasionally make some progress, though I have the minor challenge that I seem to be better at starting novels than it finishing them.

A club that does not recruit is dying. If you are going to a science fiction convention, or have some electronic social media outreach, please contact me

for copies of our recruiting flyers. We actually have four of them.

And please vote on the Laureate Awards.

Laureate Award Nominations
There is still time to vote.
Send votes to phillies@4liberty.net

The complete list of N3F Laureate nominations follows. If you are familiar with any of these works or people please speak up for them.

Best Novel:

The Other Side Of Night by Adam Hamdy
Ordinary Monsters by J. M. Miro
Fairy Tale by Stephen King
The Janus File by David Weber and Jacob Holo
Lords of Uncreation by Adrian Tchaikovsky
Ashes of Man by Christopher Ruocchio

Best Shorter Work or Anthology:

Venomous Lumpsucker by Ned Beaman
Return to Glory by Jack McDevitt
The Moonday Letters by Emmi Itaranta
The Best Science Fiction and Fantasy, edited by
Rebecca Roanhorse
Stellar Instinct by Jonathan Nevair

Best anime/comic book/graphic novel:

Monstress by Marjorie Lie & Sana Takeda
New Think Volume 1.0 an anthology
Mindset by Zack Kaplan and John J. Peterson

Best anime: Chainsaw Man

Best manga:

EVOL by Atsushi Kaneko
Mindset

Best Fan Writer :

John Thiel
Martin Lock
Robin Rose Graves, the Book Wormhole

Best fan editor:

Jefferson Swycaffer
George Phillies
Gideon Marcus

Best Book Editor:

Lisa Kaits
Toni Weisskopf

Best fan website:

SciFi4Me from Jason Hunt and Mindy Hunt
Fanac.org and the Fancyclopedia from Joe Siclari, Edie Stern, and Mark Olson
efanzines.com from Bill Burns
Galactic Journey

Best Non-N3F Fanzine:

Portable Storage from William Beeding
Beam from Nic Farey and Ulrika O'Brien
Pablo Lennis
Simultaneous Times Newsletter

Best N3F Fanzine:

Eldritch Science
Tightbeamhell
Ionisphere

Best Fan Artist:

Brad Foster
Alan White
Jose Sanchez

Best Book Editor:

Lisa Kaits
Toni Weisskopf

Best Pro Artist:

Stephen Youll
Jim Burns
Austin Arthur Hart

Best Television Show, Film, or Video:

Star Wars: Mandalorian
Heath Row's productions
Avenue 5

Best None Of The Above:

Best SF Poet, Michael Butterworth
Best Podcast - Simultaneous Times
Nomination: The effort by Manuscript Press (Rick Norwood) and aruffo.com (I dunno the company name or the person responsible) for publishing the series of trade paperbacks that are reprinting the entire run of the Alley Oop daily comic strip beginning with the very first V.T. Hamlin strip and running all the way to the end of the 20th

century. This is a monumental effort, making available a wonderful comic strip that is clearly science fiction/fantasy and has been recognized as one of the most important comics strips ever published. The original Comic Book Achievement Awards created by comic book fandom in the early 1960s were named the Alley Awards, with a pic/statue of Alley Oop as the symbol. Finally, a chance to read everything, the entire run, all shot from the original syndicate stats, published in affordable format. This deserves much wider recognition, and an award or two on its own.

We also need more membership recruitment.

Comments

[N'apa 264](#): The thought of someone translating Finnegans Wake is truly impressive. Perhaps Falk was able to figure out what it meant at the translation level.

Amateur made films, short or long, are surely a fannish activity, though to make a science fiction film by amateur means is relatively technically demanding. One might imagine redoing Curse of the Demon, while omitting all visibility of the demon, which was the original intent of the film except the director change things, though I do recall seeing the trailer and being impressed with how terrifying the demon was.

I do recall Ballard as an author, with books like The Wind from Nowhere, but that was a long time ago. I also do remember seeing the new-wave magazine from England, though I confess I wasn't terribly impressed with it. It did have some good stories, including the one that John Campbell wished he had received as a submission.

Archive Midwinter: N'APA got about as close as you can get to being too small, namely not many years ago it was two N3F members exchanging emails. It has now improved. I am always happy to support the short story contest by publicizing it, even though I am ineligible to participate, and I'm happy to know your great success with bringing in new participants. This past year you had a record number of them.

Heinlein notwithstanding, I have firm support for the plumbers, carpenters, electricians, painters, woodworkers, and other professionals who gave me a pleasant house. And those are professions, too.

Modesitt has written a very considerable number of novels, enough that I have several bookshelves filled with them, some using various sorts of magic, and others that are hard Science Fiction of different sorts.

Cleopatra was assuredly a Macedonian. We can be sure of what she looked like, at least approximately, because there are surviving color paintings. By modern standards the paintings are not extremely good, but of her general appearance we have no doubt.

Brownian Motion! Again, Garth, welcome to N'APA. Your map of Canada and neighboring places was particularly amusing. I am happy to read that you are trying to revive local meetings in Vancouver. There is an extremely fine local club, the New England Science Fiction Association, but their building (they own the building) where their meetings are held is in very much inner suburban Boston, and traffic to get there is almost hopeless. Several hours in each direction is a reasonable estimate. I had piously hoped that when they got a new building, they would move further out from greater Cambridge, but that doesn't seem to be happening.

Congratulations on being the CUFF delegate. Pemmi-Con is a fine example of the fannish infatuation with unfortunate puns.

Fanac.org is a truly fine organization storing vast numbers of fanzines in electronic form. I have traditionally made a point of sending them N3F zines, to be incorporated on their site. Associated with the operation is the Fancyclopedia on which I currently edit the N3F entry. Thanks to several other Neffers the mysterious Fische Bureau of days gone by has now been explained. It was actually the Fische Bureau, from back when microfiche was going to be the solution to libraries.

I was unaware of York Factory. However. New York is a village in Ukraine, someplace near Sacco i Vanzetti. (recall that Ukraine uses a Cyrillic alphabet, which I have transliterated not quite in the most conventional way, but the village really is called New York and is named after a minor city in a state adjoining Massachusetts.

I am not aware of anyone cataloguing fan-made audio and video productions. That would be a fine activity for the N3F if someone were interested in doing it.

Modesitt is perhaps more known for the extremely extended Recluse series. The books are quite good.

Intermission 132: you will know the Russians have run seriously short of tanks when they roll out the raised-from-the-scrap-pile Imperial Russian super heavy Tsar tank. It was a very strange vehicle. Roughly speaking, it looks like a cross between a tank and a Martian war machine. It's tall, not low to the ground. In fairness to the Imperial Russians, they also built the Ilya Murometz four-engine bomber, the largest aircraft in World War I, which served sufficiently successfully that a considerable number of copies were made, including the one with the fifth engine powering the superchargers which allowed the bomber to climb to an altitude of 19,000 feet.

Klingon somehow does not seem to be the optimal language to go with music, though it might well do with rock music, especially with, for example, Concerto for Bagpipes and High Explosives. (That is a slight remake of an actually recorded Concerto for bagpipes and some other instruments.) Some readers would suggest that the musicology department of the University of East Dakota at Hoople is perhaps not the best source of information on high-quality music.

I would agree with you about earphones for radiotelephones, but I seem to see large numbers of people carrying these rectangular communication boxes in which you can speak into them, or you could have them next to your ear to hear them, but both at the same time does not seem to work well. The next generation of these gadgets seems to have improved in the direction you propose.

Amusingly, in the nineteenth century there was a sponsored contest with a reward for the first person to achieve contact with another planet. The planet Mars was specifically excluded from the list, on the ground that establishing contact with Martians would be far too easy.

Newton's interest in alchemy was not recognized until fairly recently, even though he spent much of his career trying to do to chemistry what he had already done planetary astronomy. His approach was unlikely to get him anyplace, and indeed he failed, but he was arguably the greatest alchemist in the history of the world, as is shown, for example, by the size and quality of his Star of Regulus. He was also into theology, and was a Unitarian. I do not mean the modern Unitarian-universalism, I mean

Unitarian in the form of having a specific opinion about the nature of the Christian God, namely that belief in the Holy Trinity is false. He did not publicize his opinions widely, because if he had he might've faced the death sentence for heresy.

You raise the question of the structure of the brain. There is a traditional notion that the brain is made of nerve cells, each of which on occasion fires and sends a signal to all of the other nerves with which it is in contact. On occasion those signals persuade other nerve cells to fire and through this process we somehow get intellectual reasoning. There are some fine details missing.

The notion that a nerve cell simply fires in a unitary way and contacts other nerve cells all the same way, is the old Pitts-McCulloch model.

Now, I am one of the relatively few people still alive who knew Walter Pitts. Shortly before his death, he recovered from the unfortunate medical condition that had blocked his research, and returned to the laboratory of Jerome Lettvin at MIT, where I was working as an undergraduate researcher, doing a research project that I never did get to work. In any event Pitts, Lettvin, and some of Lettvin's students in some combination worked out that that model was fundamentally inconsistent with what we know about neurons.

The core issue is that a neuron has a baud rate, a rate at which it can transmit signal pulses. The rate is determined by the diameter of the neuron, which can be thought of as a long pipe, the larger the diameter the higher the allowed baud rate. When the neuron reaches out to other nerve cells, and branches many times, the branches become finer and finer in diameter as they approach the working area.

The problem is that if the large diameter section of the neuron is transmitting at anything close to its maximum rate, the signals cannot possibly propagate down all of the fine branches, because they can't support that high a frequency of transmission. Instead, what has to happen is that when a signal propagates down and reaches a branch, it may or may not be transmitted to the finer branches closer to the working end of the nerve. However, then wherever there is a branch, there is an option for a control mechanism to decide whether or not the nerve spike, the signal being transmitted, goes into one or both or neither of the branches. The controllers mean, as a practical matter, that

the complexity of the brain as a signal processing device is vastly greater than is sometimes envisioned. For this reason, efforts to computer-simulate the human brain require much more computational power than is sometimes believed.

I have great fun dealing on occasion with people to whom I have to explain that I do not own a cell telephone, though I did ia one time for a little while, and therefore they cannot send me text messages. They can use email or voice and that is more than adequate as a method, at least for people who can't understand paper mail.

Synergy 45: as always, your artwork is remarkable.

Snow Poster Township: Facebook censorship of its posts is sometimes a bit difficult to understand. I have never encountered those blocks myself, but then I post only fairly nondescript items.

I don't recall receiving your review, which looks like something I would've been happy to run in Tightbeam. So what was the ending of poison for fairies? I gather that Banks' culture novels are more or less all equally good, so if you liked one of them, you might like others.

Samizdat: there are a lot of strange people in the world who are very happy to complain about almost everything. I'm sorry you had to encounter some of them.

You mention Starship Troopers. At the front of the book, there are a series of high school classes in which the wise teacher delivers several disproofs of Karl Marx's communism theory. I keep meaning to get around checking, but I am moderately certain that those proofs are lifted from Marx's book Capital, where Marx put them as a series of strawmen which he then shot down to defend his thinking. A reader who was actually familiar with Marx would presumably recognize the similarity, and therefore realize that they were not reading Heinlein attacking Marx but simply Heinlein presenting a high school class complete with fake history, but so far as I can tell most of Heinlein's critics did not notice this issue..

Why superheroes now? I believe the core answer is computer graphics. There was a superhero television show in the 1950s, Superman. There was almost a follow-up, a Superboy TV program, of which only the proposal film was made. I've seen it. By modern standards, the special effects were very

limited. They were also expensive. The 1950s Superman went into space approximately twice, or so I have read, though I actually only remember one occasion on which he did interplanetary flight, not very far into space. There were not more of these because they were incredibly expensive by period standards to do. Under modern conditions, they are much cheaper, and it was a misfortune of the recent Supergirl TV show that they imposed the restriction that she couldn't fly in outer space, at least without a spacesuit.

The Murdered Master Mage: I mentioned it briefly, but I shall expand slightly here the first heavier-than-air machine capable of powered flight from a take off to a landing was built, not by the Wright brothers, but rather earlier by Hiram Maxim, the man who gave the British the Maxim gun. It was not a very good airplane, since it had no ability control pitch, roll, or yaw. Its one control was the emergency release on the pressure in the steam engine. Yes it was steam powered. The engine probably had a higher power-to-weight ratio than any other steam engine ever built. To keep it from getting out of control, it was attached below to a series of heavy rails, the sort of rail used for a streetcar, with runners that ran under the rails so that when the aircraft lifted it could not climb or bank very much. It climbed enough to pull the stakes out of the ground, the stakes holding the rails in place, over a considerable distance. The person flying it had the good sense to use the emergency stop before it went too far. However, after its first flight, Maxim went on to other projects.

Fiction

As I mentioned it above, I shall briefly note the novels on which I am now working. The ones on which active progress is being made include *Of Breaking Waves*, which is the final Eclipse novel, explaining what is going on, *Tales of the Anglic Union Astrographic Service*, which is a political and economic novel with actually no combat in it, and a novel with no real title yet, simply referred to as *Tibet 1903*, about alien invaders that arrive in Tibet a century and a half ago or so and having taken a while to conquer Tibet start to bump into neighbors. The aliens do not have spaceships, they have interdimensional range transporters. They have flying machines based on repellatron rays, meaning they levitate some maximum distance

above the ground. They also have the problem that the originally planned large invasion force does not arrive in anything like the right logistical order or with the front-line people. Having said that we turn to the final Eclipse novel. Yes, she did die close to the end of book 3, but she connived come back, which you can do if you are clever and extremely stubborn.

Of Breaking Waves

Heather Koster looked up from her homework, stared, and ran to the door. "You're dead," she announced as she pulled the door open. With those words brothers and sister looked up from their own work.

"I'm tougher than I look," Eclipse explained. "I just came to say good-bye."

"Mom! Dad!" Peter shouted. "Eclipse is here!"

"I came to say good-bye," Eclipse repeated, "but there's a tiny illusion involved."

"Yes?" Heather asked.

"When you are asked about this," Eclipse said, "you'll know for a fact it happened before I died, not afterward. That's very much for your own protection. If you insist, I can remove it. Either way, you're no longer upset that I died." She looked around the room.

"I trust you, Eclipse," Marge Koster said. "Anyone else?" Her family agreed with her.

"So you didn't die, after all?" Peter asked.

"It's way complicated," Eclipse answered. "Simpler for me to say that I did die, and am still here. But I did enjoy meeting you, so good-bye." She faded into an azure cloud, the ringing of sleigh bells in the air around her.

"That's weird," Peter said. "I'd completely forgotten Eclipse visiting us before she went off to kill the star monsters, but suddenly I remember."

"So do I," Heather said. "But she could do anything, so maybe she did time travel from before she died, so she was here just now, except it was when she knew she was going to die."

"Heather," Peter said, "Every time you think about things that way, you make my head hurt. No, she was here a week ago." His siblings nodded their support.

Heather frowned. If Eclipse had been here weeks ago, why was the door open now? Whichever of them was right, the outcome was the same.

&&&&

A gloomy Victoria Wilson sat on her favorite perch above Thornberry Pond, her feet not quite touching the water. A brisk breeze blew across the lagoon, raising tiny waves that lapped against the stone wall below her. *She should be cold, she thought, but her magic, no, her gifts, the gifts Eclipse had given her as a safety precaution, were keeping her warm. She had to be careful with using them, though. Telling mom and dad about Adara had been challenging enough, even with Eclipse at her shoulder. Telling them that she could now fly, catch bullets in her bare hands, and punch holes in reinforced concrete walls would be too much. She'd done the right thing, she told herself, accepting Eclipse's gifts, even if they came with a price she hadn't considered. Her gifts did offer her a job opportunity, or would if she were a better actor. All those silly superheroine TV shows needed stunt-women. She would be perfect, if she had any idea how to get to first base as a candidate.*

"Victoria?" Someone had come up behind her, without her hearing a thing. That voice! Its odd accents! She looked over her shoulder, and sprang to her feet.

"Eclipse? You're dead?" she managed.

"In the flesh," Eclipse answered.

Victoria reached out, confirming Eclipse was solid, not an illusion. Touch turned into a firm hug.

"I'm here to say good-bye," Eclipse said. "Our universes are parallel. I'm going home. My ponies will miss me."

"Thank you," Victoria said. "Thank you for helping me with my parents. And for saving everyone in the world."

"You're welcome," Eclipse said. "For me it's always 'Life, lighter than atoms. Duty, heavier than worlds.' Don't copy me. It's a great way to get yourself killed."

"Sounds good to me," Victoria said. "Perhaps you should change?"

"Please don't tell anyone I'm alive," Eclipse asked. "But I had to come back to see you. Because the memory of me dying...it might turn you away from

using your gifts, when you absolutely had to."

"I, oh, you're right," Victoria said. "I was getting depressed. Having these gifts, not being able to tell anyone, getting my parents really mad at me...but you being alive, at least I don't have to be so afraid of my gifts."

"That's what I wanted to hear," Eclipse said, "and was afraid I wouldn't."

"Will you ever be back?" Victoria asked.

"Never say never," Eclipse answered. "But not likely. It's an incredibly long trip."

"Well, then, good-bye."

"Yes, good-bye." Eclipse faded into the blue of a bouquet of bachelor's buttons, the notes of a harpsichord ringing softly in the cold air of early spring.

GAP HERE

Moments later, Pickering stepped from behind one of the columns. He looked empty, drained of his usual humor and energy. Eclipse sprang to her feet. What was he doing here? Or was this some trick of the Great Maze, some reminder that she had crossed an unmarked boundary and was subject to its whims?

"All my life," he said. "All my life." He stared across the vast piazza, not seeing her. "All my life, I have been pursuing a dream. Always convinced I had made small mistakes, correction of which would solve everything. Mistakes, I thought, I could have corrected, if I had been a bit more clever, a little sooner. It didn't matter. Nothing I might have done would have worked. Not and gained me what I wanted. Even this cyclopean edifice," he gestured at the squat pile of stone behind him, "for all its command of time and space, cannot help me. All it did was find alternate failures. Failures."

"Failures?" she asked. "But you're alive!"

"Of course I'm alive," answered Pickering. "The Maze only kills those it defeats. But it didn't matter."

"But it was only moments!" she protested. "You weren't gone long enough to win."

"The Maze lies beyond space and time. It was hours. Or was it days? Long enough to solve a variety of interesting albeit trivial puzzles. But that's over. It didn't matter." Pickering shrugged.

"You walked the Great Maze? And it doesn't mat-

ter?" she asked.

"I walked the Maze, stood at the Arch of Time, where the tapestry of fate may be woven and re-woven. And found that no matter how the threads are arranged, my dream was not to be. Either she found another, or the finding changed her, so she was not what she was to have been, or ... many things. All failures. It all didn't matter." Pickering's voice was devoid of all emotion.

"Even the Great Maze couldn't help you? That's awful." Eclipse wondered for what Pickering had actually searched, what impossible goal defied even the Great Maze's supposedly infinite power. She knew it was all grownup romantic nonsense, but it made absolutely positively no sense whatsoever.

"Now we have each walked a Maze, mine less challenging to me than yours to you. And neither of us gained great reward thereby." Pickering looked over the embankment, down into the starry void, a darkness without matched by his darkness within.

"But wait!" she exclaimed. "From the Arch. From the Arch of Time, no mortal may leave dissatisfied. That's the promise."

"True," Pickering said. "So you may be satisfied, or you may be not allowed to leave. Or, as I explained to the MazeMaster, you may leave behind mortality. He shared the remarkable assertion that no mortal would believe my observation. Do you disbelieve me, or are you immortal?"

"No. No to both. I think. Sure I believe you. That can't be right—you're not allowed to, said the Mazemaster. The Maze's Master is an immortal. Sometimes answers of immortals demand exceedingly convoluted interpretation," a puzzled Eclipse responded.

"I found the last of these alternatives appealing. Curiously, of those who have stood astride the Arch and seen the flux of temporal possibility, almost none agree with me."

"You gave up dying?" Eclipse asked.

"Adara's people make a habit of it," Pickering answered. "Giving up dying, I mean. And they seem to do reasonably well, for a group of slave-holding sword-wielding barbarians overrun by overaged mafiosi. But now, dear, we must not overstay our welcome. The rules allow me a choice of paths

home."

"The Maze gets you home?" she asked. "By yourself? That's fine. I've got a long flight ahead of me."

"As it happens," Pickering announced, "the Rules allow me to take you along. And if our path happens to pass the Tunnels, and you choose to depart the path there, that's your privilege." Eclipse stared at him, eyes widening. "Under the rules, I'm obliged to carry you." He leaned over and scooped her up, his arms forming a seat while she clung to his neck.

"Fortunately," he remarked, "from the Maze to home all paths are but a pair of strides. One." He took a step...

and they were elsewhere, a circular hole blasted into dark stone.

BIG REVEAL WAITING HERE.



Snow Poster Township #11

July 10, 2023

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, members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, 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. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

N3F Tape and Video Bureaus Report

The N3F Tape and Video bureaus continue to offer a frequent schedule of media programming for members. Participation remains low, with one to three people per event, more often than not myself and Janine Follett, who found the activities via Facebook.

The Tape Bureau has had two listening sessions since the last distribution. On May 18, 2023, we listened to two episodes of *X Minus One*. "Marionettes Inc." (<https://youtu.be/dwkIwoMt4rk>) originally aired Dec. 21, 1955, and was based on a Ray Bradbury short story published in the March 1949 issue of *Startling Stories*. We also listened to "The Sense of Wonder," (<https://youtu.be/v4EmpW-DyE>) which aired April 24, 1956, based on the Milton Lesser story appearing in the September 1951 issue of *Galaxy*.

June 15, we listened to two episodes of *2000 Plus*: "When Worlds Met," (<https://youtu.be/BDxVhMCRYeg>) which aired May 3, 1950; and "The Robot Killer," (<https://youtu.be/L1EDCwU7sII>) originally airing Aug. 30, 1950.

The Video Bureau held five events, screening two programs of short films and three feature films. On

June 2, we featured the animation and special effects work of fan favorite Mike Jittlov. Items included:

- *The Wizard of Speed and Time* (short), <https://youtu.be/GoLhLn9hVKE>
- *The Collector*, https://youtu.be/_HBa58vtRbg
- *The Interview* and *Swing Shift*, <https://youtu.be/frvNT8sBFrI>
- Demo Reel, <https://youtu.be/kz46izozLFU>
- *Animato—Fashionation*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Brj3vX2Hiuk>
- KCBS feature, <https://youtu.be/3UXxfY-ZCOM>
- *The Adventures of Lat and Long*, <https://youtu.be/KwmOZqmLZbY>
- Demo Reel 2, <https://youtu.be/fbp7F-bYZqs>
- *Major Effects*, <https://youtu.be/boQQmV32-n4>
- *U.S. Art: The Gift of Ourselves*, https://youtu.be/_vQqAOdb8do

On July 7, we offered a program of undead-related Super 8 reels produced by Americom, Castle, Columbia, and Ken Films. That program featured:

- *Scared Stiff* (Ken Films), <https://youtu.be/b8qJayZJ8S8>
- *Master of Terror* (Ken Films), <https://youtu.be/RQ6vXvbAZ8o>
- *Master of Horror* (Ken Films), <https://youtu.be/qb9sSjFkNV4>
- *The Three Stooges: We Want Our Mummy* (Columbia Films), <https://youtu.be/h9bhUXjN7JA>
- *The Mummy* (Castle Films), <https://youtu.be/Bq-FcY97IAY>
- *Mummy's Ghost* (Castle Films), <https://youtu.be/QbzdyMCM7WU>
- *The Undead* (Ken Films), <https://youtu.be/e8l2iiuhCBc>
- *Horror of Dracula* (Americom), <https://youtu.be/MYLTu4TEm0k>
- *Doom of Dracula* (Castle Films), <https://youtu.be/Y30wu-rgbK8>
- *House of Dracula* (Castle Films), <https://youtu.be/x2Chx2vzXoI>
- *The Vampire and the Ballerina* (Ken Films), <https://youtu.be/Y0mj-zuS1KE>

Feature film screenings included *Things to Come* (1936) on May 13 (<https://youtu.be/atwfwWEKz00U>), *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920) on June 10 (<https://youtu.be/Gpn49rUuOGU>), and *Lost Continent* (1951) on July 8 (<https://youtu.be/-iGUAJBiqmk>).

We've currently scheduled programming through September. I'll most likely continue to the end of the year, but if participation doesn't pick up, the series

will most likely not continue. I enjoy listening and watching even when it's just me, but I can do that on my own time—and do.

From the Reading Pile: Book Reviews

Caviar by Theodore Sturgeon (Del Rey, 1955)

I received this paperback collection not long ago from Whileaway Books (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #72) and began reading it immediately. The slim volume collects eight short stories, all but one which had been published previously. That first story, “Bright Segment,” ranks among the most interesting stories I’ve ever read and is utterly and sadly horrifying. Without giving too much away, let’s just say that it’s a very human horror tale about finding meaning and purpose in one’s life, and the drastic measures one might take to hold onto that once found.

“Microcosmic God” first appeared in the April 1941 issue of *Astounding*. An inventive mad scientist tale, it focuses on one possible source of innovation and tests the limits of accelerated evolution, greed, and faith. Those first two stories are stellar and the collection is worth reading based on their merit alone.

“Ghost of a Chance” originally ran in the Spring 1951 edition of *Suspense Magazine*, a retitling of “The Green-Eyed Monster” (*Unknown Worlds*, June 1943). A man falls in love with a woman harassed by a jealous ghost. “Prodigy,” from the April 1949 *Astounding*, plays with readers’ assumptions, shades of *The Twilight Zone* episode “It’s a Good Life,” based on a 1953 short story by Jerome Bixby.

“Medusa” stems from the February 1942 *Astounding* and combines a couple of wonderful ideas. What if only one member of a spaceship crew were sane? What if a conscious planet could drive people who are near it insane? The build up is a delight. “Blabbermouth,” which first appeared in *Amazing Stories*’ February 1947 issue, takes a look at poltergeist phenomenon, involving a radio broadcaster turned gossip columnist. In this story, as in “Ghost of a Chance” above, Sturgeon’s portrayal of a couple’s relationship is excellent.

“Shadow, Shadow on the Wall...” originally appeared in the February 1951 edition of *Imagination*. Equal parts domestic horror story portraying a frustrated stepmother and supernatural thriller, I’m surprised that this wasn’t adapted for radio or television.

And “Twink,” the least strong piece in the book, was first published in the August 1955 issue of *Galaxy*. I found it somewhat confusing, and the ending didn’t warrant the lack of clarity. All in all, however, this is an especially strong collection, offering a handful of absolute need to reads.

Comments on N’APA #264

I previously included mailing comments for **Ahrvid Engholm**’s *Intermission* #131 in *The Explosion Containment Umbrella* #9. Quoting that apac: “In *Intermission* #131, ... Engholm expressed his frustration having to recreate the issue from scratch after a technical error of some sort. ##### # #####’# ##### # #####, # ### ##### # #####, as it were. (“While I haven’t experienced that myself, I can totally empathize,” lest I forget what those jokey hash marks represent.) And, ouch! What a pain in the arse.

“Thank you for your report on Sweden’s Short Film Festival. It’s been a while since I’ve gone to a film festival—my wife’s work is occasionally screened at such—but I agree: The short films programs can be fascinating. In ... *De Profundis* #586, the Condensed Cream of Menace of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society includes remarks from Damon Brown, who reported on the outcome of the Filmapalooza 2023 International Film Festival in Los Angeles this past march. The winner of the fest’s 48 Hour Film Project this year was *The Death Rattle*. Its trailer is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ1NJGak-R8>.

“At the end of last year, I started following the annual Saturn Awards (<https://www.saturnawards.org>) sponsored by the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films. It’s not a festival per se, but can still indicate movies and television shows you might not want to miss.

“The shorts you detail all sound fantastic. I recently saw a 1993 Norwegian short titled *Snorr* that was written and directed by Roar Uthaug, who went on to direct the 2022 *Troll*. It’s a relatively silly 30-minute film exploring what might occur if mucus is irradiated.

“I read and enjoyed History Corner, particularly the segment focusing on Sam J. Lundwall and radical sf, perhaps a piece to return to! Your comment to Garth Spencer made me chuckle. When he goes to the North American Science Fiction Convention in July, he should wear a pair of handcuffs on one wrist! He might make some... interesting friends.”

In *Archive Midwinter* dated April 16, 2023, **Jefferson Swycaffer** offered some ideas on how to “deal with different fandoms.” I’m not sure we’re talking about skateboarding fandom, per se, when we discuss adjacent but disconnected fandoms. It might actually be helpful to develop a list, perhaps including animation and cartoons, anime and manga, comic books, cosplay, fanfiction, filk singing, old-time radio, Regency and other dancing, roleplaying and miniature war games, scale modeling, toy collecting, UFOs (to

Garth Spencer's point), and video games—among others. (Most of those have an existing sf, fantasy, or horror aspect, or show up at cons.) That's just off the top of my head. For the purposes of this exercise, I'm considering *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Doctor Who*, *Harry Potter*, Rocky Horror, *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, and similar interests as already falling under the umbrella of literature and media fandom. (One can certainly have a rewarding experience as a fan without ever venturing past the boundaries of those immediate interests!) What else would we consider as adjacent to sf, fantasy, and horror fandom?

In 2020, Wisconsin Public Radio aired a segment titled “Not Fan Enough for Fandom? Maybe You're an Adjacent Fan,” which considered this question. (<https://www.wpr.org/not-fan-enough-fandom-maybe-youre-adjacent-fan>) It seems to draw on Keidra Chaney's “Confessions of an Adjacent Geek” piece in *Uncanny Magazine* #31 (<https://www.uncannymagazine.com/article/confessions-of-an-adjacent-geek>), which might also aid discussion. Many explorations of adjacent fandoms focus on the diversity and inclusion aspects (gender, race, and sexual preference). More work might be welcome focusing on adjacency more generally, as well.

Your remark that you often consider what Donald Franson would do with the short story contest reminded me of *Doctor Who*'s Season 13, episodes 2-3, in which Yaz has “WWTDD” written on her palm. Perhaps you could consider a handwritten tattoo of WWDFD?

Thank you for the information about your involvement in fandom at UCSD. I've come across references to the Star Trek Association for Revival previously (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #46 and *The N3F Review of Books*' May 2022 issue). According to Joan Marie Verba's *Boldly Writing: A Trekker Fan and Zine History, 1967-1987*, STAR didn't last long. “[T]he Star Trek Association for Revival (STAR) published the first issue of its newsletter, *Star-Borne* (S-B), in May 1972,” she wrote.

“The last known issue of *Star-Borne* (Vol. 2, No. 13), came out in June [1974]. ... [T]he editors inserted the following statement: ‘We're trying to keep S-B on a bi-monthly schedule, but at times, it's impossible. And for those who were aware of what is going on, you know why we're lucky to have even this one out.’ After this, the Star Trek Association for Revival slowly faded into fan history. On the other hand, the Star Trek Welcommittee was still going strong.”

I really enjoyed Alexei Panshin's *Star Well* (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #46) and look forward to reading more by him. I'll also have to check out Walter Jon Williams's Drake Maijstral novels.

Garth Spencer, who heads to Pemmi-Con soon as the Canadian Unity Fan Fund delegate, returns to our pages with *Brownian Motion* #2. I appreciated your background on CUFF and Pemmi-Con, as well as the *Fanac* news.

Even though the United States might not have an explicit caste system, you're right to point out that the class system is important, as is race. And in some immigrant communities, caste can still come into play. For example, where I work, Indian expatriates are often employed on various visas. *The New Yorker* published an article about some caste bias issues there (<https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/googles-caste-bias-problem>), as did *The Washington Post* (<https://tinyurl.com/caste-WaPo>) and *The Hindu* (<https://tinyurl.com/caste-TH>).

You wondered whether anybody in the N3F is archiving fan-made audio and video productions. The current iteration of the N3F Tape and Video bureaus—me—is not, though in the past, members maintained a collection of reel-to-reel tapes that could be lent out. I do not know what happened to those materials, though I imagine they went with the member-volunteer. The Eaton Collection of Science Fiction & Fantasy at University of California, Riverside includes “film and visual materials, including 500 shooting scripts from science fiction films.” (<https://tinyurl.com/Eaton-Collection>) And the Science Fiction Oral History Association (SFOHA) “is a non-profit organization that maintains an archive of audio and video recordings related to science fiction and fantasy.” (<https://www.sfoha.org>)

Bowling Green State University offers several filk music archives (<https://tinyurl.com/BGSU-filk>). Additional audio and video material is available via the Internet Archive (samples at <https://archive.org/details/FirstWorldFantasyConvention1975> and https://archive.org/details/vts011_20200129), but you have to look for them. I'm sure Jim Freund has maintained an archive of his *Hour of the Wolf* radio broadcasts (<https://www.hourwolf.com/hotw>) and perhaps *The New York Review of Science Fiction* Readings. And Sound Photosynthesis offers some con recordings for sale. (http://photosynthesis.com/Science_Fiction.html) But I'm unaware of a large-scale, centralized collection of recordings of readings, panel discussions, and other related audio content. Collecting a directory to available resources might be a fun project.

I'll check out the Canadian fan films you mention to consider for a future Video Bureau screening, if they're available on YouTube.

I also previously commented on **Ahrvid Engholm**'s *Intermission* #132 in *The Explosion*

Containment Umbrella #9: “In *Intermission* #132, Ahrvid Engholm made a joke about the phrase, ‘take a leak,’ which made me grin. While I find the Eurovision Song Contest interesting, I admit not following it again this year. (I also didn’t watch the coronation in England.)

“History Corner’s mention of Hugo Gernsback’s annual *Forecast* intrigued me. I see that Internet Archive offers 1954-1957. The Hugo Gernsback Papers at Syracuse University include 15 years of *Forecast* in their special collections. I also read and enjoyed the material on Luncon, not to be confused with Lunacon in New York. I’ll have to look for *A Bunch of Amateurs*.

“As a side note, a friend of mine, Molly Wright Steenson, was recently named president of the American Swedish Institute (<https://asimn.org>) in Minnesota. I’ll see what she thinks of your documentation of Swedish fandom history! There might be a future collaboration waiting to happen there.”

In *Synergy* #45 (May 2023), **John Thiel** commented on synergy. How has synergy “been a hot controversy arising in science fiction circles”? You suggest that “[i]nstance, empathy, and other things which are not visible or of interest to science, but are a part of the makeup of men and women, the spiritual side, and beyond that, merging with others, to have a closer feel and intimacy with them, and greater knowledge of others” ... “has little to do with science fiction. . . .” Is that the root of the purported controversy?

I guess I can see that in terms of some fan’s distaste for diversity and inclusion, which I personally support. In many of the divisions and debates in the United States in recent years, I’ve seen libraries, public schools, urban areas, and other large groupings of people come under fire. My theory is that it’s because such settings are engines for empathy—perhaps sites for synergy. Locations that can help us grok each other in the Heinleinian sense. All three locations offer people the opportunity to gain exposure to people unlike them, to learn about them, and perhaps to *like* them. Protectionist efforts to maintain the focus on the home, private schools, churches, and smaller communities—not allowing outside contact or influence—seems to work toward the opposite, to support an insular focus at the expense of grokking the other, however they might be defined. Personally, I want to grok the other.

Where did you suggest I take over the N3F’s fanzine reviews? I don’t know that I saw the suggestion, and I certainly didn’t mean to ignore it. Given my other fanac, I’m not sure I could commit to

a fanzine review column, though it is up my alley. I even have a good title for it, “Fanimestations,” riffing off a column in the 1951 fanzine *Fan-Fare* (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #71). I’ll give it some thought, because it would provide a service to Neffers.

What do you mean by “mainstream science fiction”? While I admit to reading mostly older writing, I don’t think I’m reading anyone who’s too obscure. I’m sorry you didn’t enjoy C.M. Kornbluth’s “The Marching Morons.” (*SPT* #9) I’m glad you sought it out, however. I think the story touches on a challenging topic, for sure, and I found it worth thinking about. I have also enjoyed the fiction of Dan Brown. I’m kind of a sucker for conspiracy theories; I find them fascinating but don’t tend to fall for them, though I’ve developed a few of my own.

Samuel Lubell’s *Samizdat* #19 opened by commenting on the offense taken at the Fannish Inquisition. How was Dis ’n Dat offensive? The use of dialect? The counterpoint you offer—that a Christian worship service wasn’t seen as similarly exclusionary or offensive—seems to bear out my contention above.

Your comments on the fracturing of fandom resonated with me, and the discussion above: “The anime cons, comic book (really media) conventions, and various conventions based on TV shows and movies greatly outnumber the traditional sf/fantasy literature conventions,” you wrote. “But growth and change are part of life and SF fans above everyone else should be welcoming them.” And them, us. I think part of the challenge is that we still see ourselves as the dominant culture, and we might not be. Are we seeking our place among broader fandom while we grouse that they’re not part of *our* fandom?

I was intrigued by the Washington Science Fiction Association’s discussions of sf magazines such as *Asimov’s*, *F&SF*, *Clarkesworld*, and *Lightspeed*. The N3F has tried book discussions in the past, but members weren’t very interested. I’d still like to return to the idea, and perhaps the prozines are an avenue worth exploring. We could even consider selecting just a few stories to concentrate on.

Thank you for your brief profile of Frederik Pohl. I can heartily recommend *The Space Merchants* (*N3F Review of Books*, November 2022). Your panel ideas for Balticon all look wonderful. Good luck with the programming! As always, I enjoyed and appreciated your Status of Projects, though I’ve yet to document mine programmatically.

And in *Ye Murthered Master Mage* #264, **George Phillis** shared this year’s Laureate Award nominations. Otherwise, read and enjoyed!



Esmeralda County Line #4
March-June 2023
A zine for N^oAPA 265

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Introductory Natter

Well, damn. I appear to have missed the last disty. You'll have to put up with a serving of what would normally be leftover comments, but since I apparently didn't get around to doing any comments on #263, they'll actually be fresh off the Word griddle.

One of the most important things that happened over the last four months were the end of tax season, in which I spent a little short of a fortnight in Reno, worked my ass off, and surprised myself by actually getting paid a bonus at the end of the season. I stayed over in Reno until April 19th so I could get a decent night's sleep and a decent breakfast at Peg's before heading home, but I was too exhausted by tax season to want to stay over another couple of days, so I missed not only the NSSAB meeting in Mesquite on the 19th but the Ministry/Gary Numan/Front Line Assembly concert in Reno on the 20th. I am too old and sick to be hanging out in mosh pits any more anyway.

I alluded in the previous ish to the dismantling of EMAD and Test Site C at the Security Site, and last month the NSSAB meeting was at the site to take a look at these and the fire station, which is responsible not just for fire suppression and EMS on the site but also for a sizable chunk of Nye County. An unexpected bonus of the trip was getting a ridiculously huge suite at the Rio for about \$20/night (plus tax & resort fees, of course) which had an actual Jacuzzi tub. I lamented to my handful of YouTube subscribers that it was a shame I was too tired to find a young lady of negotiable virtue to enjoy it with.

Finally, the day after the site tour, I caught an Uber to McCarran for my flight to Dulles, thus beginning my annual pilgrimage to the Washington/Baltimore area to see friends and (finally) attend Balticon again. It is perhaps fortunate that I didn't meet fellow N'APAhacker (and convention vice-chair) Sam Lubell there, else I would have subjected him to an Airing of Grievances well in advance of Festivus. More about this anon.

Comments On N'APA #263

Intermission #129 No need to apologize for your interest in sports. I myself am a baseball fan of long standing (interrupted from 1973-89 by the departure of the Washington Senators for Texas) and have never understood the snooty attitude of most SF fans toward the various flavors of sportsball and hockey. 🍷🍷 I agree with your complaint to the Chicon staff. We appear to have been overrun with oversensitive children with no sense of humor. Or humour, either. Perhaps we should apply leeches to them to correct this unfortunate imbalance in their humours? 🍷🍷 There will always be movies that are much more impressive on the big screen, so while the number of theaters may dwindle, I doubt that they are going the way of the cyclorama anytime soon.

(RYCTo Jefferson) I find it hard to separate Campbell's belief in some things from his habit of trolling people through his editorials, but one thing is for sure: he was a firm believer in Dianetics but abandoned it when Hubbard organized the Church of Scientology.

(RYCTo me) Did you ask Jerry about it [the Dean Drive]? 🍷🍷 If you are not familiar with it already, I recommend Bruce Sterling's Dead Media Project to you.

Archive Midwinter

(RYCTo me) Thank you. 🍷🍷 Your friend will definitely be warm – and dry! 🍷🍷 Interesting. Having come to video games by way of historical wargaming (that old paper maps & cardboard units hobby) I found the hex grid much more natural, especially when figuring movement and distance. 🍷🍷 A Knight of Ghosts and Shadows was indeed brilliant, and it did hurt, and I appreciated it more as an adult than when I first read it as a teenager.

(RYCTo John) Your sister was lucky. I made that same mistake with a laptop and a vial of insulin, and it cost me \$200 to replace the screen.

(RYCTo Sam) I would disagree that we don't have social castes. They're just not as obvious as the aristocracy in other lands, since they are based more on social class than pedigree.

Brownian Motion Welcome! A fine pic to lead off with, too! 🍷🍷 I am wondering if our involvement in Stipple-APA overlapped, but probably not, since I dropped out of it in 2008 or thereabouts. I have seen some issues of your perszine thanks to the N3F. 🍷🍷 Fandom is always changing, and I for one see it as the N3F's mission to try and connect the various mansions in our ghetto with each other so that we can share the cool stuff with each other and warn our friends off the crap. 🍷🍷 You can have my Dynasty League baseball team when you pry me away from my keyboard for the last time, and the same goes for my interest in the Astros, Nationals, and Twins. I used to be fond of the St. Paul Saints when they were independent, but now they're just another farm team. Feh.

(RYCTo Jefferson) Funny you should mention Hayakawa. I started Language In Thought And Action some months ago but unfortunately it is more of a semantics text than a book discussing the topic, and I found it hard going. Perhaps I should just cowboy up and do the exercises.

(RYCTo me) Well, Civilization is the name of the franchise, but in the context of this particular game, as a player it means choosing whether you want to adapt to the planet and its native life forms or reduce them to obedience. Which Earthside faction you choose to play as has an influence on this, of course. 🍷🍷 I agree, social media have contributed greatly to a balkanization of fandom. 🍷🍷 I think in the current political climate PBS would have a hard time airing the show, and it is sufficiently retro that modern audiences might have a hard time with it. I did, and I'm old enough to remember when a lot of TV shows in the US were like that.

(RYCTo Heath) Give up your TV! Watch everything on your computer monitor!
(Disclaimer: one of the two monitors on my Dell Optiplex is in fact a Samsung Smart TV.)
(RYCTo Sam) IIRC the cause of the war was Ukraine's refusal to recognize the breakaway Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics.

Intermission #130 Having struggled with the overrated James Joyce's Ulysses and Finnegan's Wake both, I daresay I would not be wanting to thank the man responsible for inflicting them on the unsuspecting Swedish public. But – not my circus, not my monkeys. Good luck to you. 🍀🍀 The winter biathlon did indeed evolve from military snow patrols, much as the pentathlon evolved from 19th century cavalry actions. 🍀🍀 That can't be a banana, Under EU regulations, aren't they required to have a specified degree of curvature?

Synergy #44

(What Rough Beast...?) I am reminded of a passage in the Book of the SubGenius: "You say 'THIS is a sign of the End Times!' 'THAT is a sign of the End Times!' I'm here to tell you IT'S ALL A SIGN OF THE END TIMES!"

(RYCTo Ahrvid) Idk, it seems things were a lot more peaceful when the sun never set on the British Empire, but perhaps that's because all the wars were small and far away until 1914.

(RYCTo Me) It is indeed odd that Martin went out that way. 🍀🍀 I'm largely uninterested in Area 51 and its mythology, so that probably isn't going to happen. 🍀🍀 Pipelines are but one of many things prone to explode if you don't maintain them properly. 🍀🍀 I subscribed to Analog briefly after moving to Nevada and was unimpressed; once in a while the local grocery store has an issue in among the wrestling, gardening, and other magazines, but I never see anything I want to read in them. At the risk of repeating myself, I don't think it has been a magazine for fans like me since the late Ben Bova stepped down as editor.

Ye Murdered Master Mage

(RYCTo Ahrvid) The line is from Earthman, Come Home, one of James Blish's Okie stories. 🍀🍀 So Cordwainer Smith was correct, and we have to deal with the Great Pain of Space after all. Let's hope we come up with something better than the Haberman Technique.

(RYCTo me) Serviss' novel was awful, but it is on Project Gutenberg if one wishes to subject oneself to it. 🍀🍀 I understand your aversion to flying but appreciate your support.

Snow Poster Township #9

(RYCTo Ahrvid) If you like fix-ups, you will adore A.E. van Vogt, who is credited with creating them in the 1950s to meet publishers' demands for novels. Off the top of my head, I can remember The Voyage of the Space Beagle, The War Against the Rull, Empire of the Atom, and perhaps most memorably, The Weapon Shops of Isher.

(RYCTo me) My memories of Space:1999 are forty years old by now, and I remember it being not nearly as entertaining as the reruns of the original Star Trek that were showing at the time. Perhaps I would think differently of it now, but somehow I doubt it; I have found while unboxing various books that I picked up in the 1970s and 80s that my tastes have changed – or maybe I've become more critical as I age – but either way, political thrillers and pulp adventures (Don Pendleton's Executioner, to name just one) are no longer as entertaining as they used to be. I daresay Space:1999 would be even more excruciating to watch now.

(RYCTo Ahrvid) (re Chicon 8) This kind of humorless, spineless behavior is part of the reason I stopped supporting WSFS. 🍀🍀 I've been thinking of taking a look at Resident Alien. You seem to like it, and Alan Tudyk is hilarious.

Samizdat #18

(RYCTo Ahrvid) SF has always been diverse. We have had women and Latino authors since the 1930s at least, and with the 1960s we saw black, Asian, and Indian (feather, not dot) writers in the field as well. I can't speak for Ahrvid, but in recent decades there seems to be an exaltation of diversity above the other virtues we look for in SF, and seldom to the benefit of the genre. As a Latino myself, it doesn't matter to me that Heinlein was Anglo or that Sarah Hoyt is Portuguese or that Rebecca Kuang is Chinese – what matters to me is whether they are giving me enough entertainment to justify the asking price of their books.

(RYCTo me) Analog was criticized for focusing on “engineering porn”, mostly by people who never bothered to read what was published in it. One could hardly describe Gordon Dickson, Joe Haldeman, Anne McCaffrey, or Vonda McIntyre as writing tales with an excess of circuitry or rivets in them. As I've stated previously, the magazine has changed quite a bit since the replacement of Ben Bova by Stanley Schmidt as editor in the 1980s, and no longer publishes enough of the kind of stories I want to read. 🍌🍌 I think you have mistaken me for John here. I am definitely not against learning in general and specifically learning about other countries. Given my abortive career as a military linguist, that would be more than a little ridiculous. 🍌🍌 David Weber is one of the few milSF writers who does that sort of thing well enough for the paying customers to put up with it. Most writers who imitate him fail miserably, and most of the ones I am familiar with don't do it at all. 🍌🍌 I'm not familiar with the Baen covers you're referring to. All my Flandry books are from the Ace reprints before there was a Baen, or even earlier Signet editions. 🍌🍌 Starting Son of Silvercon is indeed turning out to be a lot of work, but I am slowly collecting a staff, which is making things easier.

(Author Spotlight) I remember Modesitt's stories from the 1970s Analogs. Like Andre Norton, he seems to be an immensely popular author whose work I just haven't gotten around to. Thanks for the recommendations; perhaps the town library or the Nevada Library Consortium will have them.

(Project History) Regarding Mr. Blair's book, I suspect he leaves out something which is well known to most students of the Civil War but seems to have been forgotten by most and deliberately obscured by some – that there was a lot of grassroots pressure to forgive those rebels who surrendered. The signs are evident in a lot of postwar laws which classify Confederate veterans as American veterans (which entitled many of them to badly-needed pensions), prohibited the desecration of veterans' graves, and conferred battle honors on National Guard regiments that traced their lineage to Confederate Army units*, among others. The tone was set by Grant's generous terms of surrender for Lee's Army of the Northern Virginia, and Chamberlain's command to his division to present arms in salute to the defeated rebels passing by to surrender their weapons. I myself think this was the best thing to do at the time, but the issue has been clouded by the “Lost Cause” sorts in the early 20th century and more recent race hustlers who seem determined to expunge all memorials and histories that don't fit their narrow view of the past.

*Among these, the 175th Infantry (Maryland Army National Guard) which when I was in the Maryland Guard in 1983 was the senior regiment in the state's 58th Brigade. It traced its lineage to the 1st Maryland Regiment (CSA), which gave it precedence over my regiment, the 115th, originally the 5th Maryland Regiment (USA), which was raised by Union loyalists some time later.

Here endeth the comments on N'APA #263

REVIEWS OF THIS AND THAT

Behold, Humanity!

”Sixty million years ago, a human on Terrasol picked up a rock. The Universe decided that was everyone’s problem.”

These nine books are edited extracts from the “First Contact” posts Ralts Bloodthorne has been making on r/HFY since 2020, which are about to hit the 1000-post mark. They’re a wild combination of combat SF, xenoanthropology, horror, cyberpunk, and slice-of-life stories with heavy influences from Laumer, Drake, Saberhagen, Warhammer 40k, and all manner of pop culture references on a scale so massive it makes Ready Player One look weak by comparison. Part of this is because it’s set around 10,000 years in the future after dozens of wars (mostly between humans but occasionally with aliens) and nobody is really sure any more what is truth and what falls under the heading of “This is obvious bullshit, but it’s cool, so I choose to believe it.” This nine-book arc mostly covers the war of Humanity (most of it) against not just the Precursor Automated War Machines but the Unified Civilized Systems, run by a bunch of herbivores not nearly as smart as Niven’s Puppeteers but considerably more evil. Fortunately for Humanity, they’ve got a fair number of friends: the Free Mantid Worlds, populated by descendants of the insectile aliens who thought they could shock Terrasol into surrender by glassing the homeworld and its Solar colonies*; the Treana’ad, whose territorial dispute with Terra was resolved by the Great Ice Cream Raid as well as the discovery of tobacco and birth control; our Digital Sentience descendants (don’t call them AI, that’s insulting), and the various species of Terran life that have been uplifted into sentience...not to mention various LARPerS, the Idiots, Daxin Freeborn, and the Digital Omnisiah. You’ll know them when they come by.

I am at the stage where Humanity and its allies have begun to grasp the full vileness of the Lanaktallans** scheme to remain the preeminent civilization, and to say the least, they are Not Happy. The Lanaktallans have been f’ing around for millennia, and they are in the process of finding out.

I’m enjoying this series tremendously because it has a whole cast of well-developed characters, the scope of the tale is epic, and it all fits together very nicely.

Private American

I see in the news this week that Marvel has retired the Punisher for good, and in a way sure to alienate what few fans were still following the comic. Well, no loss. The concept of a combat veteran going up against criminal gangs is hardly original with Marvel; Don Pendleton wrote something like 300 Punisher novels before he hung up his typewriter, and I’m willing to be that if I spend some time looking around, I could find examples predating Pendleton.

Anyhow, Mike Baron (who wrote a lot of the Punisher comics) is doing something similar with Private American, wherein a Chicano combat vet decides to do something about the cartels on the southern border. If this is an example of the kind of quality independent comics are going to produce (and I’m sure it is) while DC and Marvel continue to try and rack up social credit by appeasing whiners who don’t buy their comics to start with, pretty soon there won’t be a DC or Marvel, and nobody will miss them.

*The glassing of Mars, Venus, and Mercury had some horrific consequences for the Mantids and other enemies of Terra for several millennia to follow.

The aliens running the Unified Civilized Systems. The general opinion of other races concerning the Lanaktallan is best summed up by this quote: “F* those cone-stealing, milkless piles of ambulatory hamburger.” – the Treana’ad Gestalt

Music

I am continuing to pick up the multi-CD albums that constitute Klaus Schulze's *La Vie Electronique*, which contain a lot of tracks recorded at live concerts in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. Unfortunately, some of them contain vocals by Arthur Brown, who Schulze was apparently a fan of, but whose howling and screaming I can do without, thank you very much.

On a related topic, my favorite British electronica act Conelrad is taking a break to recharge his creative energies, but he's put all his Conelcast podcasts up on YouTube. Give it a listen.

SON OF SILVERCON PROGRESS REPORT #3

We found a home at the Best Western Plus in Henderson, but it required us to move the dates from September to October 13-15; fortunately, this was not a problem for our guests. Unfortunately, NASCAR is in town that weekend and the room rates are pretty awful.

On the gripping hand, we have T-shirts!



They're \$20 for all sizes (Small through 5XL), and you can pick them up at the convention. We may have some extras for sale there, but I can't guarantee sizes. It's best to order ahead.

We're slowly but steadily adding members, and I am firing off memes, blog posts, and Tweets on a more or less regular basis to attract more members.

Attending memberships: \$40 (\$35 for N3F members)

Supporting memberships: \$20 (convertible to attending by August 15)

Make your checks or money orders payable to Friends of Fission-chan, and send them to PO Box 143, Tonopah NV 89049, or send us the money via PayPal.. Feel free to e-mail me with questions.

Comments on N'APA 264

Intermission #131 I think we've all had the awful experience of having the computer do exactly what we tell it instead of what we want, which forces us to retype a lot of stuff.

(History Corner) I agree that Lundwall pushed too hard for depressing, leftist SF, and like many New Wave authors he and his works (and a lot of the authors he and Moorcock championed) are forgotten while more entertaining and less political authors continue to sell well because they have the positive attitude and sense of wonder about the future you talk about. For my part, a little bit of experimental goofing around is OK, but in Brunner's case it seems to me that after Stand on Zanzibar he kept trying to ring changes on that style of writing with even more dystopian plots (I am thinking specifically of The Jagged Orbit and The Sheep Look Up) which were not well received. As for Moorcock himself, it looks likely that he will be forgotten except for his Elric novels – and those only because of their connection to Dungeons & Dragons.

(RYCTo me) Can't help thinking the British would have come for New Sweden as they did for New Amsterdam, but it's an interesting what-if. 🍷🍷 Nothing wrong with writing for money; there are a number of popular authors who are adamant that if you want to be a professional writer, the most important part is to Get Paid. 🍷🍷 I'll have to disagree with you about Star Trek and other similar media fandoms, and not just because I've been loosely associated with the Klingons for some time. There are degrees of immersion in the show; some people just like to dress up in Starfleet uniforms, others go whole hog and cosplay as Klingons or Romulans, but most of the people I know who are "immersed in the fantasy", as you put it, have a deep knowledge of the various series and movies, and are both able and willing to critique the parts that aren't good. We have gained a number of pros from Star Trek fandom who have written their own original (non-Star Trek) stories, so I think calling them "not real SF fans" is to repeat the mistake made by litfans in the 1960s when Trek fans first started showing up. Only now they don't have to put up with supposed BNFs drawing those lines of exclusion; they have their own sizable conventions to go hang out at.

Archive Midwinter

(RYCTo Ahrvid) I had the unpleasant experience some years ago of observing David Brin arguing with someone (possibly Larry Correia) on Facebook and he was definitely doing a good impression of an insane genius, heavy on the insane.

(RYCTo Garth) Agree with you completely on what to do with different fandoms. It's helpful to remember that to a lot of people, we are the different fandom.

(RYCTo John) Uncle Bob wasn't often wrong, but in this case I agree that he was. I am reminded of Eric Hoffer's comment that "A society that exalts its philosophers over its plumbers will soon find that neither its pipes nor its philosophy hold water." As a result of being a Catholic Air Force brat, I was taught at an early age to appreciate the people who make things work and keep them working. "Work is an anointing of dignity" – Pope Francis

(RYCTo Sam) "...and who could possibly not be [a fan of Alexei Panshin]"? *raises hand* That would be me. He was an obnoxious person and a mediocre writer, and with the passage of time I suspect all he will be remembered for is his criticism of Heinlein.

(RYCTo me) I hope you enjoy the Continental Op stories. For me, a big part of the fun was not only enjoying the glimpse into 1920s America but seeing where later writers (and movie producers) had picked up tropes from the stories. 🍷🍷 It would be a very serious mistake to assume anything about Drake from the characters he writes about in Hammer's Slammers. I can only think of one incident where one of the Slammers murders a civilian: when Major von Steuben kills Councilor Tromp at the end of "But Loyal To His Own". 🍷🍷 We have been very lucky throughout the Atomic Age. There have been at least half a dozen accidental launches, though for some reason the ones in the USSR get the most publicity.

Brownian Motion

(Pemmi-Con) I saw some flyers for it at Balticon and was amused. Having spent first and second grade in Alaska, I got the reference immediately.

(RYCTo Ahrvid) Flying saucers (if not UFOs) are a recurring topic in SF. Perhaps your radio guy had seen *Iron Dawn*. 🍷🍷 I see you too have fallen victim to the Belgium conspiracy. Everybody knows there's actually no such place.

(RYCTo Jefferson) Methinks you may be a bit premature about assuming South Africa hasn't descended into domestic genocide. They certainly seem intent on devolving to Third or possibly even Fourth World status. In any case, it's long been the case that truth is stranger than fiction. ~~It is known.~~ 🍷🍷 There is definitely some concern in various circles about economic classes in the West stratifying into castes, but thanks to academia, the children of the rich seem to be turning out too stupid and uneducated to keep their places.

(RYCTo me) Well, I'm glad you enjoyed the zine, or at least weren't too annoyed with it. 🍷🍷 Having gone to two regional SF conventions this year (one of which I won't be returning to and the other I'm very much on the fence about) I can assure you that yes, the wokies really are that benighted. 🍷🍷 The problem with finding a suitable hotel in Las Vegas (and I include here North Las Vegas and Henderson, its suburbs) is that a lot of the smaller hotels don't have much in the way of function space (many of them don't have any at all) and the larger hotels that do have function space need us to be a much larger convention than I expect we will be this year. I am expecting 100+ people, and the bids we got from the Plaza and the various Station Casinos hotels would have required us to have 1000+ people just to cover the function space costs and have a little left over for pop and veggies in the con suite. I haven't looked into it too deeply but I suspect a big reason for the lack of function space in a lot of hotels is because they mainly cater to tourists or people going to commercial conventions at the Las Vegas Convention Center, Sands Convention Center, or the Mandalay Bay CC at the other end of the Strip. 🍷🍷 We could all stand to go outside to the Big Blue Room and touch grass. Except for me; the evil Day Star is far too bright, and the green things that grow in the ground here are spiky.

Intermission #132

(editorial) As I write this, it seems Erdogan has withdrawn his objections to Sweden joining NATO. (~~The fix was in.~~)

Synergy #45

(editorial) ISTR that spell-check ignores words that begin with capital letters because it assumes that they are proper nouns. 🍷🍷 Synergy as you describe it would seem to be uncontroversial, since it occurs rather commonly in nature and science both. Still, there are fans who will argue about literally everything, so there you are. Psionics, ESP, etc. tend to catch a lot of flak because some people see them as magic with the serial numbers filed off and a new coat of paint slapped on so as to make them palatable for people who don't want no fantasy in their SF.

(RYCTo Heath) Nobody seems to agree on what mainstream SF is, what the classic works are, or who the great SF writers were any more. Many of today's Bright Young Things seem intent on expunging the classic works and great writers for being insufficiently in tune with today's social fads; e.g. stripping John Campbell's name from the new writer awards and unpersoning Lovecraft from the World Fantasy Awards.

Snow Poster Township #10

(bureau report) Unfortunate that Facebook is so opaque in its arbitrary deletions and bannings. It's one of the reasons I bailed on it and no longer post there. I will occasionally comment or react to friends' posts, but no more.

(reviews) Echoes of Thunder sounds interesting. I'll have to look it up sometime.

(RYCTo me) Things calmed down considerably after tax season, though I was so burned out I effectively did nothing for the rest of April and half of May until it was time to leave for Balticon (via

Las Vegas, the Nevada Security Site, McCarran Field, and Dulles) and enjoy a mostly pleasant vacation in Virginia and Maryland.

(NEFFO) I was accused once of being a SMOF, which IIRC is a subspecies of BNF. My reply was there was nothing secretive about my mastery of fandom and I was looking forward to handing it off to ~~the next victim~~ my successor as soon as possible.

Samizdat #19

(RYCTo Ahrvid) People who take offense at things like Dis n' Dat need to go home and stay there until they can return with a note from their mothers attesting that they are in fact mature enough to associate other human beings that don't agree with them on everything. 🍷🍷 I don't know what surprises me more: that a modern SF convention would have a public display of religiosity (fandom not being known for its tolerance of organized religion) or that it wasn't in the program book so that people could avoid it if it wasn't their cup of tea. Balticon has always been good about posting the time and location of Sunday Mass in the program book. 🍷🍷 I think we are drawing closer to the technology of Howard Chaykin's "tromptography", the 3D computer simulation of actors that puts the title character of his American Flagg on the road to becoming a Plexus Ranger in the Chicago Plexmall.

(RYCTo Garth) Agree with you concerning the causes of the war in Ukraine. 🍷🍷 Your point about the loss of digital information is well taken, and something with which archivists today are already wrestling with. My friend Mark Taylor, the AV archivist for the National Air & Space Museum, can go on for a couple of hours on this topic. Michael Flynn also discusses this in passing in his Spiral Arm novels; nobody is really sure about the history of mankind 10,000 years ago because the records are missing, corrupted, and/or otherwise unreliable.

(RYCTo me) I am familiar with BSFS' many activities and knew about their (your?) clubhouse. I was greatly irritated that during my sojourn in Northern Virginia between exile in Minnesota and departure for Nevada I was too poor to join and be active in BSFS. 🍷🍷 WSFA is actually discussing SF these days? I am shocked! ;-) 🍷🍷 I don't disagree with you about either Starship Troopers or The Forever War. Weber has a lot of collaborators because of the huge extent of the Honorverse, but I rather doubt that most of the milSF writers in the Baen catalog write the way he does. 🍷🍷 It is probably just as well that we didn't run into each other at Balticon as I wouldn't have been feeling terribly friendly, for reasons I explained in my feedback. Megan acknowledged my feedback via e-mail, and said she would pass it on, so as incoming chair you have probably seen it already, and I will not belabor the points made here. I'll probably find something else to do next Memorial Day. I think.

(Fred Pohl) I liked Fred better as an editor than an author, especially in the days when he was editing *Worlds of If* and *Galaxy*, and assembling the Galaxy Reader anthologies. I also liked his collaborations with C.M. Kornbluth.

(Panels) There are several panels in this list I would have liked to attend. Maybe next time they come around I'll be allowed to.

Ye Murthered Master Mage #264

RAEBNC

Stuff In Progress

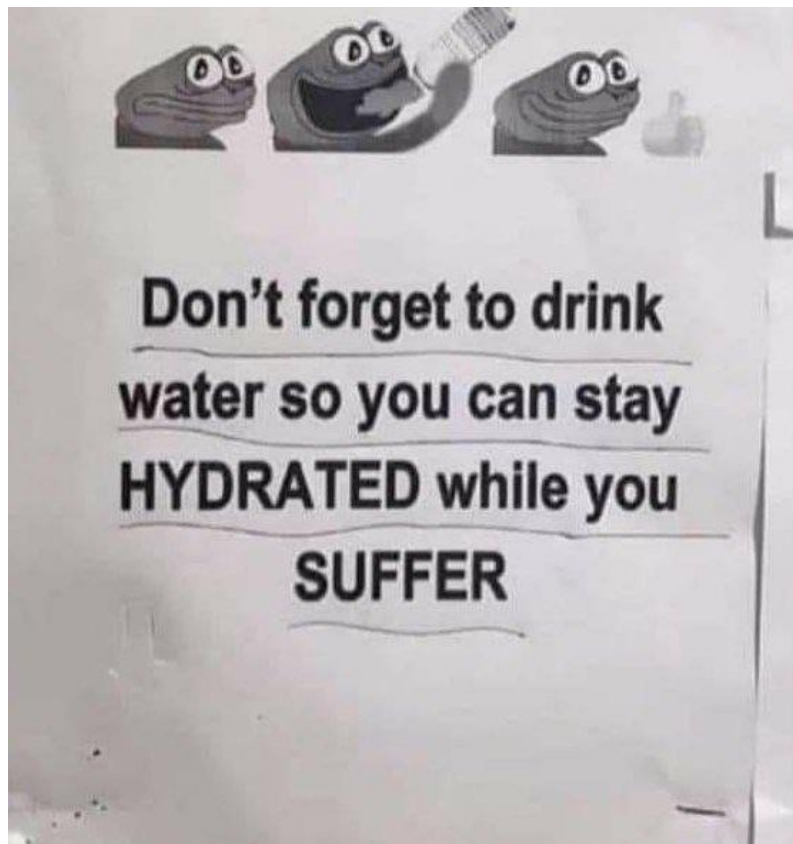
Having just finished Jack Vance's Durdane Trilogy (The Anome, The Brave Free Men, and The Asutra), which I originally read inside out (in the order 2-1-3) and only finished after I married a woman who was as big a Jack Vance fan as I was and had the other two books, I am now reading Vance's The Domains of Koryphon (perhaps known to some of you as The Gray Prince) which I first read part of many years ago in F&SF magazine. For some reason, it didn't interest me enough to find the other issues of F&SF in which it was serialized, but forty years later I am more interested in the subject matter, which deals with the clash of cultures (sometimes very physical) between two groups of humans and several alien races on the planet of Koryphon.

I am also taking a stab at one of A.E. van Vogt's last novels, Earth Factor X (originally published as The Secret Galactics) in which two women and a scientist whose brain resides in a mechanical chassis are fighting for Earth's freedom against a Galactic invasion. Fortunately for Earth, they know something about humanity that the aliens don't.

As if that weren't enough, I am also reading with great interest John C. Wright's Null-A Continuum, the sequel to van Vogt's The Players Of Null-A* which once again stars the double-brained man, Gilbert Gosseyn. The Null-A novels were an interesting series in which Gosseyn, trained as he is in Korzybski's non-Aristotelian logic, has to discover who he truly is, since it turns out that he's had false memories implanted in him, and how he can use his abilities to stop the invasion of Earth and Venus by an interstellar empire. Null-A Continuum starts with Gosseyn being involuntarily teleported to a murder scene, and I'll have to pick it up from there tomorrow.

*Wright explains in a foreword why Null-A Three, the original third novel, doesn't fit in well with the first two books, and what he's adapted from it.

Finally, a public service announcement especially apropos for July in Nevada.



INTERMISSION #134

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA and other fans of folly. Follow ed's newstweets from @SFJournalen (updates slow lately due to Ukraine syndrome: being occupied). More history in thish, virus roundup, an other great fan RIP, Eurocon, etc. Sorry that tyoes fly around like mosquitoes in a Swedish summer! Early July 2022

Editorially: Eurovision, Eurocon, Being Late, AI

Today's latest news, if you followed my skiffy analysis of the Eurovison Song Contest, is that our local TV company has decided that the 2024 edition of this intellectual Tour de Force, is to be held in early May in our southern city of *Malmö*. They've had the contest twice already and did alright. Runner-up Stockholm had found possible venues had already booked. They launched the insane idea of than in less than a year build a *temporary* one for 15 000 people – sounded desperat and not very cost-efficient. No, congrats to Malmö!

I'll have a sad RIP in thish, of a true fannish dinosaur. Also stuff from the recent Eurocon (based on my tweets, to simplify, as thish is late) and then the true figures of the Corona epidemic on this northern latitude. Sweden had the *lowest excess deaths* (the best way to measure virus effects) in Europe, despite being accused of being "careless" by those having their own hypodermics to grind. There'll be nAltional day thing. And of course, a History Corner - which I believe is that department most readers find interesting. What's up in the world? What's not up!

The US grabbed Turkey's ear and old Yellow and Blue will shortly have a membership card for club NATO. The other Yellow and Blue will have to wait until Wladolf Putler goes on vacation in a really hot place, way, way down. Oh, our new astronaut Markus is already scheduled for flight, going up with a SpaceX Dragon next year. And girl Greta of all our dreams (or nightmares) have been in Kyiv. She's been appointed to a delegation to study Ukrainian reconstruction after the war. She talked about that Mr P

didn't give a dam about that big dam, so he blew it up. She explained how bad it was for all the animals. President Zelensky agreed. Some people also didn't fare well.

Will Putler blow up the nearby nuclear stations too? Who knows what that man will do!

Finally: in late June a newly acquired laptop refused to boot. There was a warranty so I asked the seller for service. That would take at least three weeks - one fears longer since everything shuts down here in July - and temporary replacement was hard to find in short time. That delay, cons and being rather occupied with lotsa things has delayed thish. I hope the August issue wont be too late...

Bertil Falk's Space Opera Prize

As our greatest advocate of space opera May 21st turned 90 years - I'm talking about Bertil Falk of course - writer, reporter, editor, scholar, translator - I've taken the initiative to announce a *space opera prize*, named in his honour.

It's aimed at Swedish writers, but here's an idea for others: run your amazing, astounding, astonishing space opera story through a *translation service*, those are getting very good these days with AI help! It'd be interesting if someone would experiment with it. (It won't be disqualified.) *Bertil*



Markus Wandt. Sweden's 3rd astronaut, goes orbital next year



Volodymyr and Greta. Serious talks.

Falk's Space Opera Prize offers eternal glory, a diploma and an as yet unknown cash prize. The prize will be crowdfunded. (Later note. At least €50 has been collected. €100 doesn't seem impossible to reach.)

Bertil has done just about everything since he had his first story published in the *Stockholms-Tidningen* newspaper in 1946 when he was 12! His "Trip to Space" is available here, also in English translation: <https://file770.com/bertil-falk-from-a-space-hobo-to-finnegans-wake/>

Beside translating the "untranslatable" James Joyce classic *Finnegans Wake*, he's written a heap of books (recently a huge 3 volume history of Swedish sf), worked as publisher, magazine editor (*JVM*, *DAST Magazine*), journalist and more.

But his first love as a little boy was those silly, daydreaming - as school teachers complained loudly! - space stories in our local pulp *Jules Verne Magasinet*, especially the colourful adventures of Captain Future, here known as "Kpt Frank" and very popular (*JVM* reaching 85 000 copies, ie +1% of the population, proportionally as if *Astounding* had sold 15 million copies!). A local Cpt Future club was active up to the 1980's, Bertil published Cpt F and a cassette zine came with a Cpt Future mini musical. In 1975 Bertil



Ed Hamilton, author of *Cpt Future*, and Bertil Falk (in the 1970s)

visited Leigh Brackett (herself a master of space opera!) and Edmond Hamilton, the main culprit behind Captain Future. Bertil often mentioned and wrote about this "Wizard of Science" and other old masters of space, like Vladimir Semitjov and Sture Lönnerstrand.

An additional reason for a space fiction prize is that so *much is happening* in space right now! NASA returns to the Moon. SpaceX builds the biggest rocket in history (also reusable) ultimately aiming for Mars. Europe builds a new telescope with an eye big as a hockey rink and the Webb space telescope meanwhile takes the sharpest pictures ever. China builds a space station, and also aims for the Moon (with India, Japan and others to follow). We have rovers on Mars, take pictures of Black Holes, crash into comets, see Captain Kirk take a real space jump, have AIs to find ET phoning home. Even little Sweden now builds a launch pad for satellites, with first shot expected within a year.

Space fiction of yesterday is becoming reality! To enter Bertil Falk's Space Opera Prize contest, send your space opera story (simply defined as a science fiction story set in space) nomination to spaceoperaprize@rocketship.com no later than September 21. Any length admissible. It must have been published in 2022, but yet unpublished work may also be nominated - in that case you must attach it. A jury will be formed, and it will also on its own accord look for stories that may be awarded.

You can also apply for a jury job to the E-address. Recap your connection to space and if you have been into writing space fiction yourself. At the same time all space fans are urged to make a small donation to (though I believe it'll be more complicated or foreigners) my Handelsbanken account 6153-330 334 578 and tell ahrvid@hotmail.com that. Donors will be officially thanked, but may be anonymous if you wish. Ca €50 collected this far. (Thanks Ulf and Cecilia!)

And Bertil, congratulations! Your space dreams from boyhood are turning real.

RIP: Hans Sidén - Gothenburg Fandom Founder, Mingled with the Stars

Maths Claesson hardly had time to get below 37C when we had more sad news: one of the founders of our fandom, journalist Hans Siden (b 1935) went to the eternal Gafia June 24, aged 87. Our historical trufandom slowly dies as the fen who created it kick the rocket-bucket one by one.



A young Hans Sidén with a prop from "This Island Earth" (1955).

An 18-year old Hans Sidén was one of the founders of our fifth oldest sf club, the only still active, Gothenburg's Club Cosmos launched in 1954 (#1 was Atom-Noak 1945, #2 Strate Organisation 1949, #3 was Futura 1950, #4 was club Meteor 1952) and co-editor - with Lars-Erik Helin and Gabriel Setterborg - of Sweden's #2 fanzine *Cosmos News* (1954, #1 was *Vår Rymd* 1952). He wrote a lot about sf and fandom in the papers, a few books, and generally covered modern culture, especially rock music, movies, comics and popular literature.

Mr Sidén was there as it happened, as stated in his photo book *The Boy With the Paisley Shirt* (2021, in English with a vinyl single, available on Amazon):

Beatles, Stones, Who, Kinks, Hendrix, Dusty and Tages - the music explosion of the 60's in Gothenburg seen through the lens of Hans Sidén's camera. He sat so close to the band that he could've leaned forward and touched Lennon's shoes when The Beatles played Cirkus in October 1963. He bantered with Rolling Stones in a hotel room, went to

the discoteque with The Who and had dinner with The Troggs. He hitched a ride with Tages to Stockholm and with The Hep Stars to Borås, served Cat Stevens home made pizza, lent stacks of Tamla Motown and Stax singles to English DJ Clem Dalton and hung around every soundcheck when the stars came to town. Journalist, illustrator and author Hans Sidén had front row tickets to the music scene in Gothenburg, Sweden all through the sixties and happened to bring his cameras.

That beats touching Erik Andersson's shoes when he filked or drinking tea as Steve Sem-Sandberg howled and owled!

I met Sidén a few times. A nice fellow how knew a lot about popular culture. Though he wasn't too fanactive in older days, earlier he was often one of rather few to report from out conventions - as examples from previous issues show. Here's another one, from Göteborgs Handels och Sjöfartstidning Sep 23 1967 (signature "Fotobomber" fits the camera carrying Sidén), "*Science Fiction Meet*":

Around 40 sf aficionados from the whole Nordic area gathers this spring in Gothenburg for a convention. It'll be the 12th convention of its kind and it's arranged by the supporters of the field in Gothenburg, who call the event Götcon 1, as it's the first time Gothenburg has this honour. Among the topics of the convention we note sf (science fiction) subjects in today's culture, sf Vs fantasy (scientifically impossible fiction), information on foreign sf and fandom (sf fans). Films are shown and records are played, among them Orson Welles' War of the Worlds. An award, Alvar, is also handed out. The adventures take place in the Björngårds Villa and visits of several famous friends of sf are expected.

Gabriel Setterborg here covers how Club Cosmos was founded https://clubcosmos-net.translate.goog/history1.php?_x_tr_sl=no&_x_tr_tl=sv&_x_tr_hl=sv&_x_tr_pto=wapp noting eg how young Hans Sidén at that time already "subscribed to several American sf magazines". Subbing to foreign mags ("several"!) is advanced for a boy hardly out of high school. For one thing we had currency export restrictions. And English was first foreign school languages since only 1944.

Hans Sidén was a legend!

Eurocon, 7-9 June, Uppsala

As this issue was delayed by some computer glitches and a heap of other things, to save time I'll resort to simply give you the pictures of the tweets I posted during the con, with original captions, and to this add some running comments. Besides, it's no point in wasting too much on a conrep nowadays, since this artform has degenerated. A good conrep used to be a witty thing, a fannish reporter walking around making humours observations, funny associations and even puns. Conreps today are mostly dry diaries, or even worse: I've seen examples attempting to be mordernist, pretentious literature. All so boring! No, I'll do it this way. BTW, you'll find other reports online if you

Science fiction-träff

Ett 40-tal science fiction-älskare från hela Norden samlas under påsken till kongress i Göteborg. Det blir den tolfte kongressen i sitt slag och den anordnas av branschens tillskyndare i Göteborg som kallar mötet Götcon 1 eftersom det är första gången Göteborg får den äran. Bland kongressens ämnen märks SF (science fiction)-inlag i dagens kultur, SF kontra Fantasy (ej vetenskapligt hållbar fiction), Orientering om utländsk sf och fandom (sf-fans). Filmer visas och skivor spelas, bl a Orson Welles Världarnas krig. Ett pris, "Alvar", utdelas också. Äventyrligheterna utspelas i Björngårdsvillan och man väntar besök av flera bemärkta sf-vänner.
(Fotobomber)



google "Konflikt Uppsala", as they named the convention fitting Mr Vladof Putler's recent destructive hobby (to kill, rape, steal and maim).

You'll get my @SFJournalen tweets in approximately chronological order. In my first tweet we see fen Seppo Laine, Tony Elgenstierna (both active since 4+ decades), lone Ukrainian attendee Sergei Paltsun (among other things author of 100+ short stories, he told me) and Latvian publisher Imants. Seppo manned the well-stocked second hand book table, where I eventually obtained a well-filled bag of reading material at €1 apiece.

Next one shows infamous fan fraud couple Mr JH Humbug and Mr Belly, still owning Swefandom 1000s of € and numerous gaffations from they-were-tired-of-their-shit ex-fen. (Mr Humbug looked rather bleak and weak.)

But here they talked about a new book dealing with Sam J Lundwall and his publishing house Delta, written by Jörgen Jörälv (to the right). Mr Lundwall now 80+ feels he has to speed up and get everything out of his head before Roscoe comes to collect him. We learned he has written a 3000 page (!) manuscript and recorded a bunch of new songs - neither of which will be published! Sam J strangely seems to want to rub out stuff instead of add to his life. He has also burnt his entire archive. Jörgen's book is a tour de force, in which he through careful collection of sources Sam hasn't thrown on the fire, has fairly reconstructed Delta's and its editor's career (including details even your humble sf historian didn't know).



Next tweet: Uppsala University main building that hosted it is beautiful, as you can see in my. Next tweet:



The main hall for opening and track 1 program is like Parthenon in Rome! But I heard the rent was astronomical (ca €50K) and there was only a cafe, no proper bar (bheer €7-8! - too expensive for me, alas). I attended panel on flying cars and other sf vehicle. Danish futurologist Klaus Mogensen centre. (Up to 2/3 of the program were panels. Many were too loosely handled, allowing panelists to mumble for minutes. I suggest they should have an egg timer

interrupting everyone after 1 minute!) Next tweet: GoHs were presented: Johan Egerkrans (Swe), Merja Polvinen (Fin), Francesco Verso (Ita), Martha Wells (US). Far right interior of Uppsala's SF/Fantasy bookstore, small but well stocked. Middle: Finnfandom made an English presentation publication, but I simply had to point out that its fandom timeline is *wrong!* The first sf con in Finland was King-Con in 1982 (I was among those behind, while main culprits were Tom Ölander and Sam J Lundwall). Wells' GoH speech - not shown in tweet - was rather interesting, defining skiffy as "what makes





metaphors real". KJ Noren - next tweet - made a re-run of his filksong history (one of *far to few fandom-connected* program items!). Entrance hall had perhaps 20 tables for publishers and fan groups. (I put up hastily written info for *Intermission* and writers' list SKRIVA and to my amazement got at least half a dozen to sign up to each!) Ian Watson had fun coffee-klatsches. Next:

Here the program book and catches from the book tables: A Swedish Captain Future novel,

translated by *Bertil Falk* BTW, and the very same English original. Some space opera went into my big book bag (I have to prepare for *Bertil Falk's Space Opera Prize!*) and else generally older skiffy. Books were better before word processors came. They have made authors shitting out words like they had loose stomach... Another tweet:

Nordic trends panel correctly assessed fantasy was most popular here. A lot of young authors have popped up the last 10-15 years (my SKRIVA list has contributed, several members later coming in book form!).

Myself, well, find most fantasy superficial, naive and uninspiring! How



some some can stand swords and magic is beyond me. Eurocon had ca 160 program items and about 600 fen turned up, from the Nordic countries, UK, Poland, Romania, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, France, Switzerland, Germany, the US, Belgium and probably countries forgot. An exoplanets panel is today almost old news. New planets are found daily. What astronomers now

try is to analyse their atmosphere (from the sun's light passing planet edges) for oxygen and other chemicals that indicate life.

Next tweet:

The weather was super! As I sat in the sun reading, I guess, Captain Future the gang from the SW fan club Swedish Jedi Order came by. We talked about the big Star Wars-



gathering they organised in the TV house some 25 years ago. Back in the con I noticed a very long signing line to Johan Egerkrans, whose retrofuturistic world has sold to Hollywood.

The energy panel talked a lot about "alternative" energy and good old nuclear power. He wasn't announced, but suddenly in trotted Professor Jan Wallenius, an old Trollhätte fan, now projecting Small Modular Reactors through his upstart firm Blykalla (he should have been in the panel). I call him Swefandom's Dr Strangelove. A space panel was very pessimistic about Man in Space: radiation, 0G degradation, absolute zero temp, loneliness... Killjoys! Moving on:

I hope Finnish skiffy poetry publisher Matti Jarvinen won't I promised to help proof a Swedish-Finnish



old poem about a balloon to the North Pole. (After all, I know about the Andrée expedition, old plural verbs and old spelling.) Martha Wells signature was almost as sought after as

Egerkrans'. The ESFS biz meet + con presentations were tedious and overlong, while the Swecon 2024 one was a breeze - it was decided for Stockholm. Sergei from Ukraine was seen talking a lot with Kirill from Russia, and explained the latter was against the war (but I doubt he could say that at home).

More from the entrance with book/info tables. And Jani Ylönen's genetics speech, which was interesting, a field almost as hot as AI and coming new fusion power!

And to the right my final haul from the hucksters. I count to 38 books. Oh Roscoe, when will I have time to read all of them...

At the closing ceremony, the Spirit of Swecon was caught and put into its bottle, a Eurocon flag was passed to Rotterdam for 2024 and one Anna Olsson Rousett won the Alvar fan-activity award.





ESFS awards were also announced. And on a serious note, handing one to John-Henri Humbug is like awarding embezzler Bernie Maddoff. See lastish documentation on how he (with Mr Belly) mass produced fanfund "votes", When his phone was insufficient (no mobiles in 1987!) he simply forged signatures or just jotted down a list: "Votes for Belly, collected by JHH" (top in ill). Documentation is 100%. We sees brown-licking from two in the

ESFS board, who further refuse to released nominations to cover their weak support. Corrupt!



(Köster på Bellis, insamlade av
 JHH enligt de finansiella)
**He invented dozens of ballots
 ignoring signature requirement!**
 1. Emma
 2. Anders F. Forberg
 3. Gabriel Stein
 4. Jonas Björnsjö
 5. KG Johansson
 6. John Hall
 7. Lena Johansson
 JHH 70: -

The last pic isn't from Twitter. On the train station on my way back to Stockholm, I bumped into Kirill Pleshkov from Russia. I had already of course met and talked with him on the con. Kirill reminded me that we've know each other for 25 years. Despite his negative stance on Putlers terrorising war I found it a bit difficult to really convey my thoughts on this topic. He said most Russians had no understanding for the war, but most would refrain from openly show an opinion. There's only a minority gung-ho war mongers, despite what Kremlin propaganda claims. Apparently Sweden hasn't stopped visas for Russians. I guess we keep a little opening for critics who need to bug out. But Finland was closed. Kirill told me he had to go....through Turkey.

(Where one Mr Erdogan blackmails NATO to stop Sweden joining. It seems we'll get in anyway... Latest news is that Erdogan wants to be let into the EU to approve us - sweet dreams! The EU has already seen Turkish EU negotiations collapse. The deal now seems to be that Sweden "promises" to do it's best to help Turkey into EU - which doesn't mean much. We will also have annual security conferences - OK, fine. I think the US threw in a few F16s too, but not the more advanced F35.)

Generally about Eurocon:

- Too many panels with mumbling slow takers taking themselves too seriously. Almost no fannish program. Too boring sercon! Where's fannishness and fun?

+ Good site. Good weather. At least one good book corner.

- Too expensive bheer. (Inflation times, I know. One solution could be to make con discount deal with a nearby pub. But today's concoms seem to be fat cats with no understanding of high costs for poor fans)

Lots of fen from many corners of the world.

- Skip silly, ethically questionable "Codes of Conduct". Those are rubber rules and often

used to silence freedom of opinion. "CoCs" have several times violated Lex Nycon! The Laws of

the Land cover what what you can and cannot do and what rights you have. They are used in a hypocritical way. The Dublin Worldcon a couple of years ago con CoCted it was perfectly fine to attack history's greatest editor, life-time anti-fascist John W Campbell, calling him a "bloody fascist" from the main stage. CoCs are codified, biased intolerance. Their basic ideas are against the freedom of fandom.

(A month later and due to that this has been late I went to Finncon 2023 in Tampere. But I'll think I wait with reporting from that... I remember having a backpain through that con, eating painkillers, feeling miserable.)

Anyway, this has been too delayed already and it's already 18, perhaps 20 pages.

A Science Fiction World and A Plague Dissected

We live in a science fiction world. First we had a world-wide pandemic. Then that asshole Vladolf Putler started a stupid, criminal, murderous war that even Tom Clancy would have been ashamed imagining. And in recent months we began to see really impressive Artificial Intelligence popping up. It will improve further and will only become more impressive over time...until we all turn into paperclips. (Hopefully not!) On top of that NASA is going back to the Moon, SpaceX continues with reusable, cheaper-to-operate rockets landing on their tail just like Hergé's Tintin, while we watch rovers roam Mars in almost realtime, get daily sensational pictures from huge new telescopes peering at the edge of the universe: black holes billions of suns in weight, crashing star systems, thousands of new planets, where we look for life gases in their atmospheres. ..

Even little Sweden (500 years of "independence" from the Kalmar Union in 2023) aims for space. Within a year our Artic Circle space base Esrange will launch its and mainland Europe's first satellite, and a third Swede (after Christer and Jessica) will enter orbit. One Markus Wandt, civil engineer and former SAAB test pilot, is now scheduled to fly with Space X early 2024. I'm glad I didn't spend all those tumultuous years in the Swedish Space Movement for nothing!

Beside this, flying cars and fusion power are coming. And we may see the fall of self proclaimed Czar, in all but name. In all this the least sensational may be our little 200+ years neutral country sneaks into NATO. (It was a far fetched fantasy only a couple of years ago. Remind me to boycott Turkish Delight, BTW.)

A science fiction world. As I said.

Let's have a closer look at the first sf component: the pandemic.

Many are a bit embarrassed now. They stumbled along the wrong path and now their mistakes are obvious. On Eurocon recently a panelist babbled about how Sweden acted "totally irresponsibly" in the pandemic. The panel topic was something else, but it was as if he simply must get this accusation out of his troubled system.

Afterwards I told him how wrong he was. I showed statistics, news reports from respectable sources, etc. Sweden had among the lightest pandemic "restrictions" and fared among the very best. "Irresponsible"? I've done the math. Have a look at the figures, everything from official sources!



Your industrious editor and Kirill Pleshkov.

For 2020, the excess mortality in Sweden was about 4,700 people, while claimed number of deceased "from corona" officially was ca 9500. Numbers are from the government's own Central Statistics Agency (Statistiska Centralbyrån, SCB). It means that more than half of the deceased that year died WITH the corona virus, not FROM it.

The number of Swedes dying from the virus in 2020-2021 is claimed to be 14,666 (<https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/statistik-om-covid-19/statistik-over-antal-avlidna-i-covid-19/> - from the government's own Social Board, use a translation site) which means that the number of claimed deaths from the coronavirus in 2021 was about 5170. (The above total of 14 666 for 2020-21 minus the ca 9500 of 2020.)

The total deaths in 2021 was 91958 (<https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/manniskorna-i-sverige/doda-i-sverige/>) which is roughly 6000 fewer than in 2020 (=98124) and means NO excess mortality 2021! There was an under mortality. A number of deceased were, so to speak, "moved" from 2021 to 2020.

Let's calculate the mortality percentage in the five years before the pandemic, with official numbers from the Central Statistics Agency:

Year	Deaths	In tot popul
2015	90907	9851017
2016	90982	9995153
2017	91972	10120242
2018	92185	10230185
2019	88766	10327589

(" / " below of course means "divided by".)

Total deaths 2015-19: 454812 / Deaths in total population 50524186 = 0.00900186694 gives mortality as a fraction (X below). (I use all decimal numbers I get to reduce errors.) Expressed as a percentage it becomes 0.900%.

And here's the mortality in the two pandemic years 2020 and 2021:

Year	Deaths	In tot popul
2020	98124	10379295
2021	91958	10452236

Total deaths 190082 / Deaths in total population 20831531 = 0.00912472539 gives mortality as a fraction (Y below). Expressed as a percentage it becomes 0.9100124.

Excess mortality in 2020-2021 compared to the five-year average before the pandemic, becomes X minus Y = 0.00012285845.

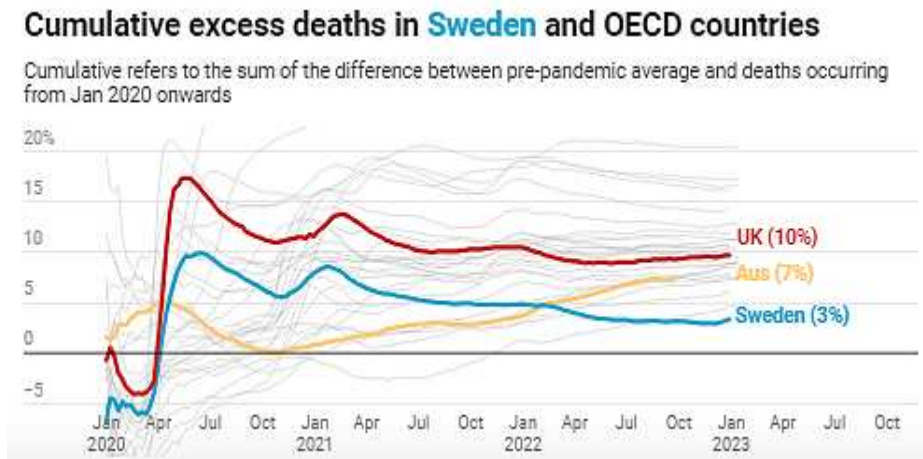
This figure - total excess mortality during two pandemic years - must be multiplied by total population those same years, to obtain the excess mortality number, and that becomes 2559.32960979 (with all decimals the computer gives you are no extra charge) or rounded: 2559.

It was claimed that approx 15,000 died "from" the coronavirus in 2020 and 2021, but the the total excess mortality for the two pandemic years was just over 2500:

ONE SIXTH OF THE CLAIMED NUMBERS!

There's no "cherry picking". All data is from official government sources. There's no magic complicated maths - just multiply, divide, plus, minus. Deaths from the ordinary flu is 500-1000/year in Sweden. The corona virus deaths was just about twice that - bad enough, but nothing near the hysteria it caused!

As we saw that the pandemic beginning to calm down considerably early 2022, figures became available and conclusions could be drawn: one country had no lockdowns, didn't close schools, didn't order mandatory face masks, didn't force or pressure people to vaccinate, and so on. And many loud-mouthed self-assured opinion makers and politicians should now learn something; **SWEDEN HAD THE LOWEST EXCESS DEATHS** in Europe (or among the very lowest).



<https://www.news.com.au/technology/science/sweden-has-the-lowest-excess-mortality-rate-after-the-pandemic-despite-refusing-to-lock-down/news-story/df50001366bb09b6a20421520cbfbf53>

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/data-show-sweden-lower-excess-death-rate-than-most-europe-despite-forgoing-strict-lockdowns>

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-europe-mortality-idUSKBN2BG1R9>

The reason *claimed* "corona deaths" in Sweden weren't reflected in excess deaths is that they were defined extremely wide. If you died from *any cause*, but had the slightest traces of the virus or perhaps antibodies (ie, you just had it) it was ticked in the box for a "virus death". That of course inflates claimed victims hugely!

Other countries (Norway and others) had stricter death definitions, which of course make comparisons totally meaningless. The best epidemic statistics comes from excess deaths, as they show actual mortality and you see the real effect of an epidemic .

Most governments had their pre-planned epidemic strategies organised since many years back, you can be sure. They were in a think binder in the office safe of the prime minister or president (the surgeon general having a copy too). It was based on science and very careful planning. The plan would look like something what Sweden did in practice.

Sweden stuck to the plan. *Others panicked!* Some idiot statisticians, eg from Imperial College in London, claimed they had magic "models " that could "predict" that "half a million Brits would die from the little buggger within a year". Or whatever the fearmongers claimed.

Computer models are lousy oracles, they are more like computer games. They just give you what you feed them and expect. As you construct and train models you actively *push* them towards what you counted on from the beginning!

Some of the panic measures may even have been fueling the pandemic. If you force a whole family to stay close together for weeks, they will infect each once a little virus sneaks in. Draconian measures also make people angry and lowers the respect for all and any measures! And when you try to stop a virus, you slow down the build up of any herd immunity. Worrying people will probably also affect their health negatively.

And as our chief epidemiologists Dr Tegnell noted: The scientific support for face masks is surprisingly weak. He noted that eg any protective effect is ruined by virus caught on the outside, which get on your hands when you handle the mask. If you feel "safer" with a mask, you will also take more risks.

Meanwhile, the education of children was hampered for a long time. Small businesses went down the drain. The economy shrank. Huge government credits and handouts were hewn upon us. art of the inflation we see now is undoubtedly from the expansion of government spending during the pandemic. As it wasn't backed by more income and increased production - it meant borrowing, which means creating a debt, which means the government pandemic handouts came back inflation (and in the future as increased taxes). Bad economy always means higher mortality. Many countries have seen "average expected life span" dropping- if only marginally, still noticeable. I haven't studied suicide statistics, but I'm sure people's mental well-being took a heavy hit due to house arrests and orders to cover your face wherever you went. Mental depression will also cause deaths without suicides - your body weakens and you take less care of it.

Why lockdowns, forced vaccination in places, closed borders, mass testing, vaccination passes, etc if it had no effects, or possibly negative effects? *Mass hysteria*, I'd say.

It wasn't a conspiracy from pharmaceuticals wanting to harvest gold. It wasn't a secret plan from the "deep state" wanting to...well, I don't know, I've never understood the depths of that evil or what the heck it is. It was human psychology on turbo. On one side we had health authorities who finally felt important, feeling their egos and purposes being justified. Professor So-and-so of virology, PhD Smith in statistics and datamodelling "expert" Hacker Jones made beautiful curves and graphs. On the other side we had politicians who knew that in the next election they'd be an easy target if they were perceived to "not have done enough".

Caution, effects on economy, education, people's mental state etc was all thrown out the window together with the careful scientifically based pre-plans. It doesn't take much for mass hysteria to break out. I remember how sightings of flying saucers periodically have been almost on a mass

hysteria level, especially in the 1950's with all those flying saucers invading movies. We have seen mass hysteria in the environmental "debate" (though there is almost no debate!) from at least the late 1960's and on. The Club of Rome guaranteed in beautiful, scientific curves that most resources would be depleted, pollution would have multiplied by several magnitudes and we'd have widespread famine by the 1990's. The doom never happened, but every voice heard since continue to cry wolf!

In an afterword to his interesting anti-environmentalist novel *State of Fear* (2004), Michael Crichton notes - and it might surprise you:

Imagine that there is a new scientific theory that warns of an impending crisis, and points to a way out. /Supported by/ leading scientists, politicians, and celebrities around the world. Research is funded by distinguished philanthropies, and carried out at prestigious universities. The crisis is reported frequently in the media. The science is taught in college and high school classrooms.

...Its supporters included Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Winston Churchill. It was approved by Supreme Court justices Oliver Wendell Holmes and Louis Brandeis, who ruled in its favor. The famous names who supported it included Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone; activist Margaret Sanger; botanist Luther Burbank; Leland Stanford, founder of Stanford University; the novelist HG Wells; the playwright George Bernard Shaw; and hundreds of others. Nobel Prize winners gave support. Research was backed by the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations. The Cold Springs Harbor Institute was built to carry out this research, but important work was also done at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, and Johns Hopkins. Legislation to address the crisis was passed in states from New York to California.

These efforts had the support of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Medical Association, and the National Research Council. It was said that if Jesus were alive, he would have supported this effort.

...Those who opposed the theory were shouted down and called reactionary, blind to reality, or just plain ignorant... Today, we know that this famous theory that gained so much support was actually pseudoscience. The crisis it claimed was nonexistent. And the actions taken in the name of this theory were morally and criminally wrong. Ultimately, they led to the deaths of millions of people.

The theory was eugenics

Sweden's National Day

June 6th is Sweden's July 4th. This year it was special, because it's now 500 years since "modern" - in a sense - Sweden was born. We left the Kalmar union. The new king elected cut ties with the Catholic Church and introduced many new administrative institutions. As I've been a bit stressed by a computer mishap and being short of time, I decided to let my friend CharlieGPT explain the background. Below is what Mr Electronic Brain came up with!

To understand the significance of Sweden's National Day, we must first look back to the era of the Kalmar Union. Established in 1397, the Kalmar Union united the kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden under a single monarch. However, this union was marked by power struggles and conflicts, leading to the eventual dissolution of the union in the early 16th century. Sweden emerged as an independent nation during this period, forging its own path towards self-determination.

Gustav Vasa played a pivotal role in Swedish history, and his reign is considered a turning point in the country's development. Under his leadership, Sweden achieved independence from the Kalmar Union, leading to the establishment of a sovereign state. Gustav Vasa's ascension to the throne on June 6th, 1523, symbolizes the birth of modern Sweden and serves as a cornerstone for the celebration of the National Day.

Another important event that underpins Sweden's National Day is the signing of the 1809 Instrument of Government Constitution. This document, ratified on June 6th, 1809, marked the transition from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. It laid the foundation for democratic principles, granting citizens certain rights and freedoms. The adoption of this constitution solidified Sweden's commitment to a system of governance that respects individual liberties and equality before the law.

Artur Hazelius, the founder of Skansen, an open-air museum in Stockholm, made significant contributions to Swedish culture and heritage preservation. Hazelius introduced the tradition of celebrating the Swedish flag on June 6th in the late 19th century. The Day of the Swedish Flag, observed at Skansen, became an annual event that fostered national pride and unity. Today, the raising of the Swedish flag on National Day continues to symbolize the importance of national identity and cohesion.

While some may propose using Midsummer Day as an alternative date for Sweden's National Day, it is

important to consider the historical and cultural significance of June 6th. Midsummer Day, celebrated on the summer solstice, holds its own importance in Swedish traditions. It is a cherished holiday that signifies the arrival of summer and is deeply rooted in folklore and customs. However, shifting the National Day to Midsummer would risk diluting the historical context and unique identity associated with June 6th. Moreover, Midsummer celebrations already have a distinct cultural significance and do not necessarily require the additional layer of representing the nation.

Sweden's National Day, celebrated on June 6th, is an occasion to commemorate the nation's history, independence, and unity. The date's connections to the dissolution of the Kalmar Union, the reign of King Gustav Vasa, the signing of the 1809 Instrument of Government Constitution, and Artur Hazelius' efforts to preserve Swedish heritage all contribute to its significance. While Midsummer Day holds its own place in Swedish culture, it is important to preserve the distinctiveness of June 6th as the National Day, honoring the historical milestones that have shaped Sweden into the nation it is today.

Here's AE again instead of AI: While the above is all correct, the text is repetitive, lacks a little "life", is a bit stale and many details are left out. For instance, usurper Gustav Vasa began his deeds after the Danish king committed the infamous Stockholm Bloodbath when oppositional noblemen (Including Gustav's father) were executed. Gustav went to the province of Dalecarlia to get support for cause. They hesitated, so he went on his way on skis (it was winter). But then the Dalecarlians made up their mind to support Gustav Vasa and sent off skiing couriers, who caught up with him after 90 km. This is the inspiration for the today famous Vasa Race, the world's biggest ski race getting 10 000's of skiers in early March every year.

Another point missed is that the Swedes don't celebrate June 6th as flamboyantly as eg the Norwegians, with their May 17th national day. It may be because Midsummer splits the focus, but more important is perhaps that our pivotal events are so far back that the enthusiasm becomes a bit bland. June 6th wasn't even official national day (by act of parliament) until 1983.

Anyway, I sometimes think that the dissolution of the Kalmar Union is nothing to celebrate. It was originally formed to counter the might of the Hanseatic trading league. If the Nordic countries had stuck together their clout would have been bigger, and perhaps we'd have a chair at the G7 table (or a G8). Historians have also in recent decades re-evaluated king Gustav Vasa - he was quite rough around the edges in his reign.



king Gustav Vasa in the Nordic Museum.

History Corner

There are lots in store for this's Hysteria Corner! We start with Uncle Hugo Gernsback (probably a "bloody fascist" if we'd believe a certain Worldcon stage invader...) and I found a stash of stuff about Yours Truly - promoting space, giving writing advice, finding the origin of "fan" etc. So let's not procrastinate...

AI is now the second hottest show in town (#1 is still Russia's super-stupid war!) and Mr Gernsback speculated on if computers could think in his 1956 tech newsletter *Forecast*. He correctly concluded that they must be taught (now we call it machine learning), but they still wouldn't be as creative as Newton, Edison, Tesla, Verne or Wells in a thousand years, he says. His solution was to keep a *real* human brain alive artificially in a nutrition solution with connected blood vessels. But the brain must be alive when connected so "...steps must be taken to obtain the brain while it is still normal and

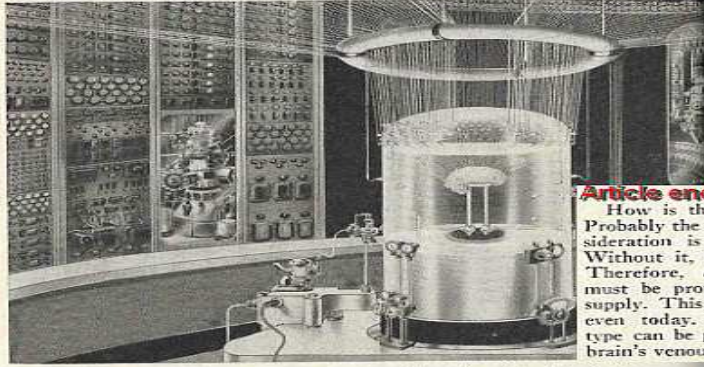
THE ELECTRONICIZED BRAIN

I HAVE always had little patience with those who claim that so-called electronic brains will eventually do away with constructive thinking or reasoning. So many people—even academicians—fall into the trap of

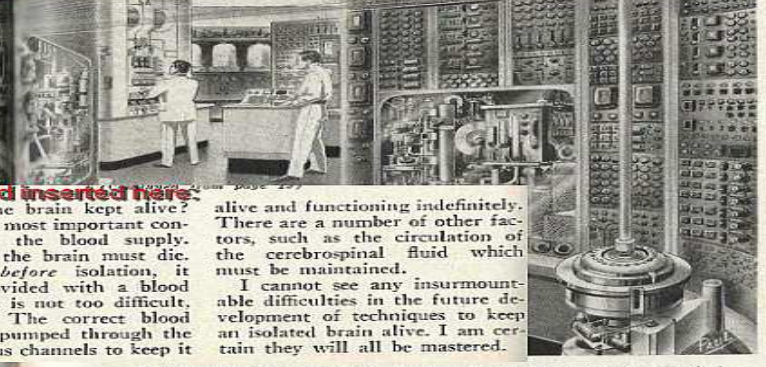
arguing about whether an electronic brain can think—or reason. Before one can argue successfully on such a subject, one must know *what thinking or reasoning is*. No one has ever yet answered this question. We sim-

ply do not know. It is the old argument about an equally confused subject: Do animals think? Can they reason? Many scientists answer in the affirmative, others in the negative. So with electronic machines

that solve complex problems. Nevertheless humans, the "lower" animals and electronic brains have many limitations; all work differently under varying conditions. Yet all must be taught in some manner. Isolate a dozen



Present-day "electronic brains" cannot think. The electronicized future intellectual brain is grown in a special tank in a vitalizing solution heated



Article end inserted here.

How is the brain kept alive? Probably the most important consideration is the blood supply. Without it, the brain must die. Therefore, before isolation, it must be provided with a blood supply. This is not too difficult, even today. The correct blood type can be pumped through the brain's venous channels to keep it

alive and functioning indefinitely. There are a number of other factors, such as the circulation of the cerebrospinal fluid which must be maintained.

I cannot see any insurmountable difficulties in the future development of techniques to keep an isolated brain alive. I am certain they will all be mastered.

to 98.8". It has its own blood supply. Hundreds of electrodes attached to it work a multitude of machines for industrial or other purposes.

newly born human beings from all human contact by feeding them from simple machines for five years and nearly all of them will grow up mere animals. Without human touch and teaching, you will rear near-idiots.

Bring up insects in isolation and nothing similar will happen. Why? The insect has always been brought up in quasi-isolation. It needs no teaching because it is a self-contained entity with a miraculous mechanism: instinct by inheritance. It does not learn as a rule. Rather, it will do the same acts over and over, whether necessary or not, blindly and without reasoning.

● The electronic brain, like the human, must be taught—it cannot function by itself. The problems it is to solve must be carefully stated by specialists, usually technicians and mathematicians. This is nearly always done by means of punched cards. Unless the problem is carefully and precisely stated, the electronic computer cannot function. Indeed, it can make all sorts of mistakes, if not properly guided. Only highly intelligent technicians can delineate the problems correctly. It is, therefore, doubtful that an electronic brain will acquire intellect in the foreseeable future.

Could an electronic brain or

the most elaborate computer ever turn out new and important inventions? Could it be an inventor like Edison? Could it make great discoveries like a Faraday, a Nikola Tesla? Could it think up Newton's law of gravitation, Einstein's theory of relativity?

Could it write all of Shakespeare's dramas—or Jules Verne's or H. G. Wells' technical forecasts of the future? Or could it compose Verdi's or Wagner's operas?

● No, positively no! No pure machine will ever acquire intellect and do these things, at least not for the next thousand years. Eventually yes, when we succeed in growing a reasonable facsimile of the human brain in the laboratory—an actual brain in a tank, equipped with electronic tentacles and means of communication for intercourse with the outside world.

How do we get such an Electronicized Brain? We breed it. We keep it alive for centuries in a special vitalizing broth, just as famed Dr. Alexis Carrel kept a chicken heart alive and growing in a glass tank for decades.

● Such brains would not be exact duplicates of present human brains—they would be different in certain respects, inasmuch as their main purpose

would be intellectual specialization, for instance, in literature, invention, the arts, physics, etc.

Since such a brain would be completely isolated, it would have to operate a vast array of electronic instruments, computers, magnetic tape recorders, typewriters and dozens of other machines. Hence a specialized human brain will be required for future "industrial" "thinking" machines.

How can such a human brain be "wired" and connected to the vast array of instruments which it is supposed to operate?

● There is no difficulty about that—even today. Indeed, in many instances in the past decade, electroencephalographs have been connected directly to the human brain by means of suitable electrodes. This is done by piercing the skull with a number of small holes. Platinum wires are then inserted into the skull openings which contact the brain in various locations. It is a curious fact that brain tissue is absolutely insensitive. It can even be cut by a surgeon without anesthetic—the patient feels no pain whatsoever.

Thus there seems to be no valid reason why future laboratory brains could not be permanently wired, provided proper safeguards have been taken against infection, too great a pressure against the brain by the electrodes, etc.

How do we obtain such brains? In the future—maybe several thousands of years hence—science may have advanced sufficiently so that such brains will actually be "grown" independently of a human body. Just as Dr. Carrell could grow live tissue from small pieces of a former live chicken heart suspended in sterile bouillon, so science may be able to grow human brains.

But long before that, scientists and other altruistic volunteers will have donated their brains to science before their death. This will be true particularly of those unselfish men who have incurable diseases.

● It is not possible to utilize the brain after death has set in, particularly if the body has been ravaged by a long illness, such as cancer. Hence steps must be taken to obtain the brain while it is still normal and healthy.

This means special legislation and new medical laws, to allow a board of surgical specialists to secure a living brain that has been willed by its owner to science prior to his demise.

Before this time arrives, brains of criminals condemned to death will first be used for such experimental purposes. This will make new medical laws necessary, once it has been proved that isolated living brains are a possibility.

End inserted above.

healthy...a living brain that has been willed by its owner to science prior to his demise." Hugo must have read Ed Hamilton's Captain Future stories, where we have Simon Wright, a "brain in a box".

I found a stash of ahrvid-related clips from my Royal Library digging. So bear with me. First the last breath of a project I forgot. *SF News* May 28, 1986 (paper not stated but the narrow column style of the time points to evening rag Expressen)

Sf nytt

Svensk science fiction har gott rykte internationellt, och nu vill man göra det ännu bättre i öst. Det sker genom en antologi med svenska noveller, som ges ut i Polen inom en snar framtid. Elva noveller av bl a Bertil Mårtensson, Ahrvid Engholm och David Nessle skall ingå.

Swedish sf has a good reputation internationally /AE: Really?! and now they want to make it even better in the East. That comes with an anthology of Swedish stories to be published in Poland soon. Eleven short stories by eg Bertil Mårtensson, Ahrvid Engholm and David Nessle are included.

From what I remember the publisher went into economic hardships and the anthology never came. It was a project began couple of years earlier with my correspondent Ryszard Jansinki in Szczecin. I put a lot effort into finding and selecting stories, which he'd find a translator for. I had come in contact with Ryszard in 1982 when Poland was in turmoil under marshall law. A pity the book went under. It could have been a gem!

And here a public lecture I have forgotten. From the today calendar of Dagens Nyheter, May 10th 1986.

Space in literature is the topic by sf expert Ahrvid Engholm in room 301, Citizen's Hall, 8pm. Stockholm's Space Movement arranging. Free Admission.

And a few months later I was at it again, Dagens Nyheter's calendar again for 22 Nov, 1986:

Ahrvid Engholm lectures about sf in the space age in the Citizen's Hall,

• OM RYMDEN i litteraturen handlar ett föredrag som science fictionexperten Ahrvid Engholm håller i rum 301, Medborgarhuset, kl 20. Stockholms Rymdrörelse arrangerar. Gratis inträde.

• AHRVID ENGHOLM håller föredrag om "Sciencefiction i rymdåldern" i Medborgarhusets rum 414 kl 19. Stockholms Rymdrörelse arrangerar. Fri entré.

Room 4141, 9pm. Stockholm's Space Movement arranging. Free Admission.

I don't remember much from these lectures (except I used OH plastic slides) but I'm pretty certain that next story article, "Put space to use" was a result from the last lecture, from late Dec 28th, Dagens Nyheter (it just took time to find....space):

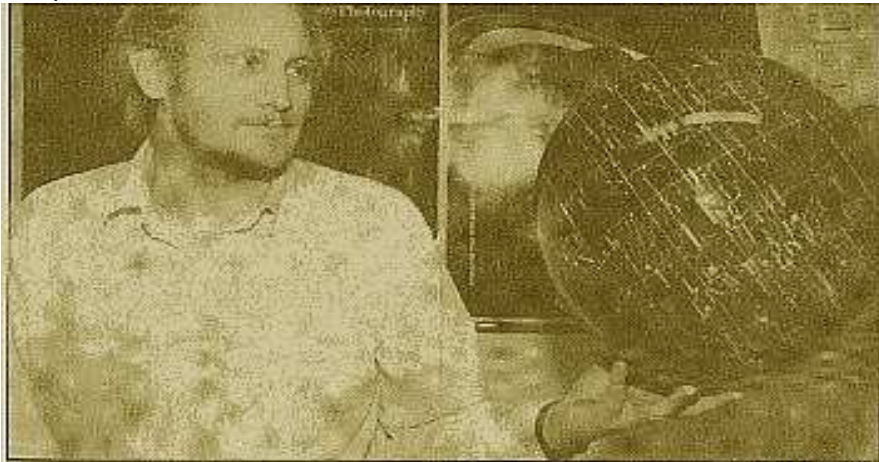
"Swedish politicians are too Earthbound. They have animated talk about the EC /EU/ Ahrvid Engholm in the Swedish Space movement says.

Man must take space in possession. Otherwise our planet will soon be devastated in series of crises and wars

in struggle for raw materials and food. That bleak future perspective is the force behind freelance journalist Ahrvid Engholm, 27, and his friends in the Swedish Space Movement.

They see the universe as a pioneer frontier for Mankind, with a cornucopia of resources just waiting for us. Which also must be put to use.

"No matter how much we save Earth's resources it won't be enough. Space is a security valve that means we can continue to feed growing population. The alternative is zero growth but that would only lead to struggle for resources, Ahrvid thinks. But the road to space is long. "There are certain technical limitations. It can't be solved today, perhaps not in 10-15 years, but in 50 years everything will look differently. That makes it more important to get going now. According to the Space Movement Swedish politicians haven't understood this. /An itsy- bitsy thing/ "They are too geo-centred. Debate if we should join the EC or not. But that's a petty question compared to important decisions facing us. But not even when they do bet on space they aim right. The only thing getting politicians to start space projects is if it creates jobs at SAAB Space or Volvo Aero Engines. They don't realise it may be a matter of the future of the entire humanity. The Space Movement wants parliament to give more money to the European space cooperation. They also want to scrap the Space Law that bans citizens to engage in space activity without a permit. "It a hair-rising that the government shall have a monopoly on something that important," Ahrvid says. When we visit the Space Movement's simple Stockholm office there's a film show about the Space Law. A hacker is arrested by the Security Police since he operates satellites from his computer. They hope to show the film in schools and youth centres but haven't reached that far yet. The economy is poor.../All about this film a couple off issues ago! Here I skip comments on the crazy "United Future" group. Would take too much time to put all things straight.../ He proudly shows how they have obtained a telescope, a computer, a photo lab, and a library of magazines, open for those curious about space. "We are for peaceful use of space. None of the superpowers will manage it alone, he says. But what kind of riches can you find? "Energy, minerals and food /space grown/. Sun-based solar power delivers three times as much energy wice as long as on Earth. The Moon and asteroids are full of interesting stuff to mine, powered by solar energy. This is what Ahrvid and his friends see as the first stage. The next stage is beginning to change planets, making the Earth-like, something called terraforming. "We could start on Mars. Spray charcoal on the poles to catch heat and melt them. Place organisms that produce oxygen. The pressure



— Svenska politiker är tilldelar för jordhanden. De får en upphetsad diskussion om UG, som ju är en fjuttifåra jämfört med rymden, säger Ahrvid Engholm i Svenska Rymdrörelsen.

"Ta rymden i bruk"

Rymdrörelsen befävar att vår planet kan ödeläggas av kriser och krig

AV JAN MALLMÖR

Människan måste ta rymden i besittning. Annars kommer vår planet snart att ödeläggas i en serie av kriser och krig i kamp för råvaror och föda.

Detta är den huvudsakliga budskapet i den senaste utgåvan av den svenska Rymdrörelsen, ett av de mest aktiva rymdrörelserna i Sverige.

De som uttrycker detta är huvudsakligen medlemmar i Rymdrörelsen, ett stort antal ungdomar som har varit på ett eller annat sätt i kontakt med rymden.

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will slowly rise. Making it possible for people to be there. All this is doable, but in a perspective of thousands of years," Ahrvid says. But should you manipulate nature like that? "Since there is no other life in the solar system we can experiment as much as we want. Terraforming is a natural process, we just speed it up. /In due time/ Ahrvid doesn't for a moment doubt this can be done. In due time. He sees the space movement and their sister groups around the world, as spearheads in a struggle for a future that must come. "Earth will else become a planet of stone and dirt, like Mars is today, What else would I do. This feels important for me. I'm driven by my interest in space and humanity's future /From Malmö to Östersund/ The Swedish Space movement is a non-profit organisation founded in 1984 intending to give new life to the Swedish space debate. There are subgroups from Malmö to Östersund, the biggest is in Stockholm with 300 members, out of a total of 500. Their aim is to promote peaceful space activity and spread knowledge about space. They write articles, hold lectures, make exhibitions and publish Space News (earlier title Space Life). They cooperate with similar organisations in about 10 countries, including Planetary Society in the US which has 100 000 members and is an important lobby group promoting more US space activity.



Above Isaac Asimov appearing in the Superman comics, though he is called Asa Ezaak!

I only vaguely remember giving those lectures. I don't think more than perhaps 10 people showed up, but one must have been the reporter with whom we later met up at the then brand new little Space Movement HQ (57 Skåne Street). I note terraforming takes thousands of years and more advanced space flight may take 50 years (we're near it now with SpaceX!). I still believe space is important for our future, but the UN has called off the "population explosion", it's highly unlikely we'll be depleted of resources, but we need space for new knowledge, new horizons, a backup if a huge comet hits us...and why not the huge adventure! Our Space Movement was perhaps a bit too early. It should be around now, when so much more space things happen!

Author Börje Crona often came to our cons. Here he reports in Dagens Nyheter 5 dec 1983 (and it was of course an exaggeration that all fen had beanies – it was probably only me):

(Caption: Ahrvid Engholm with the propeller beanie for fans. /Interestingly you only see a small rim of the beanie.)



Ahrvid Engholm i propeller försett tons-mössa.

Monstruös kongress

För vänner av marsmonster och resor till stjärnorna inföll julens år sedan den gångna helgen. De arrangerade Skandinavisk förening för science fiction (SDF) sin årliga kongress i Tekniska högskolans kårhus i Stockholms Svecon hallas arrangerades många och där sammanfördes föreläsare och författare med fans från hela landet.

Förslagen var lättast att komma igen – de bar den propellerförsedda mössan som är obligatorisk för alla närvarande.

Förmer som *Männen* och *Bländpinnen* visades för en intressant publik, och i pauserna redogjorde föreläsarna för hur de skriver, varför de skriver och vem som skriver åt dem.

(Bertil Mårtensson har exempelvis en väldigt snarast dator.)
Sj-präglat musik av Paul Lindbergs kvinnligt och världspremiären på ett skakande teaterstycke av David Neville och Erik Andersson var andra bejublade programpunkter.

För alla åhörare blev återställa ordningen i ordmanuskriptkonferens Sveriges Radio att sända en rapport från evenemanget i P3 kl 21 den nästkommande natten. CRONA

For friends of Mars monsters and trips to the stars Xmas happened past weekend. Scandinavian SF Association had its yearly convention in the Technical University student house. Swecon it is called, and brings together publishers and authors with fans from the whole country. Fans were easy to recognize – they wore that propeller beanie that is compulsory in these circumstances. Films like "Alien" and Bladerunner "were shown. And in pauses authors described how they write, why they write and who writes for them (Bertil Mårtensson eg has a well-behaving computer.) there was sf music by Paul Lindbergs quintet and world premiere of a shaking theatre play by David Nessle and Erik Andersson was another appreciated program item. To somewhat make the calendar right again, Swedish Radio will have a report from the event in P1 9pm the real Xmas Eve /Signed CRONA/

There's more Engholm in that found AE-stash. In Dagens Nyheter May 30, 2000 I explained where the word "fan" comes from (that it just from "fanatic" sounds to rough!) - *New idea for fan:*

Due to Catharina Grunbaum's language column last Saturday, a reader contacted us:

I have read about another theory than that "fan" comes from "fanatic" (Lat "fanum", temple). And that is that "fan" comes from the English "the fancy". My New Bantam English dictionary isn't sure "fan" is from "fanatic", and only says "perhaps fanatic. 19th Century British sports enthusiasts were called "the fancy" (whatever sport it was, horse racing, golf, cricket). Such a "fancy" (to imagine, to like) followed their sports heroes as an approving tail. "Fancy is in it's turn short for "fantasy", from Greek "phantasia" (to show).

There you have it. Do you think "fan" comes from "fanatic" or "the fancy"?

And here's comment to an editorial where I try to wake up local writers:

I took over the then new sf-mag Nova SF for couple of years, before John-Henri Humbug crashed it spectacularly by using it in his fan fund

fraud, nicking several \$K (but you'll only hear him claim making up phone lists of names were permissible: fingers + cookie jar = lie thru your false teeth!). I had written a similar piece for Jules Verne Magasinet earlier. Below Dagens Nyheter comments my *Advice for an sf writer, 1985:*

"To you who write" editor Ahrvid Engholm says in an editorial in the latest issue of sf-magazine Nova SF. Nova seems to get stories from its reader and in this issue Engholm has decided to give some advice to his enthusiastic but perhaps not as well trained contributions. It's a fine little article written by a weary but still optimistic /I already had a couple of years slushpile digging from Teknikmagasinet/ Engholm has to start from scratch: You must use a typewriter with clean types. The advices are wise and constructive: most must be retyped, try to spell right, the beginning is important. Ahrvid Engholm also likes the logical end. But most claimed "surprise ends" are far from surprising. And he employs the readers to avoid ends "where the sun turns into a nova" and in a giant explosion destroys persons and plot. "A good sf writer only lets the sun explode when it's necessary", Engholm maintains

I like the phrase that a good skiffy writer only let the sun explode when it's necessary...

Mailing Comments

Here comments to latest EAPA (there was no new NAPA, a mid July mlg is on. Intermission started in APAs, that's why MCs...though now also goes to some others fortunate). BTW, why not do a fanzine yourself! Fandom as we know it is sinking, and as it is flooded with silly superhero costumes, brainless games and pointless sword & sorcery. You see few of the traditional sf fanzines! I suggest: do a zine and you'll become rich, healthy and trufannish!

Nya uppslag för fan

Med anledning av Catharina Grünbaums språkspalt i lördags har en läsare hört av sig:

Jag har läst om en annan teori än den att "fan" kommer från "fanatic" (från latinets "fanum", tempel). Och den är att "fan" kommer från engelskans "the fancy". Mitt New Bantam English Dictionary är inte alls säkert på att "fan" är från "fanatic", utan säger bara "perhaps fanatic".

"The fancy" var benämningen på brittiska sportentusiaster på 1800-talet. (Vilken sport det nu kan ha varit, hästsport, golf, cricket.)

Ett sådant "fancy" (föreställa sig, gilla) följde med sina sporthjältar som en gillande svans. "Fancy" är i sin tur en förkortning av "fantasy", från grekiskans "phantasia", visa.

Ahrvid Engholm

Råd till en sf-författare

"TILL DIG SOM SKRIVER" skriver redaktör Ahrvid Engholm en ledare i senaste numret av sciencfictiontidningen Nova.

Tydligen får Nova in en mängd noveller från sina läsare, och i detta nummer har Engholm beslutat förmedla några råd till sina entusiastiska men kanske inte alltid så tränade bidragsgivare.

Det är en fin liten artikel, skriven av luttrad men fortfarande optimistisk redaktör. Engholm får börja från scratch: "Du måste skriva maskin med rengjorda typer..."

Råden är kloka och konstruktiva: det mesta måste skrivas om – försök stava rätt – början är viktig

Ahrvid Engholm talar sig också varm för det logiska slutet: de flesta förment överraskande slut är allt annat än överraskande.

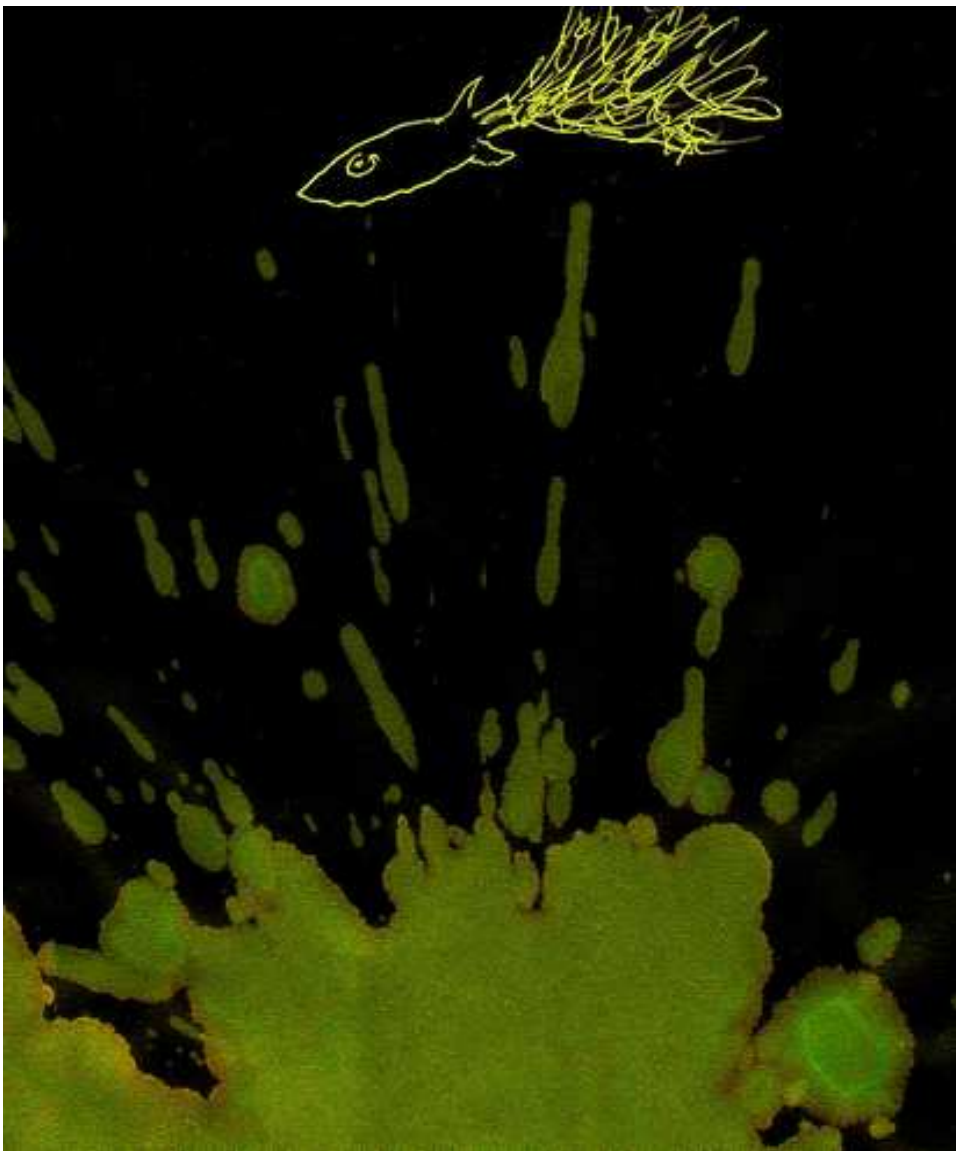
Och han väddar till läsarna att undvika slut "där solen blir en nova", och i en jätte-explosion gör slut på både personer och intrig. "En bra sf-författare låter bara solen explodera när det behövs", framhåller Engholm.

MÅRTEN BLOMKVIST

Garth Spencer: Congrats for your fan fund adventures! Waiting for your revelations about SF Canada...

Intermission's fanzine blockade means no copy of *Intermission* goes to the Kermlin. It'll hit them hard! (The concept of a fanzine blockade was BTW invented in 1978 by one Marvyn de Vil in Tullinge, AFAIK he's the first to announce one and use that exact term. The first target was one Mr Belly, due some of the evil doings he was up to already then. Thus spoke the fandom historian.)

Henry Grynsten: No, when you urge for sharply increased "equality" you *cannot* refer to science. First, you can't point to *science* ("naturvetenskap" in Swedish) as the word is used in English. You merely refer to *social sciences* ("samhällsvetenskap" etc in Swedish). Secondly, these soft social sciences you think are science has since the 1970s and on been undermined by postmodernism and similar anything-goes-ideology.



A rocket dropping an Atomic Blob...or what? Ask artist Lars LON Olsson.

logically also is the force behind - what has been named - the growing replication crisis:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Replication_crisis Replication means the ability of independent researchers to get the data, replicate the experiments or investigations, run the calculations...and get the same result. Then we have science and confirmed hypothesis. What can't be replicated *isn't science*. And more and more of claimed science *has shown to be irreproducible* (especially soft research as social sciences). Your claimed backing of "science" (eg social sciences) is very weak! Thirdly, what we talk about is ethics. That is asking "what is good and what is bad"? Calculations, test tubes, meter readings can't answer what "good" is! You need some sort of deep philosophical reasoning to *try* to find answers to ethical questions. Science won't cut it. It's a question of what values to rely on. Is it good or bad to respect the individual and limit collectivism? Is it good or bad to let politicians run more of the show from the top? Will freedom of action and thought promote creativity, good or bad? Science can't answer. Social sciences even less so. When you refer to - in the opinion of many' the infamous - *The Spirit Level* (2009, Wilkinson/Pickett), what you put such faith in has huge problems. Here're some:

- Claimed correlations in the book are often very sensitive to chosen data, and disappears if some are removed. Graphs often look like dalmation dogs.
- Worth remembering is also that correlation isn't causation. The authors ignores plausible third factors which would be more likely causation. Like: drop in Russian lifespan in 1990s is more likely from increased vodka flow, much medical data from the US must be heavily influenced by the lack of a universal health system, panning out life expectancy - or other medical factors - must have more to do with biological limitations than economics , teenage pregnancies more likely to come from lack of contraceptives, sex education and morale/religious attitudes, public trust in this or that comes from

the media landscape and the temperature of that, violence depends on drugs and spread of weapons. (Note: we have such a problem now with criminal gangs target shooting on each other, having drugs and weapons smuggled in. But it can't come mainly from poverty: if so poorer countries would have bigger problems, and they don't, at least in our vicinity. The problem comes from the police being utterly inefficient, social services too, and the criminal system inept. The inefficiency of Swedish police is no news BTW...)

- Much of their reasoning is mushy. A good hypothesis says not only *that* X happens but also *why* it happens. They can't explain why creativity should grow if you command people more through politics, limit people's choice and actions and take things from folks to give to others. Why should economy grow with centralised economy, which has shown failures world wide? And by taking and handing out money in no relation to the individual's effort?

Both authors are described as "activists" by Wikipedia (saying a lot since Wiki itself is rather into activism!) and towards the end of their book they begin to speculate about fixing everything by making companies and businesses collectives, like Soviet Kolkhozes. Such have almost never worked! Their blindness is exposed when they praise the 1980's "wagetaker funds" in Sweden. It was a deeply unpopular system promoted by our own TUC's left wing, soon scrapped and forgotten. Their intellectual shortcomings is also obvious when they speculate about the "predominantly egalitarian societies of Stone Age human hunters and gatherers" (p204). The murder rate in these "egalitarian" societies has shown to be as high as 10-25%! (Eg "Proving Communal Warfare among Hunter Gatherers: The Quasi-Rousseau Error" by Azar Gat, Evolutionary Anthropology, 2015). A very bloody dream society...

No, claiming "groping" is an "assault" makes the meaning fussy. Some may attempt to use the word that way, but it remains a military attack or a violent physical attack. I'm against trying to twist words for ideological reasons. That's Orwellian newspeak. Governments and their laws are politicians trying to score points. No cigar! But of course Asimov, coming from where he came, thought it was "legitimate and permissible flirtation." Groping is shitty behaviour, but don't compare it to a violent assault. If groping would be that, the Russian attack on Ukraine becomes...*just groping!*

Als *are* moving towards brain complexity, but it will take a long, long time! I'd guess 10 years from now. Yes, we are probably coctivores. That has obvious advantages. Interesting essay, as always.

Heath Row: I've checked your film tips the best I can. Thanks!

William McCabe: The Hugos began as a US award, so we can really complain. Let them cover all original works in English too. Fine by me. I know the six who nominated Bertil Falk in ESFS quite well and am sure they did. It can easily be checked by releasing initials (that'd be enough just to verify) of nominators, so it is a fishy to refuse. Nominations may get lost etc but circumstances don't imply anything like that. What happened is that two in the board (I have indication in an E-mail to prove it) decided the outcome from the start, wanting to lick ass, and it'd be a nuisance to have it publicly shown a more popular candidate nominated, someone deserving! Beside, *ESFS* arranges the awards, it's *their* responsibility, not mine, to show hands. Why ask for nomination if the meaning is "they don't count!". It *stinks*.

All you beloved PDFzine consumers: I may run a LoC if the contents carries *extra* weight. However, make any comments you want on your website, blog, your own zine or whatever (and plz show it to me!). Fanzines need to get shout outs! We need more of them. Fanzines were the backbone of fandom and should be promoted. "Social media" is so shallow...

Слава Україні!

Synergy 46



NAPA MAILING 265, July 2023

SYNERGY is the editorial production of John Thiel, who was born to produce good zines. His residential address is 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904, and his email address is kinethiel@mymetronet.net. You can click on that and get an email form, but if you click on the street address you will get nothing. You'd have to load a paper mail envelope and write that address on it, the street address, to achieve or effect an intercommunication.

Cover by Richard Andre, "Stairway to Heaven"



"Perhaps they are not ready yet for Syzygy."



Mankind builds, but does he also destroy?



Shake hands with Synergy.



See how these men look? They are following principles of Synergy. They are happy in their shirts. These could be science fiction fans who have realized that we are all one in the spirit, in this case, the spirit of fandom. You can't buy what these men have, you must find your way to it and once found, you are there. It is that simple to join into Syzygy. (The following of Synergy, its activation.) I am surprised that all of fandom hasn't done so already.



Given the Apocalypse, here is a post-holocaust view of followers of Synergy, in desolation, yes, but they are beginning to recreate civilization, and to find better ways of living than they have had. Followers of synergy are idealists, ready to live with what is left to them, which others are not. Doubtless they will come up with a fine way of life, since there is nothing inhibiting them.



Syzygy, as you can see by this drawing, is all. Not that there are not other things of which this same thing may be said.

EDITORIAL



Believability

A lot of people see science fiction as unbelievable. Sometimes there are those among the literary crowds who say it is "unrelated to reality". Very possibly they are right in this, but I think they are right in their own terms, and would not be in the terms those who like science fiction are familiar with, which in considering leads to the impression that taking the totality of these viewpoints into account, they live in a different world than the world in which science fiction is appreciated, and any form of communication with them is impossible; they would have totally different belief systems, and one side, if sides they are, would not be able to understand the other side. Also the word "reality" is not being defined in these arguments. Basically, facts are real and lies and fabrications are not real, but the word reality is applied to more complex matters. Reality in life is probably a lot like mata, materialism, and unreality would be maya, illusion. Those following maya would be "dwellers in illusion" from a viewpoint of neutrality, and followers of mata would be those sticking to hard facts and positive proofs of what is seen, the proofs being of their own making and having a material basis, and being invalid to those not following materialistic principles, "slaves to the word". Science is highly locked up in materialism, while fiction is the reverse, and fantasy is a world of uncertainty where reality is mostly whether someone is telling the truth. Something is unbelievable when it does not have consistent referents and cannot be adequately explained. Science fiction does endeavor to explain itself, but without very notable success, even though it has been obtaining advancement. Fantasy usually offers no explanation for itself. Its writers like things to remain mysterious and phantasmic. Horror stories are considered fantasies because the behavior in them is inexplicable, often involving psychological matters like psychosis and lunacy. Publicly, psychology is considered phantasmic, which is why science fiction with a psychological basis is considered dubiously to be in any way scientific. Buck Coulson and I argued this matter out years ago in the pages of my fanzine Pablo Lennis. (If you think warfare exists outside the area of science fiction and the social matters don't affect us who read it very much, this thought could be countered by my describing the Writers Conference held in Indianapolis which I attended, and which Robert and Juanita Coulson also attended. We had a policewoman carrying a gun in her holster out in the lobby while things were still

in session, and it seemed obvious to me that there was likely to be a police raid. I had been leaving the conference early to get a ride home when I spotted this, and I went back and told the others about it. Juanita went up to the desk to inquire, and the "police" were not reasonable. The woman was finally put out of the building, but she was waiting outside when I left, with the others watching. They came out of the building when I was assailed and there was a standoff. Half an hour later I was getting low with the Circle of Janus in the underworld on the other side of town, and thereafter my brother and I made our escape on an open road out of the city. Coulson had a connection with the police, although not those police, and told me he was able to hold on to the situation. I'd call all that warfare getting into the science fiction culture.)

If people don't find science fiction believable, what are they doing talking about it at all? Is science fiction being forced upon them? Well, if they have televisions, I'd say it is being forced upon them, with science fiction supplanting what they normally see. Much of the science fiction being broadcast goes against anything anyone would want to see happen, and is therefore an aggression. It seems to have war in mind more than it does science fiction, which is material; for warfare precisely because it is intolerable to the viewer. Science fiction should be tolerable and even acceptable viewing. What is intolerable about it? A) Major characters in the stories are dying violent deaths. B) The world is shown suffering destruction. (In ANDROMEDA the Earth is entirely destroyed.) C) The main characters are involved in nefarious doings. D) No one can identify with characters like Data, Lore, Worf, Spock, Rommie, Reverend Bem, The Doctor, Teal'c, any of the crew of BATTLESTAR GALACTICA, who represent a degenerate mankind, Seven of Nine, the robot Doctor and the Alien Cook; and it is hard to identify with the human characters as well. E) The actors enact jujitsu rather than acting, and quote the scripts. If they understand what they're saying it's an acting plus. F) It portrays eradications of the general public, which may be said to be who is watching television. The movies are chiefly about monsters, and portray abominations, such as people being ripped apart (JURASIC PARK and others). IF this is science fiction, people who don't like it have a claim. It is difficult to discuss these programs, as they are unspeakable. The fact that they are put on TV is itself in the realm of unbelievability.

So, as a broad perspective, do we believe things, or not believe them. If believability is not the criterion, then it seems best we should believe things we like and ignore things we don't like. A thing is real if it is there and its presence has an effect, and there is no reason to believe things that are elsewhere are real, because we have no way of knowing what is existing outside of our senses. We can't trust what we are told from afar, we can only be entertained by it if it is entertaining, but it should not motivate our actions. Things are never known for certain unless they are there.

Not much like reading science fiction, but we should not put our faith in science fiction. It is just something we like to read, a stimulus to our imaginations and provocative of thought, but not something with any practical applications, certainly not carrying any ultimate truth. Anything presented as ultimate truth is apt to be assailed and eventually destroyed anyway. People don't like being dominated by people speaking from afar. When they start to affect us, they are usurping their prerogative, and had better be nice if they want to sustain what they are doing. Don't be going for anything that is not interactive with yourself, though.



WHAT IS IN THE MAIL TODAY?

Hmm, nothing commentable upon in the zines this mailing. Muchly it gets too far away from science fiction, or isn't focused upon it, and is concerned with things neither here nor there for me, things with which I am not familiar at all.



Samizdat...

Samizdat Ish 20
Samuel Lubell's zine
July/August 2023



LOC for N'APA 264

Intermission #131-Science Fiction stories have always been about the time in which they were written more than the date in which the fiction is set. On minorities, I don't think the sf community or even the awards have a quota. However, voters for awards tend to nominate works that stand out, that are different from the usual book so reward authors who use their backgrounds to produce something new.

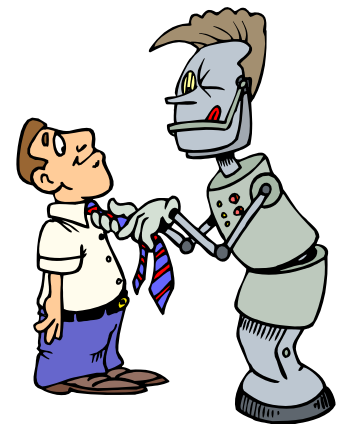
Archive Midwinter - I have not read Walter Jon Williams' Drake Majstral novels but I did read and like the Alexi Panshin Anthony Villars books. I hope you enjoy L.E. Modesitt Jr. I like that even though his fantasy far outsells his SF, he insists on writing (and getting his publisher to publish) his SF because he likes writing SF so much. Good point about if WWII had been a few years later it would have

been a real nuclear war. That would make for an interesting alternate history book.

Brownian Motion #2—I'm sorry I will miss the NASFIC this year. I'll be going to Confluence instead. I should send some WSFA Journals to the Fanac page.

Intermission #132—Your glimpses of the history of European sf and its connection to science are always of interest.

SYNERGY #45—Assuming you use a Microsoft product, you can set it to spellcheck words with Capital letters or exclude them (File-Options-Proofing). We should back the Ukraine because they were invaded and we don't want the world to return to a situation where countries invade each other to steal territory. Dan Brown is one of those authors who I think works better in movies rather than books where you have time to think about what is happening and how nonsensical it all is.



Snow Poster Township #10—It is interesting that in the golden age of radio, real sf stories made it on the air. Netflix's *Love, Death, and Robots* is carrying on that tradition. Yes, I'm active in the Baltimore Science Fiction Society, running their monthly book group (which has a zoom component, you can join our book discussions. See www.bsfs.org for details. Our July book is Katherine Kerr's *Daggerspell* and August is Laura Mixon's *Up Against It*.) This year since I'm chairing their annual convention Balticon, I am not running the Compton Crook Award for best first novel, but I've run it in past years.

Ye Murdered Master Mage 264. When I'm done with Balticon, I'll get more involved in N3F.

Author Spotlight: Keith Laumer



Keith Laumer is best known for his satirical Retief series about a two-fisted diplomat and his Bolo series about self-aware battle tanks. But he wrote a lot of stories and novels outside those series as well, often involving time travel and parallel worlds. Laumer used his own experience in the air force (becoming a captain) and the Foreign Service as the basis for his stories. Much of Laumer's work was humorous, especially the Retief books which featured a diplomatic corps so mired in red tape and slavish obedience to the rules of diplomacy that they couldn't see how Earth's enemies would exploit them were it not for Retief's violent disregard for traditional diplomacy. These are light, fun entertainments.

Unfortunately, Laumer had a stroke in 1971 and his later work was not as good as his earlier work. These read like someone trying to imitate what he had previously done rather than create something new. Also, since much of his works are collections of stories, many use the same stories under different titles.

Nearly everything by Laumer is out of print (except for some ebook collections of mostly public domain material). The late Eric Flint edited five collections of Laumer's works in the 2000s, but these no longer seem to be available (although, well-worth trying to track down). Readers new to Laumer can start with public domain stories (and the novel *Worlds of the Imperium*) at [Project Gutenberg](#). Your best bet is to check used bookstores and Internet sites.

From Wizard to Scientist: Changing Views towards The Scientist From Hawthorne to Twain (Part 1)

I've been doing some cleaning up and I found a copy of my 1989 undergraduate thesis on what I was very careful not to call early 19th century American science fiction. I figure that science fiction fans would be interested in this analysis. Please forgive 22-year-old me for any literary lapses.

Introduction - Hawthorne's Wizards and Twain's Scientists:

In nineteenth-century America, there arose an explosion of science. This historical change colored the fiction of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Mark Twain. Writing in the 1840's, Hawthorne created mysterious, malevolent scientists whose abilities approach those of sorcerers. In 1889, Mark Twain created a benign engineer who only pretends to be a wizard. This difference reflects the different views towards science prevalent when each author was writing.

In Hawthorne's time, science was only beginning to develop. Scientists moved from being natural philosophers to more utilitarian scientists, claiming to achieve practical results. During this initial period, many doctrines flourished that were later discredited as not being "true science" but only "pseudo-science". Nathaniel Hawthorne did not approve of these changes: he believed that scientists possessed a powerful but threatening force which they were using to meddle in nature without fully understanding the possible results. Hawthorne's scientists, Aylmer of "The Birthmark" (1843), Rappaccini of "Rappaccini's Daughter" (1844), and Chillingworth of *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), reveal his fundamental fear of the new role of science. Hawthorne linked his scientists to wizards who



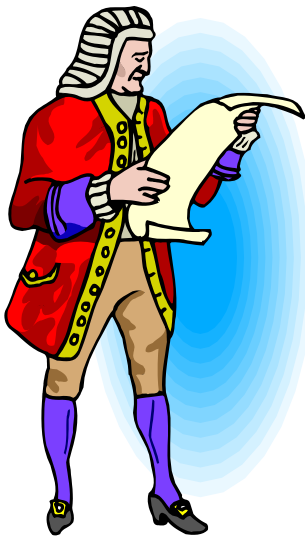
control minds, bodies, and souls. Thus, by mixing science with magic, he revealed the dangerous similarity between them. Hawthorne created his fictional world by extending contemporary scientists' extravagant claims of power, but not giving them enough knowledge for its control.

By the second half of the century, when Twain was writing, science began to fulfill its earlier promises. In true partnership with technology it created new electrical inventions that had a direct effect on people's lives. As "pseudo-science" was discredited and legitimate science grew more specialized and professional, science became seen as identical to progress. Dazzled by its transforming power, the public grew more supportive of science. Mark Twain, who was personally involved with new technology, absolutely approved of these changes. His *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* exalted the progressive virtues of science. The Yankee went into the backward sixth century and through his technology, single-handedly attempted to modernize the country, introducing nineteenth-century "civilization". Although the Yankee pretended to be a wizard, in reality he fought magic and superstition in the form of Merlin and the Church.



Hawthorne portrayed his scientists as powerful sorcerers, combining science and magic to illustrate their common threat. By contrast, Twain had his Yankee fight magic, easily defeating the powerless Merlin. This thesis will explore the connection between the historical change in the public's views of science and the simultaneous literary change in Hawthorne's and Twain's depiction of the scientist in fiction. The nineteenth century moved from conceiving of the scientist as wizard to interpreting the scientist as embodiment of progress. Curiously, the late twentieth century may have gone full circle, returning back to Hawthorne's conception of the scientist as wizard meddling in realms beyond his understanding or control.

Chapter 1 - Hawthorne: The Scientist as Wizard



In *The Scarlet Letter* when the physician Roger Chillingworth is introduced, Nathaniel Hawthorne seemingly insignificantly describes the townspeople's awe of the physician's European associates, "whose scientific attainments were esteemed hardly less than supernatural"¹ Yet this sentence is a rare explicit admission by Hawthorne to the connection between scientists and sorcerers that is such a major theme throughout his work. In his stories of science he includes alternative magical explanations for the powers of his scientists. Aylmer in "The Birthmark"² reads sorcerer's books and works to achieve eternal life and perfection. In "Rappaccini's Daughter,"³ the physician and biologist Rappaccini, literally creates a new form of life, like a wizard summoning a familiar. Similarly, in *The Scarlet Letter*, Chillingworth, the physician and "man of science," [156] perverts his learning, vengefully torturing his patient. The scientist in Hawthorne is both natural philosopher and wizard, technician and sorcerer. There is no boundary line between science and magic; Hawthorne's characters belong to both the sphere of science and the magic circle at the point where the two blend together.

¹ Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*, in Norman Pearson ed. *The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (New York: Modern Library 1965) pp. 85-240; p. 155. Subsequent references to the Pearson book will be indicated in square brackets in the text.

² Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Birthmark" in Pearson, ed. pp. 1021-1033.

³ Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter" in Pearson, ed. pp. 1043-1065

Hawthorne himself was educated in the sciences, as evident in his tenure as editor of *The American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*. From March to August of 1836 he wrote, or selected from already published sources, every article in the magazine.⁴ Each issue contained a few short articles on science, generally accounts from the natural sciences on animals, fossils, and scientific exploring expeditions. Some of his article's sources point towards much science reading by the young Nathaniel Hawthorne, most notably "Mind and Matter" (March) identified as from "Babbage on the Economy of Machinery," "Extinct Animals" (June) from the *Magasin Universel*, and the "Apparent Distance of Objects" (July) from Arnot's *Elements of Physics*. Hawthorne's original articles include an article on Phrenology (April), and "Natural History among the Ancients" (August) in which he displayed his belief in the advancement of science, and an awareness that the science of his own time was not itself infallible:



Their [Greeks and Romans] strictly intellectual cultivation was the most perfect of which human powers are susceptible; but they were mere children in all matters that are to be learned by physical experiments, the observation of facts and scientific analysis... Yet let us not look back too scornfully upon these elder times; for Science is even now but in her alphabet; and it is unquestionable that future investigators will convict the present age of absurdities.⁵

Such absurdities may have included the prevalence of what historians today call 'pseudo-science'. In an article on phrenology- the science of reading a person's character from bumps on their skull- Hawthorne could not decide if phrenology was a science. He writes:

.... Phrenology, therefore, in reference to the opinion of the wise, might still be ranked among the doubtful sciences. For ought we know, it may hereafter be as irrefragably confirmed as another other doctrine, in physics or meta-physics. On the other hand, the next generation may see cause to reject it, as utterly as we do judicial astrology.⁶

Hawthorne never, decided if these "doubtful sciences" were real or fake; he remained skeptical. While in England in 1858, Hawthorne wrote in his notebook about hearing Dr. Garth Wilkinson's accounts of spiritualist manifestations: "But again, do I really believe it? Of course not; for I cannot consent to let Heaven and Earth, this world and the next, be beaten up together like the white and yolk of an egg... I would not believe my own sight or touch of the spiritual hands."⁷ Ironically, rather than adopting a spiritualist account, Hawthorne believed that the doctor's vision was caused by magnetic suggestion, itself a pseudo-science.

Because Hawthorne did not know the extent and powers of these sciences, he feared them. In his stories he ascribed tremendous abilities to his scientists, "a power that in real life they would not have been likely to claim."⁸ He made his scientists magical, almost God-like in their powers. In "The Birthmark," Hawthorne

⁴ Frank Mott, *History of American Magazines: Volume I, 1741-1850* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939) p. 364

⁵ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*, Volume II, August 1836, p.489-90

⁶ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *American Magazine*, April 1836. p.337

⁷ Taylor Stoehr, *Hawthorne's Mad Scientists* (Connecticut: Archon Books. 1978) p.173 citing Hawthorne's *English Notebooks*

⁸ Kent Kreuter, *Literary response to Science Technology and Industrialization* (University of Wisconsin: Ann Arbor University Microfilms 1963) p. 51

shows his dread of the limitless power of science: “[The scientist] would ascend from one step of powerful intelligence to another, until the philosopher should lay his hand on the secret of creative force and perhaps make new worlds for himself.”⁹ Even outside his fiction, Hawthorne dreaded the power of science over the soul. In the early nineteenth century, mesmerism was considered a science, and many people sought out mesmerists to heal internal ailments by the transference of their “magnetic fluid.” One such patient was Sophia Peabody, Hawthorne’s future wife. Horrified to learn that Sophia had been regularly seeing a mesmerist, Hawthorne wrote her from Brook Farm revealing a tremendous fear of the extent of mesmerism’s powers and of its harmful effects:

But, belovedest, my spirit is moved to talk with thee to-day about these magnetic miracles, and to beseech thee to take no part in them. I am unwilling that a power should be exercised on thee, of which we know neither the origin nor consequence, and the phenomena of which seem rather calculated to bewilder us.... Supposing that this power arises from the transfusion of one spirit into another, it seems to me that the sacredness of an individual is violated by it... thou surrenderest more than thine own moral and spiritual being...¹⁰

Clearly, Hawthorne believed that mesmerism was more than just a hoax. He feared it as a “power,” a branch of knowledge, of which humans did not know enough to be able to control safely; a science that could destroy the human soul. Hawthorne’s scientist characters expose this fear through their control of minds, bodies, and souls.



This dangerous power of science dominating others recurs throughout Hawthorne’s fiction. The misuse of knowledge was a persistent theme in the Gothic Romances, the popular fiction of the day, especially in the Faust stories. Although the characters in Gothics were usually not cloaked in scientific guise, they share Hawthorne’s scientists’ lust for knowledge and desire to interfere with nature.¹¹ In one sense, then, Hawthorne is telling Gothic variations of the Faust myth, showing characters who surrender their souls to the devil in return for knowledge and power. The scientists’ own search for truth becomes the exploitation of it. Yet Hawthorne’s characters are too powerful to be the victim Faust; instead they resemble Mephistopheles, the devil puppet master “who sets the conflict in motion, leads his puppets on to an assault on moral law that precipitates their doom,”¹² while himself remaining in the background. This resemblance to Mephistopheles arises from Hawthorne’s conception of his characters’ true sin, their power over other people. Science, like magic, is a means to control. But Hawthorne’s scientists are not able to regulate this power, allowing it to pass the limits of science and become magic.

⁹ The German physician Franz Anton Mesmer believed that “animal magnetism constituted the etheric medium through which sensations of every kind- light, heat, magnetism, electricity- were able to pass from one physical object to another.” Robert Fuller, “Mesmerism and the Birth of Psychology” in *Pseudo-Science and Society in Nineteenth Century America*, Arthur Wrobel, ed. (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1987) p. 207. See also chapter three.

¹⁰ Hawthorne to Sophia Peabody, October 18, 1881 cited in Newton Arvin, ed. *The Heart of Hawthorne’s Journals*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929)

¹¹ Stoehr p. 252

¹² William Stein, *Hawthorne’s Faust: A Study of the Devil Archetype*. (Connecticut: Archon Books. 1968) p. 105

Status of Projects: July 2023

Past readers of *Samizdat* will remember that I have launched a number of projects to improve my life. Here is the latest progress report.

Project Nonfiction: I read *Medieval Europe* by Chris Wickham (Yale University Press 2016). This book takes the premise that the Middle Age was more than a transition away from the Roman Empire to “dark ages” before the Renaissance. Instead, it focuses on change during the middle ages and pays some attention to the Eastern Empire (Byzantium). This is close to a modern textbook approach. I also reread, *The World We Created at Hamilton High* that is a history of high schools focusing on a single school, labeled “Hamilton High” here (later identified as Nottingham High in Syracuse, NY), and how it evolved and changed since 1953.

Project Classics: I finished *Prince of the Ghetto: The Stories of Y.L. Peretz Retold* by Maurice Samuel. These are mostly stories about Chassidic Jews, especially their conflicts with more traditional Orthodox Jews. And there is a lot on the Devil, who is much more prominent in Jews peasant folklore (largely influenced by Christian views) than in Jewish theology. I still think that traditional translations would have worked better than Samuel’s approach where he translates pieces and paraphrases or talks about the other parts.



Project Trek: To promote the second season of the new *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, Paramount put episodes of the first season up on YouTube. I watched the first four episodes. This is old-school Star Trek about the Enterprise under Captain Pike, Kirk’s predecessors, although Spock and Uhura are on board. Each episode is complete in itself although there is character development continuing through the episodes, largely around the effects of Pike’s learning about his tragic future. I liked this “back to basics” approach and would watch more of these.

Project Movies: I watched *Pan* (2015) a movie that purports to be a prequel to Peter Pan (although largely ignoring what J. M. Barrie wrote about Peter’s early life in *Peter Pan in Kensington Garden* and *The White Bird*. But Peter Pan and Captain Hook are nothing like their characters in Barrie’s works and the Disney movie. Peter and Hook are friends and Hook has much more in common with Han Solo as a reluctant hero and has a romance with Tiger Lily. Peter is a caring, heroic “chosen one” rather than the selfish, nearly sociopathic character in other media.

Project Cleanup: I’ve made a lot of progress on this. I’ve thrown out a lot of stuff and will be taking some books to conventions.

Project Conventions: Balticon went very well. I took careful notes about what I want to copy and what I want to do differently next year when I chair it. I’m going to Confluence in Pittsburgh later in July.

Author’s Note

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