

NAPA

November 2023



The Official Organ

#267

Next deadline: January 15, 2024

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

By vote of the members, we do not want to include participation from “Public Members” of N3F, members who are not paying dues? Thank you for voting!

Procedure: Please Read:

Submissions should be sent to the preparer, Jefferson Swycaffer, abontides@gmail.com

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. N’APA has been in existence since 1959, but has transitioned from being a paper APA to an electronic one.

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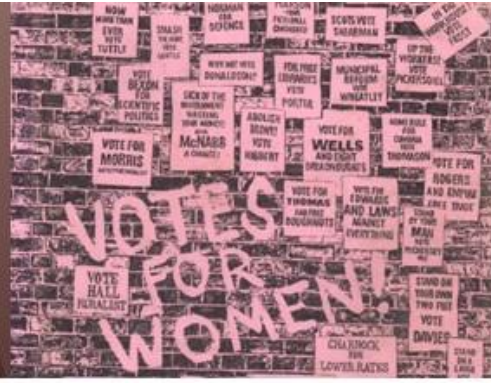
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FANAC FanHistory Zoom Session
APAs Everywhere, with
Fred Lerner, Christina Lake,
Amy Thomson & Tom Whitmore
Date: December 9, 2023
Time: 2PM EST, 11AM PST,
7PM GMT (UK)

Since the first FAPA mailing in 1937, APAs have been part of fandom, with topic-specific APAs, local APAs, general APAs, con committee APAs, and many more. Our panelists talk about their experiences with APA life.

Why did you join APA(s)? Did your APAs live up to your expectations and why? What makes the APAs unique? How do the members of the APA relate to each other? What's that community like? How does it compare to being online? Are APAs obsolete? Would you join a new APA today?

To attend, send a note: fanac@fanac.org



INTERMISSION #137

E-zine by **Ahrvid Engholm**, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA and all artificial intelligences. I'll try to make this # shorter! Follow my @SFJournalen newstweets before Musk makes Twitter unsustainable. Long live His Majesty the King! Typos Dié! Late Sep '23

Editorially: Ukraine, HM 50 years, Ukraine, Gang Shootings, Etc

Domestic news have lately been dominated by one good thing - His Majesty the King's golden jubilee! - and one very bad thing: there have been virtually daily gang shootings in Sweden. I'll cover Carl XVI Gustaf's 50 years on the throne separately.

I'll start with the gang wars. Normally, Sweden is very peaceful. The murder rate hovers at just over 100/year, compared to the US: 20 000+/year. (England & Wales have a modest: 600/year - the county of Midsummer not included...) This figure is now rising, because we see headlines of shootings and bombings *daily*. See the headlines to the right, Sep 27: *Two arrested after explosion tonight - young woman killed. - Three dead in twelve hours.*

It's criminal gangs targeting each other, but they sometimes hit innocent bystanders. Right now there is a gangster civil war with a character called the "Kurdish Fox" who has fallen out with others. Gangs send kids with guns and bombs to get at each other. They use under-15s since those won't go to real prisons due to age. We also have the Stockholm northwest suburban gangs Shottaz and Death Squad who have been at each other's throats for a long time. The usually very quiet northern city of Sundsvall has seen an outbreak of violence. So has Uppsala north of Stockholm, and Södertälje to the south has had similar problems for a long time. This and much more give the papers a lot to write about. Every freaking day. The latest attacks in which at least two innocent bystanders were killed caused PM Ulf Kristersson speak to the nation: new stiffer laws on the way (bugging, witness protection, data exchange, no-go zone for crooks, etc) and the military will be asked if they can assist the police

Kids using guns come from that sentences are reduced up to age 18 and if you are under 15 you just go to "to the care of social services". The gangs thus recruit kids as hitmen. The gang wars are course drug related, gangs fighting over turfs and money from drug deals. It's also very much around personal attitudes: if someone feels offended he must show force to "get respect". It turns into a self-sustaining spinning wheel: perceived "disrespects" or attacks must be revenged, preferably with added VAT. The gangs now attack relatives (parents, siblings) of their enemies and gangster rap stars associated with groupings. They place bombs at homes, work places, in cars. No signs of easing up this far.

For the time being the gangs target each other - but several collateral casualties have happen. The victims are ca 40 this year, this far - the incidents are more, maybe thrice that. While it may be comparable to just one very bad week in Chicago it's unusual for us. It's topping the agenda of the political debate, and I'm afraid it helps the nationalist so called Sweden Democrats (which I'm not a fan of). Speaking of the US, we - fingers crossed - don't have the non-gang mass shootings here when someone suddenly opens fire in a school, mall or office on unknown people who just happen to be there.

And to comment the US gun control debate: the guns used here are usually smuggled, illegal guns - as I understand leftovers from the war in former Yugoslavia. It's very difficult to control illegal guns. The Swedes have up to a million *hunting rifles* at home (for the popular autumn moose hunting) licensed after rather strict tests, but hunting rifles aren't the problem. They are rarely involved in criminal activities as they are to clumsy for that. Explosives for bombings are often stolen from construction sites. Bomb construction details are on the Internet, as you know.

The criminal gangs are dominated by second generation immigrants, but it's worth remembering that if the gangs number 1000 (the number should be thereabout) 99.9% of the immigrant population



JUST NU: Två gripna efter explosion i natt - ung kvinna död

"Barnen skrek - trodde det var en jordbävning"

Tre döda på tolv timmar
Typical headlines from gang wars.

is innocent of wrong-doings.

So what should be done? Of course those guilty of and connected to it all go to the slammer, so they won't misbehave for at least a while. There are some law reforms discussed it may not be the best idea to put a 15-year old away for 20 years. You create a bitter, guaranteed re-offender with an exam from the College of Crime. The leaders of criminal gangs should of course be behind bars. *Go to the top*. I'm generally not a fan of stiffer laws. The US has the world's second highest prison population after Russia. Honestly, has that helped?

The police should definitely be reformed. My impression is that they are focused on the wrong things and often lazy, just picking low hanging fruits for their statistics. I've seen numerous stories of crimes written off for "having no leads", even in cases of video recordings and the offender even being *identified!* Theft, burglary and such are not taken seriously. The police should shift focus from traffic offences, testing for minimal drug traces in party goers, hunting poachers, all kinds of small stuff not against persons or private property. Instead patrol troubled areas, use more CCTV, improve customs to stop smuggled guns, put tails on the usual suspects, improve relations with the neighbourhoods to get civilian help, etc. Today the police officers are more into harassing the "hoods". Youngsters frisked on the street daily are apt to see the police as enemies and become candidates to join criminal gangs. And harassment builds up a pressure until it boils over, resulting in riots and burning cars, which we sometimes see.

The schools could also do better, giving useful and better education, going for knowledge instead of populist trends, keeping an eye on pupils that fall by the wayside, and offer meaningful after hours activities. Personally I also see bad influences from the disastrous "brutalist" 1960's suburban architecture and city planning, being a perverted version of the 1920s Bauhaus – which I'm rather fond of otherwise (Bauhaus is our version called "funktionalism").

But gangs shooting at each others is a fart in a hurricane compared to what happens in Ukraine! Some random notes, but based on things seen in media or on the net. I spend lots of time daily trying to follow the news on Putin's insane war.

The latest new is that the Ukrainian army has made an important breakthrough in the south in the Zaporizhia region, cracking two of three Russian lines. They'll soon assault line three manned by Russian conscripts of low fighting spirits. British Challengers are engaging as well has precision artillery (I hope the Swedish Archer mobile artillery does its part) to knock out Russian guns with counter battery fire. Ukrainian artillery with the help of drones and artillery radar is said to be able to target a Russian gun within a minute after it has fired, while the Russians complain their counter battery fire is too slow or non-existent.

There are a few weeks left until rain and mud comes, but there is the realistic prospects that if the Ukrainians could advance just a little further they'll get main Russian supply lines under "fire control", ie their guns come close enough to close of Russian supply roads and routes or make them very difficult to use. They could then isolate the Russians on Crimea by snipping the Crimea bridge, which they have drones and missiles for (it's part capacity now, to inspire Russians to leave Crimea). That will isolate Crimea. The Ukrainians have lately stepped up the bombardment of Russian targets and installations on the peninsula, using British and French long-range missiles as well as drones. They recently destroyed the Russian Black Sea Fleet HQ, taking out their lead admiral and lots of top brass. US ATACMS are on their way too! Sea drones attack Russian ships. Ukraine is slowly gaining naval superiority without really having a navy... (They have small patrol boats, many from the Americans who are accustomed to river war. These boats give the Ukrainians superiority on the Dnieper and land and supply troops the left bank opposite Kherson.) To get Crimea isolated is a realistic situation before winter.

Of some 150 Leopard 2s most haven't yet been committed (two have been lost). There's one lost Challenger. Losses are usually from mines: the tank gets the tracks damaged from a mine, has to be temporarily abandoned but before it can be salvaged it's and targeted by Russians. 31 US Abrams



PM Ulf Kristersson speaks to the nation about the gang wars.

Wild West Stockholm: Gangland violence grips Swedish capital as rapper, 18, is executed on a sports field, a second man is shot dead and bomb blast kills innocent woman, 25, in her home within 12 hours

• Streets of Swedish capital have descended into chaos amid spate of attacks

are arriving and haven't seen use yet. Some 100+ Leopard 1s are on their way, an earlier generation but still probably better than what the Russians have left.

But using the tanks are difficult with the huge minefields. Mine corridors must be cleared. The Russians have planted more mines than anyone in history. 50 to 100 million mines of all types are figures mentioned. That and the lack of air power and not enough long range missiles limit the Ukrainians. The west has been dragging the feet in supplying what is needed! The F16s won't arrive

until next year, over a year after the issue was raised. (And it looks increasingly possible that a wing of Swedish Gripens will join them. The Social Democrat opposition wants it and the government has directed the Air Force to evaluate a transfer. Ukrainian pilots are already on "evaluation training" on the Gripens. But we first be in NATO.)

Ukraine's general staff's published figures claim 280 000 Russian soldiers have been Killed In Action. Those figures are most likely too high. I've always estimated that the real figures should be about 60% of UA general staff figures, or around 170 000. But from a leak we learn the Russian army has issued *230 000 death certificates!* <https://www.newsweek.com/russia-orders-certificates-families-dead-soldiers-ukraine-war-1828178> 230K KIA is a *huge number*, and seems possible just in between mine and the general staff's estimates.

Despite being on the offensive the Ukrainian losses are lower (they try to be more careful with their soldiers), but still high at - one estimate says - 70 000 KIA. That the Ukrainians are more careful makes the offensive slower. Sappers crawl during the nights to clear mines. The Russians are hit heavily behind their lines with precision artillery. No gung-ho charges, though there are many videos about Ukrainians going into Russian trenches to cleanse the - but that is "relatively safe" since most Russians are already knocked out or have fled.

Putin can ill afford losing so much material and men. The Russians are now getting rusting 1950's tanks from Siberian outdoor storage. And human losses will erode any "support" for the war as tens of thousands of mothers get bad news. The Ukrainians deliberately *target the Russians will to fight*, as numerous intercepted mobile calls reveals. It's assumed Russia coming winter will once again target Ukraine's energy system, but they now have fewer missiles and the Ukrainians have more air defence. (And I suspect their energy companies have taken measures to make the system sturdier.)

I think there's a decent chance that the war ends in 2024 as Russia simply can't afford it (their economy shrinks, and the economy of the EU and US is 50 times that of Russia). And peace may be triggered by the Putin regime's downfall – from an internal palace coup in that case - which should lead to a retreat. A new regime would have their hands full stabilising the country. A regime change would be better end than to fight it out to the last inch of occupied ground. That would be very bloody.

There are some signs that certain populist politicians in the west want to limit the support for Ukraine - such idiots! A dollar sent to Ukraine is an investment in future security and a very *cheap* way to grind down the military capacity of a US/EU main adversary, without any boots on the ground! And it's way more meaningful than eg the Afghan war (which went on for decades and lead to nothing). And it tells communist China to keep their hands off Taiwan. To US Republicans, listen! Ronald Reagan would spin in his grave if he knew what some of you say!

Intermission will continue reporting from the war and tighten our *fanzine blockade!* Slava Ukraini!

--Ahrvid Engholm

Ps. I learn Mr Trump is found guilty of fraud - another Mr Humbug ! - ordered to pay \$250m in restitution. Was earlier convicted of sexual harassment is investigated for mishandling top secret documents (considered as espionage!), is under fire for the Congress assault Jan 6th and charged with trying to fake ballot. This *multiple serial-criminal* is a danger to the US. He makes one Mr Nixon seem like a sweet, innocent altar boy in comparison.

HM Carl XVI Gustaf Celebrated 50 Years on the Throne

I actually say our *old* king once, on an excursion with the school in Stockholm's old town. When we passed the Royal Palace a big black limousine stopped by the southern entrance and out stepped the popular, old Gustaf VI Adolf. I still remember how Swedish TV was on live around the clock on his deathbed, with bleeding ulcers. It happened at the same time - mid September 1973 - as the Norrmalm's Square bank hostages drama that interested much of the world. (And gave rise to the "Stockholm Syndrome" when the hostages seemed to side more with the bank robbers than the police, which used aggressive tactics, including gas.)

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy, ie the king has a ceremonial role only. He opens the parliament, chairs a foreign committee of parliamentarians and informational cabinet meetings, receives ambassadors and goes on state visits. He holds a Christmas speech and one if there's a special crisis (there was a King's speech during the pandemic). The Swedish king used to have a lot of power, but it eroded from the mid 19th century and on. When the king's at that time promised to help the Danes in the Preussian-Danish war in 1864 it was stopped by the government. The last king attempting to project personal power was Gustaf V who forced a government to resign by holding a courtyard speech in 1914, advocating an expanded military.



The actual throne of Sweden. Made for Queen Kristina in 1650 and used for opening the parliament until 1974.



The King opened the parliament once under the old constitution. In background Charles XI's Drabant Corps.

(Eventually the king proved justified as WWI began shortly thereafter.)

Present king Carl XVI Gustaf (he should really be Carl IX Gustaf or something, the higher number comes from fictitious medieval history) is the grandson of Gustaf VI Adolf. As his father who was supposed to take over died in an air crash in 1947, he was just 27 when he took to the silver throne.

Yes, there is an actual physical throne he could sit on. But only once! A new constitution came into effect 1975 to remove the king's remaining formal power (not used and irrelevant), but before that that king could at least once open the parliament the old way: sitting on the silver throne in the Hall of the Realm in the Royal Palace, reading the government's declaration after the Charles XI storm troopers had marched in. The British king still does that, but our monarch now opens the parliament from the ordinary tribune of the Riksdag and the prime minister reads the government declaration.

I've seen our king a few times, first in 1975 when he opened the blue lines of the Stockholm underground (I was only 10-15 metres away.), later on a technical fair he opened and also from the street when he and Queen Silvia have passed in a horse-drawn carriage during special celebrations.

King Carl XVI Gustaf's 50 years on the throne was September 15, as fellow Nordic royalties and presidents gathered in Stockholm. (The UK was represented on a lower level. It was explained that we traditionally invite our direct neighbours.) The night before they had a big dinner with 400 guests in the Palace with speeches by the king, the Riksdag speaker and the prime minister. It is said the party lasted well into the night. The 15th the king and queen were once more in a horse-drawn carriage through Stockholm, ending with taking the royal sloop The Order of Vasa over Stockholm's waters landing



Royal couple in carriage through town, using lots of horse powers.



Historic formation by the Air Force, L to R: JAS 39 Griffin, J35 Dragon, A32 Lance, J37 Thunderbolt, J29 Flying Barrel. Unique to see all main SAAB jets from 1950s to now together!

by the palace. The entire royal family with kings presidents and spouses of Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland (all Nordic countries) then appeared on a palace balcony and heard music from three military bands.

Later there was an outdoor concert attended by the Royals with many of our most popular artists, including eg Loreen which recently won the Eurovision Song Contest and Björn Skifs who In 1974 had our first Billboard No 1 in the US. All was shown live on TV.

Let me tell you why I'm in favour of the ceremonial monarchy here, at least for us. I have several arguments.

1. I think politicians take up too much space in society already. It's thus fine that the position of chief of state isn't *also* occupied by some grey politician. The king does no harm where he sits. Politicians grabbing even more space may do harm. I've always advocated that politics should take up less room, leaving more for the individual citizen.

2. The king is cost-efficient. The court gets ca \$10m/year. That's just coffee money in the finance minister's kitchenette. And it includes upkeep of the handful of palaces the court runs through the country, buildings that must be upheld anyway since they are national treasures. A president wouldn't cost much less - with security, periodical president election campaigns, etc.

3. And we get more than that back! A king is today a rare species, while presidents are a dime a dozen. On a state visit - and Carl XVI Gustaf has made ca 150 such - the king is accompanied by government ministers that engage in political contacts and sign treaties and such, and by business executives who promote business deals. A king grabs attention and his "support troops" on the visit finds it easier to make deals. It's been estimated that the "royal factor" gives us business worth an \$100-200 million/year extra.



All Nordic chiefs of state, spouses and some princes/princesses on the courtyard balcony. Four cheers!

4. The king also connects us with our

history. Sweden has been a monarchy *always*. The first king to rule the two main historical tribes of the country, and thus in a way representing all of Sweden, was Olof Skötkonung ("Olaf the Swede" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olof_Sk%C3%B6tkonung) crowned in 995. This is a history of more than a thousand years, at a time when the Vikings still roamed the seas. (The Swedish vikings roamed the eastern rivers, to Ukraine and Constantinople, contributing to founding Kyivrus, giving the name "Rus" to Russia). The monarchy is in important connection to history.

5. The monarchy has stable public support, 70-75% in polls. The system has stable majority in the parliament. The social democrats say they "in principle" want a republic, but don't *dare* to push for that as they'd lose votes in general elections. A king who according to the constitution is prohibited to engage in political questions can represent *all* Swedes, while...look at the US. Does Biden represent all Americans? Or Trump? Many would say no.

6. A good rule of thumb is: *If it ain't broke, don't fix it!* I.e., we know what we have, it seems to work well, but who knows what we get if we'd change that.

7. The royal family seems to behave themselves. (I won't go into any minor scandals that may have surfaced. It's noting compared to the civil war that it looks like in the House of Windsor.) Here's an interesting detail: the King himself as well as his three children have all married "commoners". Carl Gustaf found the German Olympic hostess Silvia in 1972, multilingual and a pro in nurturing contacts.

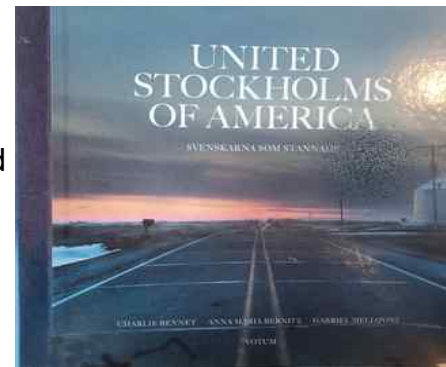
Crown princess Victoria married a gym owner and sportsman. Prince Carl Philip found a beautiful model. Princess Madeleine found a rich American business man. (Chris O'Neill, the only one of the spouses who said no to a Royal title, since he'd have to give up his business life then. But he takes part in royal celebrations.)

That's good enough for me.

The Royal family is of the House of Bernadotte, originally from France. Briefly: Sweden lost Finland in the 1808-09 war with Russia - attacking neighbours is a Russian habit. The then king Gustaf IV Adolf was dethroned in a palace coup, and the parliament began looking for a competent new king. A Danish prince standing in line died of a stroke. But how about a competent field marshal from the most powerful country in Europe? Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte was the man, and was promptly elected crown prince. (Karl XIV Johan as his royal name was shocked his former boss Napoleon, by joining the coalition against him! And he didn't as expected take on the Russians to retake Finland, but took on Denmark to eventually gain Norway.) All in all the Bernadottes have been good for us.

Stockholm, USA

I found an interesting book, *United Stockholms of America*, by Charlie Bennet, Anna Maria Bernitz and Gabriel Mellqvist. They have visited towns and places in the US with the name...Stockholm. There are a few named after the Swedish capital there, from Maine to Texas! You also find Stockholm in upstate New York, New Jersey, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. A million or so Swedes emigrated to North America, built their log cabins and thought: "Hm, what shall we call this place? Why not...Stockholm!"



Most are small, one is just a gas station from a now virtually deserted



Post Office building in Stockholm, Maine. Note the wheelchair ramp. One must assume most Maine Stockholmers are old.

place. Some give me a melancholic feeling. The biggest North American Stockholms are in New York and in also one in New Jersey, both with ca 3.5K red-white-and-blue Stockholmers. Original Stockholm has about 1 million in the administrative area, 2.4 million in "region Stockholm" and was founded around 1252 by Birger Jarl, the "strongman" of Sweden at the time. But there were almost certainly settlements



A church in Stockholm, Maine.

there since before, as the location between the Baltic Sea and Lake Mälaren was quite strategic.

Stockholm, Minnesota, brags about their famous Stockholm Pies.

Stockholm Wisconsin looks odd: *"With a population of just 66 people, Stockholm is certainly a tiny little town, but it's packed with cool things to do and see."*

<https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/wisconsin/wi-unique-town/> They talk about

the nature but also *"There are tons of quaint shops and restaurants as well as places to learn about the Swedish history of the town."* Tons of establishments among 66 inhabitants? They every summer



Stockholm Wisconsin - a real metropolis with 66 inhabitants!



The Fire of Stockholm festival, Wisconsin. Looks wild!



Aerial view of Stockholm, South Dakota.

also arrange something called the Fire of Stockholm festival with huge bonfires. Looks like a whole island is on fire!

To make EAPA's Garth happy I also looked for Canadian Stockholms. There's at least one, in Saskatchewan (population 329). I looked for Stockholms

in the UK too, but there are none. Britain wasn't settled by 19th Century Swedes. However, it did take quite a lot of 10th Century Vikings, and all British towns ending in -by and -thorpe were named by the Vikings. And the Vikings called the town of York *Jorvik*. If it had kept that name, it's possible that we across the pond would find *New Jorvik*. Or if the Vikings had settled North America *Nya Jorvik*.

If we cross the Atlantic east with *M/S Stockholm* (who in 1956 collided with the Italian liner *Andrea Doria*, so it sank) and go further east we come to *New York, Ukraine!* This town with a pre-war population of 9 735 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York,_Ukraine) is now near the front line and shelled daily, unfortunately.



Most US Stockholms are small. Here trains won't even stop.

The town name goes back to the mid 19th century but the origin of "the name of the town remains a mystery that is the subject of many local legends." It could come from an old US business contact, a distortion of the

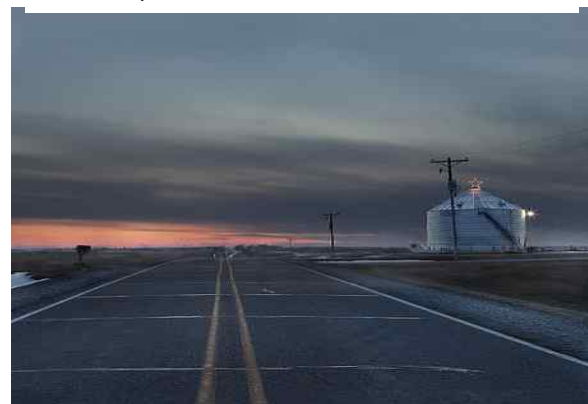
German town name "Jork", be a translation error from Latin to Cyrillic, or something else. I wonder what Frank Sinatra would have sung about this place?

These vagabond shoes, are longing to stray...

And with this we finish this geographical excursion.



Stockholm, Minnesota, famous for their Stockholm Pies! <https://www.stockholmpie.com/famous-pie/> This is the pie HQ, I believe.



This is called the Stockholm Road, Iowa. Looks like farmland. The building right must be for grain storage.



Downtown Stockholm, Saskatchewan (locals just say "Sask").



A street view from New York, Ukraine.

The Short Story Masters Strike again!

As a writer, apart from funny little articles (science, tech, sf, history, space etc) I'm much into short stories. I estimate over 125 published in different forms, lately a lot in the Short Story Masters' anthologies, from which many storied for obscure reasons have also been made into downloadable small books by publisher Saga Edmont. So for me the activities of the small (but intellectually giant!) Short Story Masters Society is rather meaningful.

We have two meetings per year, and the latest was September 2nd at the home of Ulf Broberg in Storvreta, north of Uppsala. We were seven incl associates Gullan and Peter (and me, Ulf B, Kjell, Cecilia, Helena). Cecilia had arranged train tickets, so no car driver had to worry about wine and beer served. Which was almost fatal since we became 20+ minutes late for the train switch in Uppsala. (Some idiots thought it'd be a good idea to walk on the tracks, which took the police forever to sort out, we were told.) The conductor luckily made the connecting train wait a few minutes, otherwise we'd have to wait for an extra hour.

Ulf has a wonderful bungalow with a glass covered patio, were we sat down. The loveable cat Sture joined us for a while. Before eating commenced the society's coming activities were discussed, among them a coming anthology next years, the best of our "cardinal points" series. We've made four anthologies with names referring to North, West, South and East. We also discussed our homepage

<https://www.novellmastarna.se/> and possibilities for taking part in an event in Uppsala and do something around "Easter Crime" (this originally Norwegian concept of promoting crime fiction during Easter). I also mentioned that I lately have appeared in the anthology coming from the world building course I took this spring.

Then we were served a giant sandwich cake! I understand that this is originally a Swedish concept, a cake with mayonnaise instead of cream, salmon, smoked meat and dill, instead of berries, jam and chocolate - simply a dessert turned into a main dish. See <https://www.curiouscuisiniere.com/smorgastarta-swedish-sandwich-cake/>

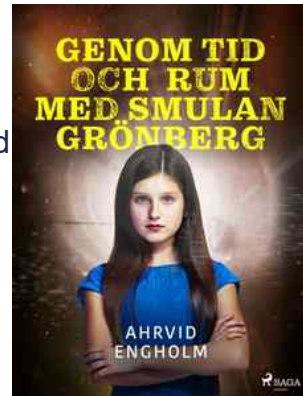
It tasted very well, and I believe even if I took two extra servings there was still a bit left at the end, so no one went hungry. The cat looked praying at our plates. I think Gullan gave the cat a little of the cake, so he was satisfied. (BTW, we learned that Ulf and Gullan had just finally married. Congrats!) After that it was ice cream with whipped cream. That's nothing for a cat, as cats have no taste buds for sugar and sweet things. (No need. Cats are sweet things by themselves!)

EN FANTASTISK ANTOLOGI III

Texter från kursen Världsbymål - skötsel
Mars 2022



My latest anthology appearance.



My Greta Thunberg parody, from Saga Egmont.



Kjell, Helena, Cecilia and Ulf at the buisness part of the day.



Selfie with in the background Peter, Helena, Cecilia and Ulf.



Cecilia (cutting the sandwich cake), Ulf and wife Gullan.

We walked to the local train station in the early evening through this affluent Storvreta, a sort of lagom Swedish Beverly Hills: the house owners have money, but aren't show-offs.

I've written a couple of crime stories from this kind of neighbourhood. With a cat in it.

History Corner

The history of fandom is its fanzines. Your favourite department will go east to get a different angle on amateur publications: *samizdat*. That's Russian, meaning "self published", the illegal, underground publications in the USSR, done by simple means – usually only a typewriter and carbons. Putin's Russia sees a return to oppression and censorship. Maybe it's time for a samizdat comeback?

We have touched upon Samizats before. Your trusty editor has even himself published in Samizdat style, in the small carbon-copied APA Gurka ("Cucumber"), of which you'll find the history in the Lynches *Mimosa* #15 <https://fanac.org/fanzines/Mimosa/Mimosa15.pdf>, "The Rise and Fall of Cucumber". It wasn't because of censorship we turned to carbon, but because we were only half a dozen members and sandwiching thin airmail paper with carbons was faster and easier than using a mimeo - and it gave you a feeling of being special and "underground"! (I did a series of fan history articles for *Mimosa*. Fanac.org has them all.) Samizdat was a bit like Soviet fanzines, if you stretch it science fiction since they lived in a *dystopia state believing it was an utopia*... Wikipedia will give you a ground course,

⇒ We remain in Europe for another visit to Swedish fandom. Last issue, The writer of the following article described some of the hoaxes perpetrated on Swedish fandom over the years. This time, he tells us about some of the Amateur Press Associations that have been active in Sweden, in particular, (and in keeping with our 'food' theme) a secret APA called Cucumber...



Anyone interested in Swedish fandom will soon hear of secret fanzine publishing. The fans in this northern country, so close to the Galatic Circle... sorry, Arctic Circle, have often engaged in secret Amateur Press Associations or APAs. In Swedish the word APA also means 'monkey' or 'ape'. Maybe APA members feel a need to be monkey-like. Judge for yourself as we unfold the untold story of the secret Cucumber.

The first Swedish APA was not secret. SAPA was active a few years during the mid-60s, with Official Editors like John Henri Holmberg and Leif Andersson. (Leif was known from TV as a teenage astronomy wis, when he won the 10 000 Crowns Quir in the early '60s. He later became a professional astronomer, died in the US in 1979 and got a crater on the Moon named in his memory. The way for a fan to pass away, I'd say.) It was followed by UPPSAPA and SWAPA, that didn't last. In 1976 the most successful Swedish APA was founded: SFF. The letters are short for Sveriges Fanzine Förening - Sweden's Fanzine Association. It was the existence of SFF that inspired a group of fans to start a new APA in 1979:

Gurka. 'Gurka' means 'cucumber'. It's unclear why this name was chosen. Maybe because it can be mentioned with others present, without giving any hints of what it is. It also sounds a bit funny. I will from now on write 'Cucumber', instead of 'Gurka', so that you will think it is funny too.

Cucumber was different. It was secret. The original members were: Anders Bellis, Roger Sjölander and me of Stockholm, Ingemar Carlsson of Gothenburg, Mikko Tenhovaara of Helsinki, and Lars Larsson and Jonas Söderblad of Nybro. The famous Nybro-fandom later launched the national Star Wars club. They once published a story with Star Wars characters engaged in something hinted upon as sex. Lucasfilms went mad on the other side of the globe and engaged their lawyers to 'protect their trademarks'. (No, 'sex' is not a trademark of Lucasfilms.)

Why a secret APA? I and Bellis already did a weekly newzine, *The Wheel's Adventures* (WA), but had also tried small print-run carbon rimes. It felt nice to write to a closed circle. My secret hobby is to write constitutions so I wrote one for Cucumber. Members

Writing about our own sort-of-Samizdat

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samizdat>:



a form of dissident activity across the Eastern Bloc in which individuals reproduced censored and underground makeshift publications, often by hand, and passed the documents from reader to reader. The practice of manual reproduction was widespread, because most typewriters and printing devices required official registration and permission to access. This was a grassroots practice used to evade official Soviet censorship...in decades prior to the early 1960s, offices and stores had to submit papers with examples of their typewriters' fonts to local KGB branches so that any printed text could be traced back to the source ... Samizdat is unique to the post-Stalin USSR and other countries with similar systems. Faced with the state's powers of censorship, society turned to underground literature for self-analysis and self-expression...Not everything published in samizdat had political overtones. In 1963, Joseph Brodsky was charged with "social parasitism" and convicted for being nothing but a poet. His poems circulated in samizdat, with only four judged as suitable for official Soviet anthologies...The longest-running and best-known samizdat periodical was A Chronicle of Current Events. It was dedicated to defending human rights by providing accurate information about events in the USSR...The Chronicle editors maintained that, according to the 1936 Soviet Constitution, then in force, their publication was not illegal. The authorities did not accept the argument. Many people were harassed, arrested, imprisoned, or forced to leave the country for their involvement in the Chronicle's production and distribution...Samizdat covered a large range of topics, mainly including literature and works focused on religion, nationality, and politics. The state censored a variety of materials such as detective novels, adventure stories, and science fiction in addition to dissident texts, resulting in the



An issue of Chronicle of Current events

Collection of samizdat material.

underground publication of samizdat covering a wide range of topics. Though most samizdat authors directed their works towards the intelligentsia, samizdat included lowbrow genres in addition to scholarly works.

The samizdat books and journals would be painstakingly typed and multiplied by using carbons and very thin paper, called onion paper, getting ca 10 copies. (Our Cucumber zines used what was called air mail paper, 30 grams/m², standard paper is ca 80 g/m². Sold in every office supplies store and of better quality than Soviet paper - I saw some as I corresponded eastward.)

The samizdats were distributed through personal connections, transported manually and hidden. Someone getting hold of an interesting publication would often - if there was a typewriter available – make more copies of it. As successful samizdat could this way be a bit of a growing chain letter.

If you're interested, George Saunders edited a collection of samizdat material translated to English, in *Samizdat - Voices of the Soviet Opposition*, available here: <https://annas-archive.org/md5/3eff748ae012d75ae1fe8afc880c40d4>

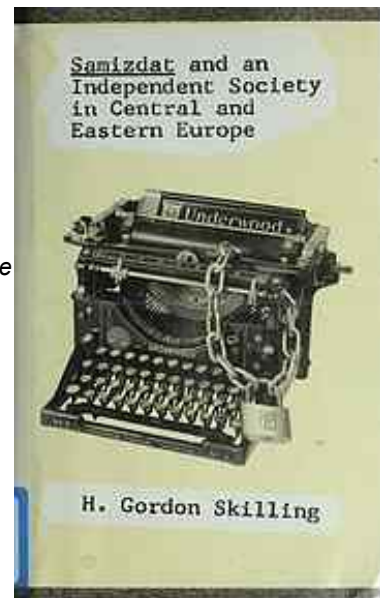
And one Gordon Johnston has covered *What is the history of Samizdat?*

Here: <https://annas-archive.org/md5/42b8a5133704aeb733ba72072423549d>

He tells us:

samizdat was prosecuted under Articles 70 and 190-1 of the Criminal Code... Article 70 requires evidence of anti-Soviet purpose or intent while Article 190-1 requires evidence of 'defamation', 'discreditation', and 'false fabrication'...Article 190-1 covers dissemination in oral, written or printed form

But samizdat wasn't unique for the USSR, but existed in all former Soviet bloc countries and republics. That is covered in H Gordon Skilling's *Samizdat and an independent society in Central and Eastern Europe* from <https://annas-archive.org/md5/1ed65f3dcf94e7ab11523b9daeffa3cb> Here's a short lecture of samizdat: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfPehnTLoOU> and a short film with samizdat production re-enactment: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD_2ehs3gF0, in this case doing banned religious texts. Today's Russia has instead allied with the corrupt Russian-Orthodox church, lead by former KGB agent patriarch Kirill who enthusiastically proclaimed that Ukrainian president Zelensky is anti-christ. Indeed!



On samizdat from other parts of the Soviet bloc.

So we can add delusional madness to transparent lies.

I guess you have to a bit interested in the history and culture of the Soviet sphere to dig deeper into samizdats. But there is every reason to nurture such an interest, because putinist Russia seems is

bouncing back to the ways of the USSR. You need to understand the Soviet Union to understand the former KGB officer Putin, and thus get clues to why we have to suffer the biggest and bloodiest war in Europe since World War II.

Today Russians get arrested and threatened with several years in prison for waving a *blank piece of paper*. The kangaroo courts will slam you with “defamation of the glorious, victorious Russian army” (a phrase meaning the same as “anti-Soviet activities” back in the bad old days). Now, you may ask, a blank paper says nothing, so what the heck... The point is that the message is in your head, the paper is supposed to create anti-Putin thoughts in the heads of the onlooker as they fill in the blanks - so the mere *thoughts* of people are banned. And there's no difference in thinking bad about the army or about Putin-Russia. The army *is* the state. To paraphrase Rudolf Hess. *The army is Putin, Putin is Russia, and Russia is Putin. Зуд хайль* (=“Sieg Heil!”)

It's very risky to deny any of these “truths” in today's Russia. *“Ukraine is Nazi.” “All is going according to plan.” “We only target military objects.” “The Ukrainians staged the Bucha massacre with actors and Hollywood props.” “The Moskva sank because one in the crew smoked carelessly.” “We just rescue children, who become so glad that they don't want to speak Ukrainian.”* But if I remember it correctly the Soviets at least tried to make their lies *sound* plausible. Putin-Russia don't care. Putin's own “Ministry of Truth” is the TV channels he controls where 75% of Russians get all their “information”. George Orwell's ghost nods in recognition.

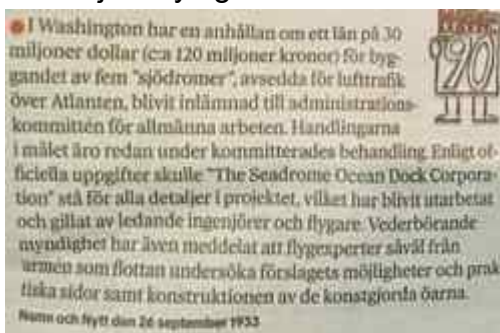
There were different kinds of samizdat. *Radidaz* or *magnizdat* were illegal recordings, often taken from foreign stations like the BBC, Radio Liberty or Radio Free Europe. *Intermission* earlier covered “bone music”, ie western pop music which was engraved on used X-ray plates! *Tamizdat* (“over-there” published) was material printed abroad and then smuggled in. Not all was typewritten. Some were xeroxed, though access to copying machines were very restricted, and illegal mimeographs or even printing presses were used, also very restricted, and those replicating methods were much rarer. I'm a bit stupefied that *hektographs* was almost unheard of! The material mentioned make no references to such, and yet they would have been very easy to make and good for reproducing 50-100 copies instead of 10. A hektograph just needs jelly+glycerin, to boil and cool and a good dye for the master, material that must have been available in the USSR too.

Today the Internet has the same role as Samizdat, though KGB/FSB monitor all traffic, blocks thousands of sites but they yet haven't cracked all VPNs (they control some). It is estimated that perhaps 10-20% of Russians have the ability to reach correct non-Putin information, but that's way more than painstakingly typed samizdat reached earlier.

Personally I see a little bit of connection between their samizdat and our Cucumber carbzines: while we weren't illegal there was a certain feeling of being misunderstood and persecuted... Sf was after all just flying saucer delusions and the books were the lowest form of

literature (at least up to the 1970s when Cucumber was active, pariah status later began to erode). It's a proud and lonely thing to be a fan.

You don't find interesting stuff only in old newspapers. As I write this I saw the following in the Name & News dpt of DN newspaper, Sep 26:



An application for 30m dollar (ca 120m crowns) for building five “seadromes”, meant for air traffic over the Atlantic, has been handed to the administration for public works in Washington. The application is already under committee scrutiny. Official information says “The Seadrome Ocean Dock Corporation” will work all details of the project, which is designed and approved by leading engineers and aviators. work all details of the project, which is designed and approved by leading engineers and aviators. The administration has asked aeronautics experts from both army and navy to investigate the feasibility of the proposal and practical things around constructing artificial islands. /Name & News, DN, Sep 26 1933/



The public works admin was one of Roosevelt's ideas to fight the depression, and it's interesting they considered a plan seen in the pop science mags. As Lindbergh barely made it over the pond, heavier passenger planes would need airfields in the sea to refuel. However, already the great DC3 arriving in 1936 had enough range to jump the ocean... See LSO <https://gizmodo.com/the-artificial-islands-that-would-have-let-us-leapfrog-1440394911>

We jump back in time to Svenska Dagbladet June 8 1960 when Kingsley Amis gets a sour review, for his radio play headline "Lost in space":

Lots of hairy, sticky arms embraces and suffocates poor spacemen in Kingsley Amis' "Enemy Planet", an sf fantasy that the Radio Theatre presented Tuesday /June/. A front guard of scientists have landed on a very comfortable planet. The five men are varmed by an atomic burner while talented and strong robots build a landing strip. Put in space an invasion force impatiently orbits waiting for the job to finish. But the calmness ends on the planet. In the darkness flourish hostile, brownish lumps of jelly, huge but still able to go through a ventilation shaft. One of the scientists die giving off agonising screams. The other scientists try to convince themselves it is just imaginations of the mind. What did Amis want and mean? Why doesn't he stay on Earth? Why doesn't he describe a hangover or something less abstract? He has shown he can handle beings on Earth? Why abandon them and go lost in space? Most must be tired of the space fantasies of the usual, banal kind. Who hasn't by mistake found themselves in a cinema where space ghosts and flying saucers do their stupid dance? And nobody could miss comics. Because of saturation you have some demands for renewals in the genre. But when not even such a bright guy as Kingsley Amis can extract any fun or frightening effects from a subject, one has to come to the conclusion that subjects for the moment have dried up. The authors language usually has a sort of irreverent and sloppy charm, but the translators Sigbrit and Carl-Olof Lång have allowed themselves a vulgar-blabbing jargon that in no way raised the mood. Nothing becomes jollier by using the word "ol'men" instead of "old men". Director Eddie Stenberg has applied all possible sound effects from whistling to explosions of screams sin anguish, but it all seems painfully familiar. Whatever intentions Amis had, nothing became clear from the play. The satire missed – if it now was a satire.

Kingsley Amis had at the time just published his *New Maps of Hell*. the first "outsider" study of the sf genre with was both serious and a bit positive. He was talked about, but his radio play didn't please this Margaret Stenström – who neither I nor Google know anything about. Does anyone know if the Amis play "Enemy planet" is published anywhere? (Google has no clue.)

Our buddy Wernher von Braun has happier space news, in Aftonbladet June 28, already in 1953, "Reading for space fans":

The first step of conquering outer space is to place a remote controlled lab – a "baby space station" - 300 km above the Earth, the world's foremost space rocket expert German Wernher von Braun says in an article in this week's issue of Collier's. von Braun and space scientists are convinced that the small remote controlled satellite is the forerunner to a big space station that may come within 5-6 years. It would circle Earth in 60 days /typo: hours/ on 300 km height with a speed of 24 000 km/h. von Braun is the chief of the US Army's research centre for remote controlled projectile in Redstone Arsenal, Alabama . "Work on the baby satellite can start at once, because it's known how it is constructed, powered etc," von Braun says. The baby space station will resemble a 1 metre ice cream, cone cone, with a tip of mirrors that take power from the sun. The conical space station contains a complicated myriad of instruments and microphones, which by radio and TV transmitter informs viewers on Earth what happens in the baby satellite. Three small, very intelligent rhesus monkeys will live on board the air conditioned space station where they are feed from an automatic food dispenser. Every movement by the monkeys will be seen on a TV screen. von Braun also explains how the baby space station will leave orbit. "Before launch the space station looks like a remote controlled Viking rocket except that it's three times as big, 50 metres tall and 10 metres wide at the base. During launch it becomes gradually smaller as two of three motors are thrown off, one at a time as they use up fuel. The station must be launched over water so that the lowest motor thrown away already after a minute from start won't hit someone or something. Nobody has to worry about the second motor, since it's thrown away at such an altitude it burns up before hitting ground. When they at the third stage reach 100 km and a speed of 24 000 km/h the third motor is automatically thrown off and the conical tip glides without power to orbit at a height of 300 km reached 44 min later. The entire trip to the designated orbit takes 48.5 minutes, von Braun ends.

Vilse i rymden

Massor av härliga, klibbiga armar slingrar sig kvävande kring de stackan rymdfararna i Kingsley Amis' "Fientlig planet", en science-fiction-fantasy som Radioteatern presenterade på torsdagen.

En stöttupp av vetenskapsmän har tagit en utomjordensplanet ännu inte upptäckt. De fem männen värmer sig vid atomkaminen medan de bekvämligt och ursäktligt robotarna anlägger en landningsbana. Ut i rymden strömmar en invasionsstyrka otåligt i sin omloppsbana i väntan på att arbetet skall bli färdigt.

Män på planeten bröts idyllen. Där troddas i mörkrets fientliga, drängliknande getekthuvuden, euorna till formater men ändå i stånd att ta sig ut genom en ventilationsströmma. En robot blir ett nervsammanbrött och blir skrämd sig själv igen. En av vetenskapsmännen dör under kvalfulla vrål. De övriga forskarna försöker uttala sig att det bara är fråga om sinnessviller.

△

Vad har nu Amis menat och vilan? Varför stannar han inte på jorden? Varför ägnar han sig inte åt att beskriva ett bakrus eller något annat mindre abstrakt? Han har ju visat att han har utmärkt hand med de vardsliga som vistas på jorden. Varför då övergå till att gå vilse i rymden?

Rymdfantaster av det vanligaste, bana la slaget måste väl de flesta vara utleda på. Vem har inte av misstag hamnat på en bio där rymdspöken och flygande tetar har trätt sin skottlösa dans? Och de tekniska serierna har väl heller ingen kunnat undgå. Just på grund av överutmatningen ställer man visst krav på förnyelse inom genren. Men när inte ens ett sådant kvickhuvud som Kingsley Amis kan avvinnas ännu några lustiga eller skrämmande effekter, då måste man dra den slutsatsen att ämnet för tillfället är uttöskat.

Författarens språk brukar ha en sorts vanskörighet och slarvig charm, men över sättarna Sigbrit och Carl-Olof Lång har de nedläst sig till en vulgärbegig jargon som knappast mantrände upp stämningen. Ingenting blir i ex. roligare för att man använder ordet "gubba" i stället för gubbar.

Regissören Eddie Stenberg hade antagit alla tänkbara ljud effekter från visst ljudar och explosioner till ångestskrik men alltså medans världens pinsamt väl bekant. Vilka Amis avskifter an kan ha varit, inte blev de klarare av föreställningen. Satiren slog slint – om det nu var en satir.

MARGARET STENSTRÖM

Läsning för rymdfantaster

NEW YORK (AP) — Första steget mot en erövring av världens rymden är att placera ett fjärrstyrt laboratorium — en "baby-rymdstation" — på 30 svenska mil över jorden, säger världens främste raketexpert, tysken är Wernher von Braun i en artikel i veckans nummer av Collier's.

Enligt von Braun är rymdvetenskapens nästa överflyttade om att den lilla fjärrstyrda satelliten är föregångaren till en stor rymdstation, som kan uppföras inom 5-6 år. Den skulle kretsa kring jorden på 60 dagar på 300 mils höjd och med en hastighet av 24 000 km./tim.

Von Braun är nu chef för amerikanska arméns forskningscentrum för fjärrstyrda projektiler i Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

Arbetet med babystationen kan börja omedelbart, ty man känner till allt om hur den skall konstrueras, drivas etc. Projektilen kommer att likna en 30 fot glasskruka i vata spets eller tunga speglar, som drar åt sig kraft från solen. Den koniska rymdstationen innehåller en komplicerad myriad av instrument och mikrofoner, som med radio, radar och TV-sändare underrettar iakttagarna på jorden, vad som företägar inte i babystationen. Tre små, mycket intelligenta rhesusapor skall bo ombord i den luftkonditionerade rymdstationen, >

hoffar något eller någon. Ingen behöver bekymra sig om den andra motorn, ty den kastas av på så stor höjd att den är uppbänd, innan den träffar marken.

När man vid tredje stadiet når en höjd av tio svenska mil och en hastighet av 24 000 km./tim, skickas den tredje motorn automatiskt och den koniska speglastationen glider utan motorkraft till omloppsbanan på en höjd av 30 svenska mil, som nås 44 min senare. Hela färden till den förutbestämde omloppsbanan tar 48,5 min. slutar von Braun. — Thinh.

Luftkonditionerade rymdstationen, där de får sin föda från en automatisk livsmedelsdispensar. Varje rörelse och språk som hörman till synes på TV-skärmen.

Von Braun förklarar också hur babyrymdstationen skall gå ut på sin plats i omloppsbanan.

Före uppstigningen liknar rymdstationen en fjärrstyrd Viking-Rocket med undantag för att den är tre gånger större, 50 m. hög och tio meter bred vid basen.

Efter uppstigningen blir den gradvis mindre ganska att två av dess tre motorer kastas av, en i stunder sedan de gjort slut på sitt drivmedel. Stationen måste lyfta över vattnet, så att inte den nedre motorn, som avkastar rök, kan nå någon minut efter starten.

metres wide at the base. During launch it becomes gradually smaller as two of three motors are thrown off, one at a time as they use up fuel. The station must be launched over water so that the lowest motor thrown away already after a minute from start won't hit someone or something. Nobody has to worry about the second motor, since it's thrown away at such an altitude it burns up before hitting ground. When they at the third stage reach 100 km and a speed of 24 000 km/h the third motor is automatically thrown off and the conical tip glides without power to orbit at a height of 300 km reached 44 min later. The entire trip to the designated orbit takes 48.5 minutes, von Braun ends.

It sounds like von Braun was ready to launch a satellite already in 1953. And from different other sources we

know he indeed was! What happened was that the US Navy was given the task but their Vanguard rocket wasn't ready and the Navy wouldn't let their *main enemy*, the freaking US Army, use their Redstone and steal the honour of launching the first satellite, or "baby space station" as it was called. Instead the Soviets stole the show! But we should be grateful the Vanguard exploded on the launch pad, because if it had been first space wouldn't have become prestige and there would be no space race and perhaps no Moon landing.

Let's return to signature Flips (Gösta Rybrant) who was clearly fascinated by this "science fiction" thing that had just popped up. In his Aftonbladet "Chronicle" Apr 24, 1954, he finds old akiffy:



Reality is more wonderful than fantasy...science fiction...an artform I have recently been associated with. You must be with the times in the realm of fiction. Sf is, as the knowledgeable reader knows, stories about life of people in 100 or 1000 years. It seems they will have some trouble also then. Lots of troubles., One moment The Martians invade the Earth and Earthers must dress up in space suits and wander through cosmos and kick their ass. Or it's people from Venus that arrive and behave unduly. And the poor Earthmen must dress up in space suits and wander around cosmos to kick Venusian ass. All this happen, as said, in 100 or 1000 years and the stories are quite fantastic. That we in those times haven't found other arguments than kicking ass seems beyond the grasp of the authors. That would be too fantastic, which is sad. The human imagination lacks borders it seem. Or as one of my artist friends said the other day when fancied the so called concretists. "The poor griffiers /???!/ think they can finds form not already found in nature!" he said as he pondered over the wild arabesque pattern of the spaghetti laying before him....Jules Verne who wrote sf long before anyone had found out it would be named that, wrote about the sky travels of engineer Robur long before Bleriot had lifted his first aircraft, but his feats are now sunken to yawning routine. Captain Nemo sailed around the world beneath the sea at a time you could only dream about traffic under water, but they have now built a submarine powered by atomic energy, something not even Verne could have dreamt of. Does anyone now consider it such an exploit to travel around the world in days as Phileas Fogg. The other dsay I got hold of a book titled Oxygen and Aromasia and it was really entertainingly written by one Mr Claes Lundin and printed by Isaac Marcus Bookprinting Ltd in 1878. It is also sf and tells about certain strange events in Stockholm in 2378. this author had really mustered all the imagination he had so he lets the young hero Mr Oxygen be boss of a company that makes weather. He sends rain that way and high pressures this way, an idea very comical in 1878, though they can now make rain in America at will and already has a hassle with the legal question of who owns the atmosphere. Aromasia is the heroine in Claes Lundin's tale and an artist. Since Wagner and his followers have made the entire music-listening half-deaf in 1878 you can't play the piano the usual way so they invented the smell keyboard – ododion – on which you bring forth the most ingenious compositions. Aromasia has for instance made an "odirate" showing "materialism winning over criticism and finishing the Nicaragua canal". Claes Lundin must have smiled when he made this up and thought it was so preposterous that his fantasy would never be matched by reality...



Oxygen and Aromasia has by some been called the first Swedish sf novel though there are other candidates, eg *The English Flyer* from 1741 according to Sam J Lundwall's bibliography. Bertil Falk has translated the first chapter of the novel to be English, found here: <http://www.bewilderingstories.com/issue256/oxygen1.html>

Mailing Comments

Skip this if you aren't interested in what I say to folks in EAPA and N'APA. Really! But why not do a fanzine of your own and join? We need more fanzines. Tweetgram, Telebook, Facer and such junk is so boring! Quotes of what I comment quoted in red.

Henry Grynsten: "Science can be divided into...The physical sciences...The biological sciences...Social sciences like anthropology and economics study the social and cultural aspects of human behaviour." Only if "science" is combined in a *compound* term. But the lone word "science" by itself will almost always point to natural science. Your quote from Encyclopedia Britannica - you are lazy with giving sources BTW! - begins with (and I'll mark the parts that directly points to natural science!): "science, any system of knowledge that is concerned with the physical world (1) and its phenomena (2) and that entails unbiased observations (3) and systematic experimentation (4)." 1) Physical world! Ie natural science, which deals with what we can touch and see (unlike "social sciences" which is abstractions, like "society", "mind", "history"). 2) The physical world has

phenomenon! Things that can be measured.3) It has proven very difficult to make something "unbiased" in social sciences, so it must be natural science this points to. Natural science measures things with instruments that give clear and 100% unbiased data. 4) Systematic experimentation is what natural sciences deals with. Social sciences has huge difficulties doing experiments. It's very difficult to be systematic with social non-linear phenomenon. So here it also points to natural science, not social sciences. And if you don't believe it here in "Difference Between Science and Social Sciences": <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-science-and-vs-social-sciences/> "Between Science and social sciences, there exist a recognizable difference." AE: Antropology and economics are social sciences, which are "undermined by postmodernism and similar anything-goes-ideology..." Henry: "That's just an opinion with no basis other than ideology." It should rather be called an assessment. And many agree: "The postmodern assault on science" <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3463968/> "Debunking Postmodernism and the Regressive Left 101" <https://socialdeocracy21stcentury.blogspot.com/p/the-philosophy-of-postmodernism-and-its.html> <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Postmodern> The last is rather fun, with multiple attacks on postmodernism, e g: "Postmodernism is the ultimate lubricant invented by social sciences in order to fuck every concept and structure that humans ever came up with." "Postmodernism is a cargo cult. It seeks to duplicate the form of rational inquiry, while lacking the substance." "Postmodernism: pseudo-intellectual Trojan Horse of tyrants everywhere in the western world." You can't possibly be unaware of that postmodernism is the subject of huge amounts of criticism! And it has a lot of bias is a fair assessment." /If you/ "don't accept the results of the social sciences because of the replication crisis, you should also throw out medicine and the natural sciences." They have their share of replication crisis too, but much less so. It's easier to replicate things that show up unbiased on instruments and have linear properties. And BTW I don't mean "no science can be relied on". That's a straw man. But there is no doubt that social sciences - ie not science - has magnitudes worse replication problems. "climate change...the science behind it isn't "soft science" As I said, science also has a replication problem, but of what remains a *big chunk of it is within "climate science"*. The higher degree of replication problems within "climate science" makes it softer. Examples of replication failures: - Michael Manns "hockey stick" of claimed temperature curves, criticised by av McKittrick och McIntyre. - Numerous "prognoses" that have shown to be wrong. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/50-failed-eco-pocalyptic-predictions-hashim-sheikh> <https://wattsupwiththat.com/2022/08/20/failed-climate-predictions-willie-soon-phd/> <https://www.agweb.com/opinion/doomsday-addiction-celebrating-50-years-failed-climate-predictions> - The Sauna climate theory saying CO2 causes warmth, but history data sees CO2 follow a temperature increase. <https://skepticalscience.com/co2-lags-temperature.htm> - <https://www.newswise.com/factcheck/rising-temperatures-may-cause-a-rise-in-carbon-dioxide-but-this-does-not-refute-human-caused-climate-change> <http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/thermo/icecore.html> Much more could be mentioned! "we are not /talking about ethics/. We are talking about objective finds about inequality. Either inequality leads to increased murder rates and teen pregnancies or it does not, and what Wilkinson & Pickett and many others say is that it does." First, W&P's *The Spirit Level* has met lots of substantial, empirical critique for cherry-picking. Secondly: Please prove that a statement about murder rate isn't about ethics. Ethics is about good or bad. Most are of the opinion that murder is bad, but that's not a proof and not science - there is nothing "objective" in it. (Same with teen pregs.) "Haven't you said that there may be something like objective ethics?" I have at times aired loose thoughts on the subject as it's worth thinking about and speculate over, but I have no definite conclusions and am not tied to the mast about it. "Researchers have shown that creativity is greater in equal countries." Opinion makers from the marshland infested by postmodernism have made such improbable claims. But it's more likely that policies respecting individualism and personal freedom is more creative, because: - Flattening differences requires a degree of oppression, and that quelches creativity. - Striving for "equality" requires to take from some and give to others. But if you take away rewards for being creative and give others for free without creativity, you kill creativity. - Plan economy, required to a high degree if you shall be able to introduce actions to flatten out differences, has an empirical record of being UNcreative. "Besides, if science can't answer if freedom of action and thought promote creativity, then how can you be so sure that they do?" It's an assessment, based upon knowledge about what makes people tick. /Critique of The Spirit Level would be/ "just a claim(s) with nothing behind it." <https://tino.us/2010/07/the-spirit-level-authors-wilkinson-and-picket-caught-lying/> <https://spiritleveldelusion.blogspot.com/2019/03/the-spirit-level-ten-years-on.html> <https://iea.org.uk/blog/more-spirit-level-delusions> <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/spirit-level-bubble-bursts-as-critics-expose-flaws-6sltg8xfwtw>

<https://thewanderinghedgehog.wordpress.com/2010/05/19/the-spirit-level-why-inequality-matters/>

There is much more! "No they don't" /ignore plausible third causations/. Yes they do. They have no comment on effects on claimed figures by the US lack of universal health care, for instance. They say nothing about effects of extreme Russian drinking. That attitudes to contraceptives rather than "equality" has with teen pregnancies to do. And so on. "with high inequality, there is also high crime rates" Only to a degree. Copycat memes, mental status of the population, and availability of the tools of violence influence too. Eg in the US there seem to be a "mass shooting" almost every day. It seems that the high frequency of it such "inspire" more of it. Each mass shooting becomes a "mental virus" that spreads, a mass shooting meme. Something similar is with drug gangs in Sweden (targeting each other, mass shootings are very rare here) . How available weapons are is also important, esp in the US with the 2nd amendment. Education is must be factored in, and city planning. To simply have badly designed suburbs will cause crime. Sure, wealth plays a role - but there are also other factors. Me: "They can't explain why creativity should grow if you rule more over people with politics, limits people's choice and actions and take things from them to give to others." You: They can and they do /"explain" how central planning & politics would be creative/ They don't. Except for their constant mantra that "inequality" explains everything. "Communist countries like the Soviet Union, North Korea and Cuba. Nobody wants that, not Wilkinson or Pickett or me." They want Communism Light. "There are exactly 0 countries with no taxes whatsoever" Monaco has no income tax, at least. (But I'm not arguing for 0% tax, but for *lower tax*.) It's not "contradictive" - you can argue for the use of something, but be against overuse. "I thought you considered Wikipedia unreliable?" Wiki tend to be unreliable for *controversial* subjects. But it's not controversial that Wilkinson & Pickett are activist. They've spent years sifting through data to find what to pick for misleading diagrams and then spent substantial time writing a book and have after that taken a lot of time trying to answer all the criticism... A *lot* of activity, thus: *activists*. "Being an activist doesn't mean that your scientific results are automatically wrong" But it does mean a tendency for being blind to faults with your world view. "joint ownership by the employees" That's is a sort of Soviet Kolkhoz. Their "solution" (to a problem they constructed, BTW) is known to work very bad. Collectives have lousy productivity. "This already occurs with a fourth of all employees in Great Britain" So the UK is part-kolkhoz to 25%. Sad for them. What's your point? /The 1980s wagetaker funds/ "was unpopular among those it was unpopular" The 4th October 1983 movement demonstration reached 75 000 (police figure), the biggest demo ever in Stockholm! /Prehistoric murder rate/ "numbers are an exaggeration". It doesn't seem so. The rates were very high in these "egalitarian" societies, exact figures matter less – even if it was an exaggeration numbers were very high. This indicates it's not a good idea to put prehistoric, primitive societies on a pedestal as W&P do. "We already talked about the term being 'sexual assault'" not "assault" Assault means a military and/or violent attack and/or an effort to subdue someone by force. "Sexual assault" mean doing this AND having a sexual goal with the violent assault. If there is *no* violent attack, there can't be a "sexual assault" because the assault factor is missing. Asimov did not violently attack anyone, so no sexual assault. Groping is something else (and I agree Asimov behaved very bad). That some opinion makers want to distort language by claiming a non-assault is a military or violent attack, is *virtue signalling*: to show how incredibly much you are on the "right side" by giving something an as bad description and name as possible. But as said: this newspeak is risky! It turns Russia's assault on Ukraine with 100 000s of dead into something comparable with just groping! To create such a unbalanced comparison is unacceptable. The newspeak behind it must be rejected, even if some virtue signallers want disagree. /The Spanish FA boss groping/ "did so because he's also sexually awkward and inhibited." I suspect he just totally lost his mind. The Spanish team had just won the highest world title. That could make people totally lose it... Normally I'd say this affair looks exaggerated. It shouldn't be more to it than the wrongdoer apologising. However - I followed things around the World Cup - in the background is that the Spanish football squad had for a long, long time been dissatisfied with the federation, leaders and officials for numerous things. There have been boycotts, open protests and more. This added to the situation, made it extremely explosive. Me: I'm against trying to twist words for ideological reasons. That's Orwellian newspeak." And yet you do it yourself, as you use "assault" To the contrary, I'm correcting misuse and newspeak. /AIs/ "don't have brains to begin with." They are beginning to get something functionally equivalent. (But getting to human complexity will take time, a long time. HAL 9000 isn't around the corner...) Functionally equivalent = If it looks like a brain, swims like a brain, quacks like a brain, it's a brain. "Just because some scientific results can't be replicated doesn't mean that all scientific are false" Some? Up to 50% for social sciences. That's a LOT. It's no better than throwing dice. /growth and freedom/ "are reached by greater equality" No, because it requires dictating to and herding

people. That quelches freedom, it becomes an obstacle for productive forces required for growth. "I was just saying that /Cro Magnon/ were more fit." Yet they died much, much earlier! "You doubt that the average Cro Magnon who used his body all day." Some of those strange admirers of primitive hunter-gather societies actually claim the people only had to work 2-3 hours/day! (I don't agree.) "Modern humans are prone to work-place accidents, traffic accidents" But such accidents are magnitudes rarer than risks by constantly wandering around in the wild, in a society where the murder rate sky high, wild animals roam... (And while some modern habits may not be healthy, the proof is in the pudding: despite everything modern man live far, far longer!) "/Cro Magnon knew/ how to navigate. If they didn't know how to get around they would have died out." Most points to that prehistoric humans were poor travellers. It could take them thousands of years to migrate, say, a couple of hundred miles. They drifted around more like a Brownian motion. (The Australian aborigines BTW had 50 000 years to learn about the place.) "Cro Magnons probably had greater resistance to diseases" Small, isolated groups tend to have worse resistance. Their immune systems haven't met challenges to train on. "would be able to start a fire faster" Finds indicate they weren't that great fire makers, since the standard strategy was to simply carry a fire with you and try to keep it glowing all the time. ME: our grey matter won't become smart by itself. It needs the right stimulation and training. "So you won't mind taking out a tennis ball-size chunk of your brain" What's your point? Maybe someone has removed tennis balls from Henry's brain... "Consciousness is the only way to have IQ." I think there is a co-dependence between the two.

Willian McCabe: I'm against editing or rewriting book according to the thoughts of the day! It sets a bad precedent and makes us stupid. We can't understand history of we don't know what people thought back in history. As for name or trademarks.

If you are Johnny Johnson and write a book and there comes another Johnny Johnson and writes a book, Johnny II must have the right to use his legal name. But if someone releases an AI written book, he/she shouldn't have the right to use the name. The two Johnny Johnsons are actually, legally named that, the AI just picked a name without legal rights. On covid: as noted you can't compared figures between Sweden all deaths noted as "covid ones" if the deceased had the slightest bit of virus positive test, while in Norway a doctor had to separately determine that covid was the direct cause of death... Those are two different death cause criteria! Excess death does away with opinions of death causes, is more accurate, and here Sweden had the *lowest in Europe* figure! No, football fanzines are much later. Comics zines were the second ones, after sf fanzines, then came Star Trek, punk rock and finally football.

Heath Row: I doubt you could easily contribute to the Bertil Falk Space Opera Prize. My only "payment system" is Swedish bank account but I have no experience or knowledge of international transactions. If anyone want to try it it's account No 6153-330 334 578 with a banlk called called Handelsbanken, but I doubt it works. P-movie "Breaking Point" is available here and there if you look around. You might need to know how to find "less legal" sites and saucy ones...

Garth Spencer: Of those about a dozen upcoming Canadian cons, I assume the majority are so called media cons! Upcoming sf literature cons over here for a typical year is one and a half. We have next year's Swecon, and now in November a one-day-con (I count that as a half, I call them "microcons" being more of an enhanced club meeting, a proper sf con should be for at least a couple of days). But We have are several media and RPG cons. A guy named Esper Isberg rents big places to sell plastic models and B-actor autographs 3-4 times year (and strangely enough has a lemming audience!). We have our own Comic Con and probably at least ten gaming/RPG cons every year. But real sf cons...too few. Nice con report. But where were the scandals?



Слава Україні!

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 267

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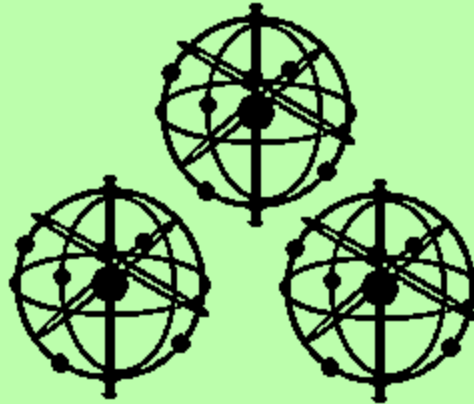
Comments:

Cover: Public Domain Fantasy Art.

Ahrvid Engholm: Fun facts about Hugo Gernsback and “Sexology” and also the idea of testing nuclear weapons on the moon. (I propose testing them in deep space...for the cool fireworks show! Yeah, yeah, I know: it'd just be a speck of light. But we could clad the bomb with materials to produce fancy pryotechnic effects! It would improve our rocketry and our bombs...)

You responded to a comment by Harry Grynnsen, who said, “Only humans can have an IQ.” Possibly, because only humans can take IQ tests. But I have met really stupid dogs...and really smart dogs...and so I believe that the abstract concept of “IQ” rightly belongs to dogs, too. And horses and pigs. I'm not quite certain about cats...

Ahrvid Engholm: re Ukraine, general agreement. I find myself a bit ashamed of U.S. politicians who don't want to consider assisting Ukraine in this war. I also am concerned that Putin might freak out and escalate to nuclear weapons. But glory to Ukraine for holding out – for winning! – when the conventional wisdom, at the beginning, was that they would lose in two weeks.



Agreement re burning books (flags, effigies, etc.) It's “legiti-mate speech” and needs to be allowed, but it's *ugly* speech, and is very difficult to admire. There are more constructive ways to say, “This is bad, and I disagree with it.”

Was that an actual Gernsback essay on writing scientific mysteries and other good science fiction? The wording seemed too “modern” for Gernsback's day and age. In any case, the advice was all good, and certainly applies today as much as it did roughly a century ago.

The presentations of various extremely impractical war machines was hilarious! “Big Wheel” weapons, and giant bipedal robots are absurdities. To be sure, many of the ideas people have today about what the future might experience are also absurd. Almost all “Manned Flights to Mars” proposals are pure pie-in-the-sky.

Garth Spencer: Lovely to see all those conventions! Alas and alack, the convention scene in my own home town is pretty sparse. Yeah, we've got Godzilla in the Attic with the San Diego Comic Con, but we don't have anything comfortable or “fannish” right now.

Fun convention report.

Very sorry to read Den Valdron's experiences. I sympathize with him, although in some ways, I don't exactly agree with him. I think he materially participating in making his overall experience worse than it needed to be. He appears – even from his own write-ups! – to have been more counter-aggressive than conciliatory.

Re social media and FaceBook, I got nothing. I don't participate on FaceBook at all – which is sad, because it would be a nice way to stay in touch with many of my old friends – because, by and large, FaceBook turns people into jerks. I know I would be just as susceptible to this hideous transformation as anyone else, and I don't want to *be* the kind of jerk I least admire in the world.

John Thiel: Lovely artwork! I really like the futuristic city-scape!

My brother-in-law used a typewriter to type up his first two novels...and that was last year! His first drafts were hand-written, then he typed them, then, at my urging, he input them into a computer, using the WordPad accessory to create RTF files. His approach was terribly old-fashioned. He had a habit of entering the “tab” character many times to try to format text. He basically does not grok word processing, and tried to treat the computer exactly as if it were a typewriter. As far as his typewriter goes, it's an old manual machine, and he re-inks his own ribbons using fluid ink and sewing-machine oil. Messy, as you can imagine! I despair of ever bringing him forward out of the 19th century.

George Phillis: re writing styles, I confess that my favorite is the classic third-person past-tense, “limited omniscience” approach, the “limited omniscience” being that, by and large, narrative is limited to what the protagonist could observe and know, but the narrative extends to things only the protagonist could observe and know, specifically his personal thoughts. Gee, I'm really hungry Ajax thought. The “limited omniscience” is that only Ajax and God know this. Some writers write in “full omniscience,” giving details that

only God could know. “Deep within the earth, a tremor began, which would soon split the continent wide open.” I don't so much care for full omniscience. I also don't so much care for present tense, which seems unpleasant affected, a style used for stylistic purposes only. I don't know of any instances where it actually was useful in story-telling. I've seen a handful of second person stories, often in the epistolary fashion. “Dear James: it has been a year since I last wrote to you...” First Person can be effective, but it requires real skill. It is too easy to do poorly, and, alas, it very often is done very poorly indeed. Roger Zelazny was a master of first-person narrative, and Dick Francis, famous for his racehorse mysteries, was also very good at it.

Re Samuel Lubell, by coincidence I just finished reading Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, and, yeah, the ending was a big grim. The over-the-top slaughter of the knights was ugly, and the ending was, essentially, the author saying, “Okay, I'm done now: ‘The End.’”

Fun segment of your story, with the guy erasing his own memory, and then, in essence, regretting it, or, perhaps more properly, resenting it. Back when I used to drink too much, I had significant memory erasures. The effect is a bit eerie. And there are certainly many experiences in my life which I wish I could forget completely. Your character has a better reason!

Mark Nelson: Fun retrospective of a fannish life!

Re Ahrvid Engholm re “Codes of Conduct,” he may be right that they are often “rubber,” as in rubber-stamp cut-and-paste formula rules copied from some template somewhere. But, alas, they are necessary. One of our local conventions had to discipline -- and eject - a serial groper. A guy who simply would not, even after warnings, keep his hands to himself. An ugly scene. He insisted, very loudly, that he was the victim and that he was being persecuted. No one else saw it that way, most especially his victims. I've never

seen a Code of Conduct used to suppress free speech, although I have seen it used to ask people to keep their voices low and please stop shouting.

Agreement re James Joyce. My reading list is too long already, and I'm no longer a young'un! I have higher priorities than to read such "experimental" prose. These days, I get a lot of my books from Project Gutenberg, classics from the past, entirely free. Free is good! And it is frankly astonishing how many really great books there are on Gutenberg's list... Also a lot of clunkers, like the Collected Sermons of Reverend Boring Deadly.

Heath Row: I see you, too, mention reading books by inactive and dead authors. Many of them were famous in their day, but have, perhaps unfairly, become forgotten and obscure today. (And, yeah, many have completely justifiably become obscure today!)

Rct me, no, I did not know that Algis Budrys had ever reviewed one of my books. I'm curious to know what he said! Ben Bova once wrote a nice review of one of mine. The book was structured as six separate stories, thematically tied together, and Bova said that it was really a "novel" and not a "collection of stories." I do not know, even today, if I agree or disagree.

Very valid and valuable comments regarding the transition of fandom to newer, younger fans, and how we will simply have to surrender some of our more treasured shibolleshs, as the new kids make up their own rules. That's simply the way mortality works. We had our day. It's theirs now. I only hope they create a fandom that has room for old farts like me. Some fandom activities are essentially closed to me -- Cosplay, for instance. I can't play that game. The door is closed. But writing and reading are ageless and eternal!

Kevin Trainor Jr.: I've only played Diplomacy once. I got stabbed in the back (well, dud!) and probably would play it again if I got a chance...with no expectations. I reffed a game once, as a DippyZine,

and, alas, made a mistake in resolving a battle, to the ire of the participants. I apologized, but it was too late: they quit. Bad affair, not at all to my credit. (I tried to make things right!)

Amusing call-out of Professor Peter Schickele, a highly influential musicalologist, and a significant composer in his own right. I have a completely collection of the published recordings of P.D.Q. Bach, but also all the recordings I have been able to find of Schickele's own work. I think perhaps my favorite is the incidental music he wrote for a performance of Beaumont and Fletcher's "The Knight of the Burning Pestle." (I've read the play, although never seen it produced. Extremely witty!)

Samuel Lubell: Novellas are good for character development. A short story really isn't long enough for meaningful character growth. Short stories are "one act plays," so to speak. A novella is long enough for changes to take place, both in the characters and the situation.

Agreement that Theodore Sturgeon's short fiction is better than his novel-length stuff. I feel the same is true for Frank Herbert. His novels -- Dune especially -- are fairly good, but his short stories are brilliant.

Project Clean-up: yeah, I need to get serious about lightening my load... I'm thinking of simply trashing my collection of VHS tapes. They're obsolete, and the medium simply degrades with time, so they might not be any good, even if there were such a thing as a VHS player any longer. The time has come to pollute the local landfill with a big chunk of hard plastic.

Project Classics: I read The Hunchback of Notre Dame a long, long time ago, and enjoyed it a great deal. I hope you are finding (or have found!) it as pleasing as I did.

It's reported Mr Putin had a heart attack. Impossible! He has no heart.

R.I.P.
Bertil
Falk

INTERMISSION #138

E-zine by [Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com](mailto:ahrvid@hotmail.com), for EAPA, N'APA and those who rule the sevagram! A shorter # for your enjoyment! Follow @SFJournalen newstweets before Musk goes nuts and makes it ex-Twitter. It's not typos...it's features! Our thoughts go to family and friends of the great Bertil Falk. See our special History Corner, all about him! Late Oct '23

Editorially: A Force of Nature Gone, Soccer Terrorism, NATO

I usually comment on news topics in these editorials. It feels that in the last few years much more than usual have happened. A bloody virus, tragic wars, bold space projects, stupid AIs,...

For me personally, it was a sad October 14th as the multi-talented, energy force of nature, my friend Bertil Falk, passed away. He was 90 and we should be grateful that he managed finish many of his life projects: tackling the "impossible" translation of *Finnegans Wake*, chronicling the entire history of science fiction written in Swedish, biographing the "unknown" husband of Indira Gandhi.

Bertil leaves us a huge legacy of research, writing, publishing, translating. He always had lots of things going on. Though I first met him briefly on an sf con in the late 1970's, I began to regularly see him when we both were engaged I the pop science/tech mag *Teknikmagasinet*, from 1982 and on. Bertil lived a bit away in the south but often came up to help out. If you when approaching the office heard a typewriter - remember those mechanical pre-laptops? - fire off like a machine gun, you knew Bertil had arrived. We had an sf short story in each issue and once while pondering a story for an issue, Bertil heard what we considered and the moment we settled on a story he threw the finished translation on the table. He also translated his youth hero Captain Future when publishing this 1940s "Wizard of Science" in a brief re-launch in 1980, but at the same time he also translated *Finnegans Wake* - something totally different, spending spent 66 years on it. He had a wide taste, from pulps to modernist classics. His broad interests let his big energy output work on many things.

I'll write more on Bertil Falk later, in fact I'll dedicate the entire History Corner to him. He's been covered in this zine many times before, so forgive me if there's some repeated material.

Another very sad piece of news was the terrorist attack against Swedish soccer fans before a game in Brussels. Two men, 60 and 70 years of age, were murdered by an Islamic extremist with a sub-machine gun, just because they wore a yellow and blue jersey. A third was seriously injured. It had nothing to do with the wars in Ukraine or Israel, but most likely with that some have been busy burning Qurans in Sweden (of course not to the liking by authorities, the police tried by failed to ban it for reasons of constitutional freedom of speech). As said earlier, I'm all for criticising religion, and while I'm a against a formal ban on book burnings, I'd advise against it - it's simply tasteless mimicking of that deplorable Jospheh Goebbles!. There are other things you can do if you want to state that religion and "gods" are just organised superstition. Roscoe doesn't count of course!

Religious intolerance is a huge problem. It's central in the Israel-Hamas war, On religious grounds Hamas wants to wipe out the state of Israel. - but since they can't they concentrate on terrorism to scare the Israeli population. The Israelis aren't always angels. They have their own extremists, but it seems they keep better control over them. What must happen in the long run is a two-state solution (the Palestinians keeping Gaza and the West Bank) but as soon there's a move towards a solution extremists torpedo it. With recent events any solution of this old conflict is several generations away.

In Ukraine we see a) Russia's failing offensive in Avdiivka, 1000s of soldiers falling daily and losing hundreds of armoured vehicles, b)increasing Ukrainian missile attacks, eg taking out a major part of Russia's combat helicopter fleet, and c) Ukrainian special troops invading over Dnipro, while the Rubel falls. Putin's only friends are fellow dictators and Hamas, and he depends on a reluctant China. Anyone breathing the slightest protest goes to his neo-Gulag. His troops don't see the point in dying in vain and there's by now mostly 1950s equipment left so their efforts arr lacklustre. Let's *accelerate our support* so we could get rid of this "Special Military Operation" shit next year!

Turkey's Erdogan has now signed Sweden's NATO accession (must pass Turkey's parliament too) and we hope Hungary isn't hungry to be a pariah, so we'll be card-carrying NATO members RSN. And that's also a step closer to get Ukraine the Gripen jets.

--Ahrvid Engholm, editor for 45+ years



Bertil translated Cpt Future.

Happy Kittens

I've been an sf news reporter for more than four decades. When I report the Hugo or Nebula awards I've in later years also commented on the biased selection they have. The huge majority of sf writers, the "middle-aged white men" as these evil enemies of humanity are called, are discriminated while female writers and so called minorities are favoured.

Below is a quick a quick look at this for the latest Hugo Awards and nominees, covering also writers of non-fiction books, and including the Lodestar and John W Campbell awards (those also relate to writing - BTW folks who tried to name sabotage the JWC Award name are *bloody fascists!* and we should use it's real name). Media, fan awards, etc aren't included. There were ca 50 nominations in all, or thereabout if I didn't slip a percent back or forth (which however wouldn't affect the basic picture).

The men's nominations were 38%

The women's nominations were 62%

"Minorities" (Asians, Blacks, trans) were 42%

(Some may be e.g. both woman and Asian, of course)

Earlier I did an estimate of the number of male sf/f writers. I took two letters of no special significance from SF Encyclopedia, and counted the percentage of male and female writers having an entry, but excluding the dead and those over 80 years of age (most of those aren't active anymore).

It showed that 80% are male. But they get only half that number of awards and nominations... White, middle-aged men - the root of all evil - are in a strong majority but have for years been discriminated, from what one can see for the Hugos and Nebulas.

I have always been against quotas policies or "affirmative" actions. It's depressing to see how genre awards distort and discriminate. It is in several ways of huge harm:

1) Perceived discrimination should not and must not be met by more discrimination. It's like fighting for peace or fucking for virginity, as they say. One cannot counteract claimed wrongs by behaving in the same way: it legitimises wrongdoing.

2) When ideology means more than quality and talent and those having that are overlooked, being a group to be collectively locked out, that harms the genre. Someone who writes well but doesn't get any rewards for it, will quit making the effort. It's a waste of time. And when someone who writes not as good is raised to unworthy fame, it just makes sf/f more mediocre.

3) Also, more of extreme values and opinions must be assumed to be propagated by authors who are given free rides for ideological reasons. Ideology is after all the reasons for nominating them. And those that may work as counterweights are at the same time kicked out. This distorts what the sf genre can tell the world.

We saw the brawl around those calling themselves "Sad Puppies". I haven't studied that issue very much, but I have a feeling that the Hugo award's constant ideological nomination bias played a part.

24th Fantastic Short Story Contest

Just announced are the winners of the 24th *Fantastic Short Story Contest*, once begun back in the year 2000. It's 25th anniversary next year! The Swedish name talks about "fantastik", a literary term covering all kinds of "literature of the fantastic". There were five honorary mentions and below the podium, places 1 to 3, which won a couple of hundred Euros (thnx Short Story Masters!). To this some selected comments from the jury, authors Pia Lindestrand, Nikals Krog and Karolina Bjällerstedt Mickos,

1: a prize: "Der Berliner Underwellen", by Kristian Schultz

An eerie "extreme sight seeing" with Mathias and Klara, on a guided tour lead by one Dieter to a disbanded laboratory ending in a tunnel with a hungry monster. Lovecraftian weirdness lurks in dark dungeons in the Berlin underground. Suggestive and exciting. Fantastic metaphors. Some distortions

are hinted and soon there is chaos... (Swedish despite having a German title, meaning “ The Berlin Underground”)

2:a prize: "Cladosporium", by Isak Laestander

A poetic story of a girl picking mushrooms in a post-apocalyptic future where everything I still. Language de Luxe, myths, mystique, every word counts. Radiation has become religious energy. People are word-less but she one day meet a remarkable being with a message. (Title is the name of an organism.)

3:e prize: "Städdagen", by Kristian Schultz

Well-written horror on a sea being, bullying and a letter written ten years after the death of a child during a fatal “clean-up day”, where the protagonist with a deadly disease is accused of being responsible. Set in a hospital bed and the west coast archipelago. (Title means “Clean-up Day”, and note that Mr Schultz got TWO of the prizes - good for him).

60% of the entries were by male writers. 40% by female, if you wonder. Thousands of stories have through the years passed through this competition, and some of the contestants have later shown up with professional novels, even more have begun self-publishing not entirely without success and winning stories have been translated to English, Hungarian, Croatian and more tongues. During the 2 ½ decades of the contest we've seen a substantial growth of locally written sf/f and I hope the efforts put into the contest can take some of the guilt.

History Corner

This corner will concentrate on that package of energy named Bertil Falk, who just (Oct 14) to great sadness passed away, at the ripe age of 90. *Intermission* has of course written about Bertil earlier, so be patient if there's some stuff you've seen before. First, my obituary in File770.com, <https://file770.com/a-fantastic-storm-has-abated-rip-bertil-falk-1933-2023/> (right), well at least the beginning of it - you have the full piece in the URL. The last picture is from then he met the then Indian PM Indira Gandhi, whose deceased husband he later wrote a biography about. I had another obituary in the Norwegian sf news site

A Fantastic Storm Has Abated: RIP Bertil Falk (1933-2023)



— Bertil Falk in 2022. Photo by Ahrvid Engholm.

By Ahrvid Engholm: I have never known anyone with so much energy as author-publisher-reporter-translator-sf-expert-etc Bertil Falk. Now after a long time's illness this hurricane of a force is no longer with us. It may be of slight consolation that he managed to publish several of his life projects before finishing his 90 years on Terra, ending October 14.



His Swedish translation of James Joyce's “untranslatable” *Finnegans Wake* came last year, a work of love taking 60+ years. We also saw his massive, three-volume history of science fiction in Swedish, *Faktasin*. Unlike earlier sf history works, it covered what's been written in Swedish only, making it a unique study. And a little earlier came his biography *Feroze: The Forgotten Gandhi*. Covering Indira Gandhi's husband, written in English and well received in India, discovering a man that really had been mostly forgotten. An interview about this book is [here](#).



<https://nyenova.no> and October 24 in the big daily Svenska Dagbladet (I've sent it to other papers to, so it may turn up elsewhere). Here's a translation:

For years Bertil Falk from Västra Alstad hovered freely over the literary landscape. From October 14 he is mourned by daughters Cecilia and Katarina, with families and grandchildren, as well as by literary friends. The Falcon eyes saw everything, from column hustlers in the weeklies to far out into space. As young emerging author, reporter etc read about the space hero Captain Future in Jules Verne magazine of those days. So he had his debut at the age of 12 with "Trip to Space" (April 2, 1946) when Stockholms-Tidningen asked for stories of the future. His first crime story, The Masked Gangster Boss, came after 21 solar orbits. He began translating James Joyce at the

Bertil Falk, 1933–2023

190 år svävade Bertil Falk från Västra Alstad fritt över litterära landskap. Från 14 oktober sörjd av döttrar Cecilia och Katarina med familjer och barnbarn samt alla litterära vänner.

Falkögonen såg allt, från veckopressens glömda spaltkrängare till långt ut i rymden.

Blivande författaren, reportern med mera läste som ung om rymdhjälten Kapten Frank i dåtida Jules Verne Magasinet. Så i Stockholms-Tidningen, som bad om framtidstories, debuterade Bertil 12 år gammal med en "Tripp i rymden" (2/4 1946). Vid 21 solvarv kom hans första deckare, "Den maskerade ligachefen". Samtidigt började han översätta James Joyce. 2020 slog hans historik över svenskskriven science fiction ned, tre tunga volymer "Faktasin", en hörnsten i alla litteraturvetares bokhylla! Efter 66 års joyceande kom "oöversättliga" Finnegans likvaka 2021.

2016 kom "Feroze – the Forgotten Gandhi", ett pionjärverk om Indiras föga kände make. Bertil var livslång fan av de heliga kornas land, boken togs väl emot



och han intervjuades av Hindustan Times.

Men heliga kor inget var inget för den flitige fritänkaren, från 1960-talet reporter på Kvällsposten. Modernistisk dikt samsades med uppslukande intresse för sf, deckare, serier, mysterier, som jämte förbisedda brödskrivare kom på Bertils förlag Zen Zat.

Han var proppad av energi. Nedlagda Barsebäck kunde ersättas om han anslöts till elnätet! 1969 återuppväckte han JVM (Sam J Lundwall tog över 1972). Han skrev populärvetenskap för Teknikmagasinet på 80-talet, blev 1987 tv-fri-brytare med Stenbecks TV3, översatte, skrev böcker, grävde i forskarbibliotek som vår främste kännare av kolorerad veckopress. Forskningsrön fick utlopp i Dast Magazine vars redaktörstol han intog som nybliven pensionär. Kärnkraftverket skydde sofflock.

I samma grad som Bertils litterära expertis upplyste spalterna pryddes Veckotidningarna av hans kluriga noveller. Det var logiskt att han medgrundade Novellmästarna, som nu i tvenne decennier befordrat novellistiken.

Ahrvid Engholm

för vännerna i sällskapet Novellmästarna

same time. His history of sf written I Swedish hit hard with three volumes of Faktasi in 2020, a cornerstone of the library for all literature critics. The "untranslatable" Finnegans Likvaka came after 66 year of joyceing. Feroze – the Forgotten Gandhi came in 2016, a pioneering work about Indira's lesser known husband. Bertil was a life-long fan of the land of holy cows, the book was well received and he was interviewed by Hindustan Times. But holy cows was nothing for the free-thinking busy bee, as reporter for Kvällsposten starting in the 1960s. Modernist poetry mixed with a huge interest in sf, crime fiction, comics, the mysterious, which together with overlooked hackwriters came from Bertil's own publishing house Zen Zat. He was full of energy. The closed Barsebäck nuclear plan could have been replaced if he had been connected to the electricity grid! In 1969 he revived JVM (Sam J Lundwall took over in 1972). He wrote popular science for Teknikmagasinet in the 80s, became a buccaneer for Stenbeck's TV3 in 1987, translated, wrote books, searched through research libraries as our foremost expert on colourised weekly press. His research found the way to DAST Magazine where he took the editorial armchair as a retiree. The Nuclear plant refused to stand still. His crafty short stories adorned the weeklies to the same degree as his literary expertise shone in the columns. So it was logical that he was co-founder of The Short Story Masters, that now has promoted the art of short stories for two decades. --Ahrvid Engholm, for the friends in the Short Story Masters society



Bertil's two daughters and grandchildren.

You find the Hindustan Times interview here, 25 min long
<https://www.facebook.com/hindustantimes/videos/in-conversation-with-bertil-falk-author-of-feroze-the-forgotten-gandhi/10155353707873580/>

Bertil travelled a lot, often to India (our common friend Tora Greve has told about when they were hiking in the Himayalas) but also the North America where he met and interviewed eg Edmond Hamilton & Leigh Brackett, Superman creator



I've been told this is young Bertil working on his Finnegan's translation. Off and on, it took 66 years.

Jerry Siegel, Swedish-American editor (of prozine *Universe SF*) Hans Stefan Santesson, Ed Hoch (prolific short story writer, having one in each issue of *Ellery Queen's Mag* for decades! - Bertil made me a bit hooked on Hoch too) and the remaining half of Enado Binder.

I made a translation of Bertil's 1946 "Trip to Space" story for File770 last year and here it is again:

The big rocketship "Stockholm" started with roaring rockets from Bromma rocketfield. "Stockholm" is one of ten Swedish rocketships on the route Earth-Mars.

And now I sat inside this rocketship. It was my first rocket journey, and I was very curious about how it would all turn out.

Thirteen minutes after take off Earth was the size of a plate and you could make out all the continents. While Earth shrank the Moon and Mars continued to grow.

The rocketship made a stop on the Moon. There I made a visit to the big Moon museum that for the moment had an exhibition of Venusian art. After about an hour the rocketship continued again, and now you could see one of the most beautiful sights in the universe. Outside it was dark, and everywhere stars were gleaming and blinking. Wonderfully beautiful comet swarms were visible almost everywhere. But even if the comet swarms were beautiful, they were still dangerous. Every rocket has a comet warner that gives a buzz as soon as a comet swarm is nearby. Without these comet warners it would be almost dangerous to go out in space.

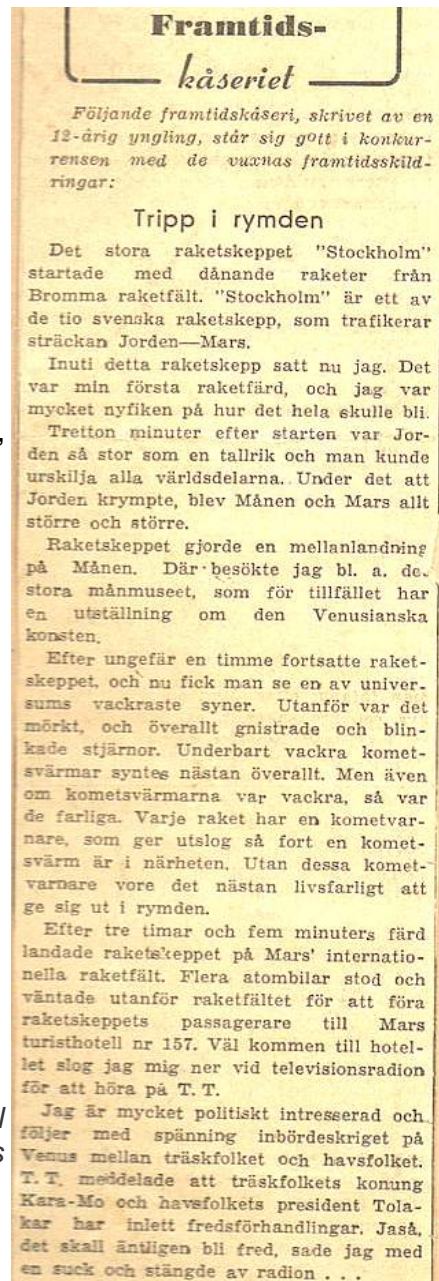
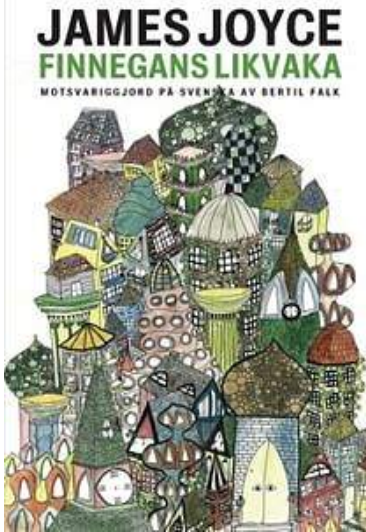
After a trip of three hours and five minutes the rocketship landed on the international

rocketfield of Mars. Several atomic cars stood and waited outside the rocketfield to take passengers to the Martian tourist hotel No 157. When I had arrived at the hotel I sat down by the TV-radio to hear the news.

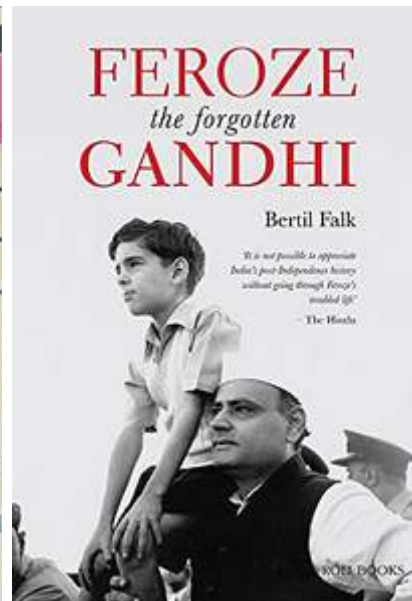
I am very interested in politics and tensely follow the civil war on Venus between the marsh people and sea people. The news reported that the king of the marsh people Kara-mo and the president of the sea people Tola-kar had initiating peace negotiations. So, will there finally be peace, I said with a sigh and turned off the radio...

See <https://file770.com/tag/james-joyce/>,

"From Space Hobo to James Joyce" (he used "Space Hobo" as a pseudonym in *Stockholms-Tidningen*). After his high school graduation he took small jobs like blue collar



Drama in India with Bertil, *Kvällsposten* reporter: "I'm in the middle of hell!" See <http://www.bewilderingstories.com>



city council work, later with a white collar in a bank office, as printshop handyman, farm helper, newspaper distributor, shop attendant, even as bellboy at a hotel, from what a corner of Internet claims. (He never mentioned any of it, it was very way back in time and probably short engagements. All great writers begin with menial jobs...)



Wine and cheese on a meeting for the Finnegan's Wake committee of the Swedish James Joyce Society. I was invited as guest as a friend of Bertil Falk (the guy in black near the end to the right side of the table) who was special guest, since he has recently privately published his translation of the first chapter of Finnegan's Wake. Bertil talked about how he treated Joyce and this work, which is considered very difficult to translate (it has never been translated in its full length to Swedish, as it is full of obscure references, puns, mythology, local Irish culture etc). Next to Bertil in a brown jacket is Kjell Genberg ,a very productive author (me, Bertil and Kjell are also members of the Short Story Masters). Leaning on the table to the left is the publisher Jonas Ellerström who lead the interview with Bertil. A nice evening which became even more interesting for me as one of the participants, one Lars Lambert, revealed that he was a school mate of and personally knew the legendary Swedish fan Alvar Appeltofft! We exchanged some gossip about Alvar who died in 1976,. His parents started the Alvar Appeltofft foundation, responsible for the leading Swedish fan award (the Alvar Appeltofft Memorial Award...which I happened to win myself back in 1978!).

Intermission told about Bertil, Joyce and Finnegans already in February 2015 (see above) when Bertil dragged me along to a meeting with the Swedish-Finnish James Joyce Society, where he presented the *first* chapter of his Finnegans translation, which he had just published as an Xmas special (Bertil did booklets as Xmas presents to his contacts, just like Hugo Gernsback). What I reported, in #36, is reprinted above with the original caption. I added the names of those mentioned. Beside Bertil, we see fellow Short Story Master Kjell Genberg and Jonas Ellerström, a cupboard sf fan, editor, publisher etc, who I tend to bump into often. (The mentioned Lars who knew Alvar Appeltofft isn't in the picture, since I took it from his end of the table. The gossip he had on Alvar wasn't too much. It was ages ago.) An interesting observation is that when going home I suddenly saw the name

“Guillou” on a door in the stariway of the house. Ah! The secret apartment of one of Sweden's most well-known authors: Jan Guillou! I now know where it is, but I won't tell you... A nice evening. In 2018 *Intermission* also reported from a James Joyce evening, lead by Jonas Ellerström, in the Rönnell's bookshop. But enough about the *Harp that once or twice*:

https://fancylopedia.org/The_Harp_That_Once_or_Twice

If you're interested in what Bertil Falk has written, which is a lot - prose, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, journalism, scholarly work - you're in for luck! The online mag *Bewildering Stories* bio on Bertil - below, beside it the funeral advert - added a partial bibliography with lots of *stories and books by Bertil in English* (translated to English by himself).

http://www.bewilderingstories.com/bios/falk_bio.html There's both sf and crime, fiction and poetry. Id like to especially point to the early Swedish sf novel *Oxygen and Aromasia* from 1878, which describes a future Sweden with a heavy steampunk feeling! Nobody paid Bertil to translate this classic skiffy novel - he had so much energy that he just did it. As for personal

Bertil Falk

BEWILDERING STORIES BIOGRAPHY

[TO BEWILDERING STORIES BIBLIOGRAPHY](#)

Bertil Falk (born 1933), retired Swedish newspaper and TV journalist. Debut at the age of 12 with the story “Trip In Space,” inspired by reading Edmond Hamilton and Eando (actually Otto) Binder. Their short stories were published in Swedish.

Got his first novel *The Masked Gang-Leader* published in the pulp magazine *Alibi Magasinet* at the age of 20.



Bertil's only pulp mag, 1954

In 1996 Bertil's second mystery, *Murder and Orchids* was published. There is a Ginnunga gap of 42 years between the two novels. Since 1996 he has written many mysteries, fantasies and sf-stories, not to mention a bunch of short stories, most of them published in Swedish.

Bertil is now (2006) translating into Swedish the autobiography *Flames from the Ashes* by the Indian journalist and freedom fighter P. D. Tandon in Allahabad.



Bertil at 15, in 1948

After that, Bertil worked as a journalist for newspapers all over Sweden and ending up as scriptwriter in the newsroom of a Scandinavian TV channel in London.

Bertil has spent more than ten years of his life in Britain, India and the United States and has travelled all over the world. He has produced TV documentaries in Kenya and Tanzania about medical doctors working for the Rotary Doctor Bank and the documentary *The Woman Jack Didn't Rip* about the third victim of Jack the Ripper. She was Swedish. Some of these documentaries have been shown by QPTV in New York.





Vår makalösa
pappa, morfar och
svärfar

Bertil Falk
* 21 maj 1933
† 14 oktober 2023

har efter ett långt och
innehållsrikt
liv gett sig ut på nya
äventyr

Sessi och Krina
Nicholas, Iris, Anna,
Alice, Olga
Max

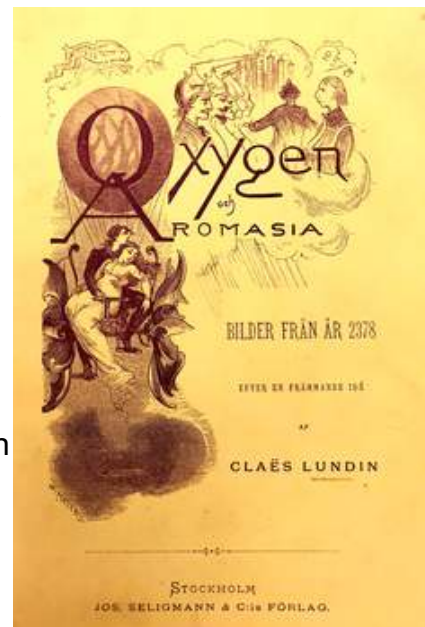
Ovi mari padme hum

Begravningen äger rum i
Trons kapell, Limhamn,
måndag 13/11 kl. 13.00.
Anmälan till minnesstund
på Wega görs på
minnessidor.fonus.se
senast 6/11.
Tänk gärna på Reportrar
utan gränser.

Our incredible dad, granddad and father in law Bertil Falk /dates/ is after after a long, rich life out on new adventures /signed/ "praise to the jewel in the lotus" /in Sanskrit/. Funeral details: Nov 13, Chapel of Faith, Limhamn. Below Bertil's book on Atlantis and the Swedes.



anecdotes, I'm not super-good with such, as I tend to forget funny things and lines. I've visited Bertil in Västra Alstad a couple of times, once for the release of my story collection *Murder on the Moon*, with a mini tour of book promotion in the southern province of Scania. I held a couple of speeches about the book including space which it deals with (as the title hints). And we had a release party at "The Worlds Smallest Book Fair", an event hosted by Bertil's friend Ulf Johansson in his central Malmö apartment. I don't see myself as a great lecturer, lacking some emotional vigor in my voice, but I had prepared Powerpoints and I think it went reasonably well. Bertil treated me with TV dinners and we did sight-seeing in his car. We went to eg the iron age partially reconstructed Trelleborg ring fortress (#7 in <https://www.heritagedaily.com/2018/05/the-7-viking-ring-forts-trelleborg/119665>) and a wonderful amber museum, with amber jewelry from floor to ceiling. And I crossed the famous Öresund bridge to Copenhagen for the first time. In the book shelves above my bed at night I saw a binder with Bertil's translation of Frank Gruber's classic story of the pulp magazine days, *The Pulp Jungle*. I spent a couple of hours in the middle of the night reading the manuscript. Bertil had mentioned it and I was quite excited to find it. Another translation he did just like that, though nobody paid him. There has later come an exclusive private edition of the translation (I have a copy) but you can find the original English one here: <https://archive.org/details/gruber-frank-the-pulp-jungle-1967/Gruber%2C%20Frank%20-%20The%20Pulp%20Jungle%20%5B1967%5D/> I highly recommend it!



Talking about pulps, Bertil certainly influenced and inspired me to a much deeper interest in older skiffy, not least the pulp era, even if I had an interest in genre history before. opinions. I've actually begun to like old space opera. Some of today's "modern" skiffy is so boring, as it just cypypastes populist I have even invented and written stories about my own pulp hero, Captain Dynamite, who fights Nazis and KGB in Stockholm at the dawn of WWII. And I'm one of probably very few who in modern time has read through - though I skipped westerns and crime stories - the 332 issues of the 1940s Jules Verne Magasinet pulp. I had a decent collection to start with, but Bertil donated the ca 20 issues I lacked to make it complete! In return I once donated the bulk of my US digest sf mag collection to him, a few hundred issues (I held back some issues of special interest to me, though). On visits I saw the shelf of spare JVMs he had. He started with JVM and Captain Future, as you remember. I understand that his big magazine collection has now been donated to the Umeå University library. I know that he has also donated - other literature, work papers etc - to the Archive of the Unexplained, which I wrote about in #129. Tora Greve received the Zen Zat leftovers. He also happened to be given some left-over material from his re-start of JVM, which he handed me to donate to the Royal Library. In it was eg stories rejected by JVM, among them one by a young Stieg Larsson, a not too brilliant yarn about meeting aliens, if I remember, later presented as a "sensational find" from the library.



STURE LÖNNERSTRAND

Zen Zats Klassikerserie

Bertil wrote a lot about old now mostly forgotten magazine authors, and published short-story collections by some of them, eg Sture Lönnerstrand, under the serial title "Hidden stories & forgotten pearls". Lönnerstrand was BTW instrumental in helping Swedish fandom to get going, founding the Futura club in 1950 and winning a big novel competition in 1954 with *The Space Dog*. He read and to a certain degree collected old weeklies, and wrote books about their authors and the short story universe of the past. Bertil estimated that Swedish

press, both dailies and weeklies not to forget trade union press, 1900-60 published up to 300 000 short stories!

Bertil followed the motto “Don't postpone until next hour what you can do right now!” and taught me the value newspaper clippings, and as mentioned an interest in genre history. As part-owner of *Teknikmagasinet* he often came up, usually before the monthly deadlines, to help out. He had a monthly column and when he had an idea for an article he started on it *at once*. No waste of time. Our office was in the West Wing...of the famous Bonniers highrise of about 20 stories.

A feature of the building was the conveyor belt “pater noster” lift, that never stopped. A bit scary but it worked fine. I believe there are only two such lift systems in the country. I used to take it to the Bonnier picture archive, where I



found historical aviation pictures for the “Fantastic Aeroplanes” page. We had permission to use a photocopier near the top floor and I often saw the Bonnier top dogs passing, the oligarchs of Swedish magazine publishing - and there I was, fresh from cranking my mimeo (sure, my newszine continued to run).

I did the bulk of the routine work, but also stories “in the field” - like once being invited by Goodyear to fly in their blimp over Stockholm! I did our varied “Tech Around the World” pages and remember it got a lot of good stuff from UK's Central Office of Information, some sort of government agency to spread British news. It was all before computers. I learned to quickly calculate text lengths manually. Staff, more than half a dozen free-lancers, two photographers (I still have some contacts



The “pater noster” lift, a vertical conveyor belt.

with Lars G), delivered paper manuscripts for the agreed number of pages (those were called mackor, “sandwiches”). Absolute top boss “Lucke” Bonnier came by at least a couple of times. Manuscripts had to be edited, checked for length (in Swedish text length is in characters, not words) and delivered to Björn with markings for headline, leaders, sizes, italics etc. ;Most copy editing was on me. When it came back from the external photo setting I proof read it. (Once when the deadline was very tight I had to go to the printer, in Katrineholm, and proof it there...) It was a lot of work, but I learned a lot and I was helped by having done fanzines for several years. We also had an sf short story in every issue, which I usually picked and translated. Robert Sheckley often suited us particularly well. An underrater writer!

Bertil's column was called “Berra bråkar” (“Berra Brawling”, using the nickname for Bertil) . Beside my newszine I also did the fandom column of Jules Verne Magasinet every other month, together with Erik “TolkienJoyce” Andersson. We liked Bertil's column, which complained about everything that was wrong. The postal service was a slum. Government cultural grants are unfair and produces pretentious junk. The school system sucks. We need more belief in innovation, the future, space. Things like that. We were in awe of the Andy Capp (a UK comics) cap that Bertil had in the picture byline of his column. Bertil's cap became a legend! In JVM we did a parody of the column, “Perra Provokes”, where the complaints were taken to the extreme... Bertil saw it with a big smile.

**Could be true! If 50 publications - also newspapers at weekends in those days! - did two stories each, and it was often more, every week for 60 years...50x2x52x60=312 000! This market was hugely important for young Swedish writers, also the posh ones. Still in 1947 many of them signed a public appeal against the depraved “colourised weeklies”, which Bertil found hypocritical. Folks like Vilhelm Moberg, Ivar Lo Johansson, Helmer Grundström wrote for them and gladly took their money. The short story market 2023 is sadly microscopic...*

JVM worked much better than Nova I later edited, a Mr Humbug changing contents on short notice, typesetter Mr Belly thinking it was fun to insert jokes, sometimes bigot, both involved defrauding a fan fund of substantial sums. I had the duty to reject a story Bertil sent to Nova, a modernist, incomprehensible thing, a mess of made-up words and concepts, possibly inspired by James Joyce (I think it became a part of his novel *Under the Green Suns of Slomor* - that title! - that later came from Zen Zat).

Bertil was interested in "mystical" things. His first non-fiction book was titled *Atantis and the Swedes* (see cover above) about the 17th century crackpot Olof Rydbeck who thought Plato's Atlantis was Sweden, and major parts of Greek mythology was also Swedish... If "believed" in mystic stuff isn't clear - he rarely mentioned it - but he was curious and I think he at least saw it as sociologically fascinating. He once wrote an article for *Teknikmagasinet* about how strange it was than an ancient iron pillar in India hadn't rusted for a thousand of years. I told him that wrought iron contains carbon. The surface iron is

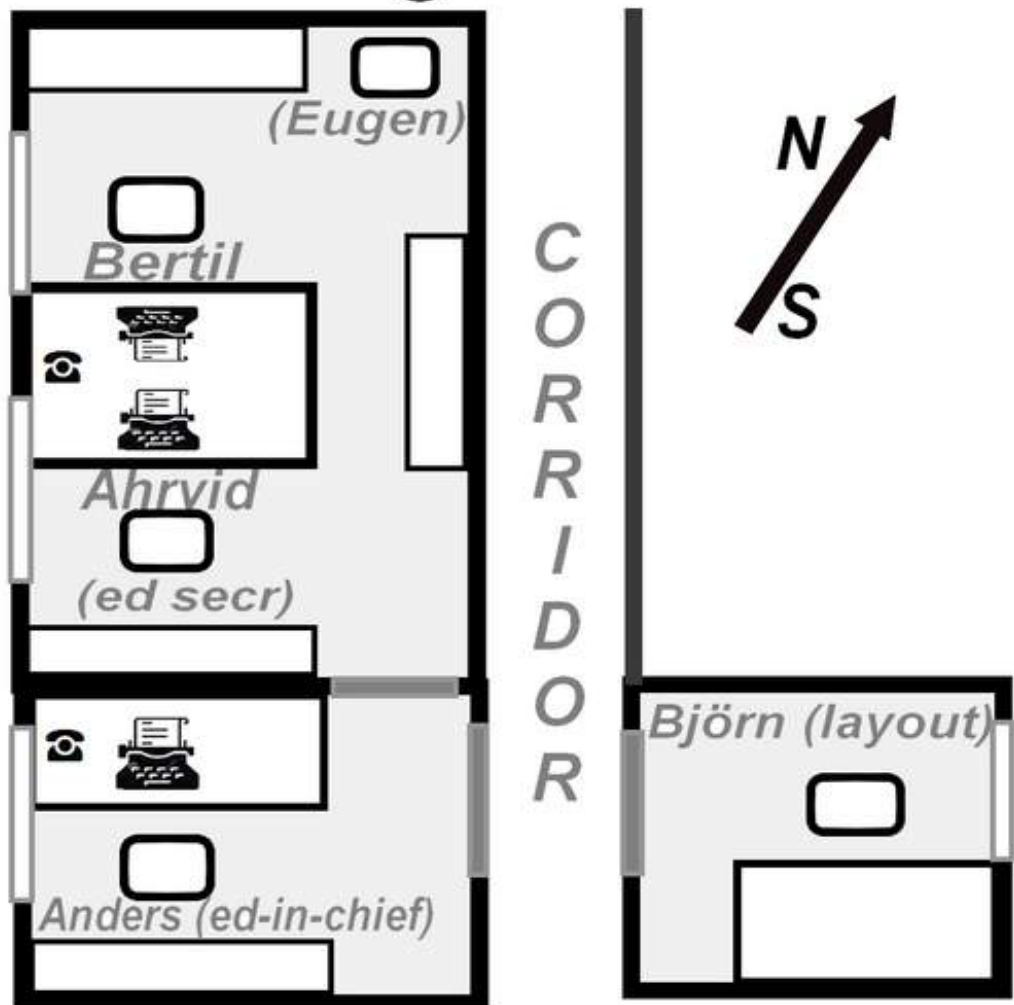
Bertil's Andy Capp cap was legendary. soon oxidized away leaving the carbon working as a protective layer so it wasn't strange. His long-time interest in India so full of mysteries, probably contributed to interest in odd things. When he in 2003 guested the minicon Rancon - held in the basement of the Tre Backar pub! - he lectured on Charles Fort. We had him earlier on our Nasacons too, where he



Bertil talking about Charles Fort on Rancon.

talked about old pulps. When moving from the *Kvällsposten* evening paper to the new TV3 network (transmitting from London via satellite, becoming a major force in breaking up the government TV monopoly) he eg did a report on Jack the Ripper. He taped and videoed - as soon as light-weight camcorders became available - lots of interesting interviews which I hope his family will preserve.

Teknikmagasinet's office



Sketch of our office. Anders Palm, ed-in-chief (left, below) in ca 11 am, a lot on the phone with a cigar in his mouth. Ahrvid Engholm, ed secr (left, middle) in around 9 am, phoning co-workers, writing, copy editing, proof reading, also reporter in the field. Bertil Falk (left, top) in at least a week/month, writing a lot. Chair shown where Eugen Semitjov as he often visited, telling anecdotes. Björn Hyll (right), in irregular, did layout, on paper - no computers!



Bertil interviewing Leigh Brackett...



...and here with Edmond "Cpt Future" Hamilton.

I've seen many of them. His report from the Leigh Brackett interview is here:

<http://www.bewilderingstories.com/issue250/brackett1.html>

Last summer the European SF Society missed the chance to reward Bertil as the true grand master he was, instead two board members ignored nominations to land it with dubious Humbug describing Bertil as "willful" and "idiosyncratic". One hopes such manipulation causes at least some remorse.

In my newspaper obituary I compared Bertil Falk to a nuclear power plant. He had so much energy devoted to many fields, but most of it was connected to skiffy and the fantastic which after all was his first love. His demise is a huge loss to the sf community. Without him, no JVM, no complete history of Swedish language sf, forgotten writers would still be forgotten. He researched and illuminated lesser known and belittled corners of literature. He wrote and edited and translated and published, all at once, as if the books were his fanzines. He claimed he wasn't into fandom, but he came to the cons, read the fanzines, met the authors, so that wasn't exactly true. He was a fan. A fan on a higher level.

Bertil Falk captained us into the future!

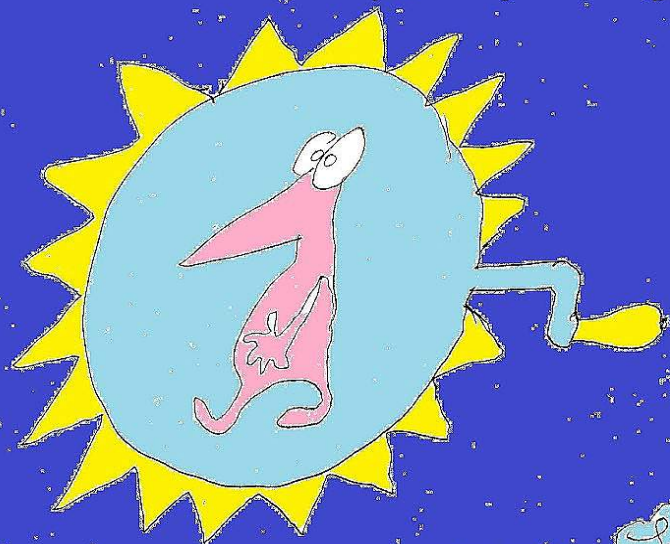
Mailing Comments

Only for EAPA, since there's no new N'APA. But listen, why not do your own fanzine and join! It's fun and educational, AND you don't even need a mimeograph for it. Burping 2 sentence, two cent chitchat on (a)social media is for amateurs with a shoe number IQ. Get smart, do a fanzine!

Garth Spencer: Good to make a fandom and fanzine and apa introduction. That may perhaps snatch some innocent

newcomer...! I don't recognise "How to recognise fascism". It is as if people seriously believe that "fascism" is wanting to be rich ("...make themselves richer"), favouring police and military ("big military and police forces"), has something to do with companies ("corporate free speech") and in general is something vaguely "right wing". But that

I'm walking on sunshine, whoa!



ISN'T fascism! Fascism is above all the idea that "might is right", extreme nationalism and a very centralised government, preferably led by one person, a strong man who often creates a cult around himself. If you can impose your will upon others by force it makes it "right". Fascism also tends to be very populist, raising enthusiasm by shallow slogans and following what seems to be popular at the moment. As for nationalism, the original fascist, Mussolini, wanted to Make Italy Great Again by restoring the Roman empire. His follower wanted to create a Grossdeutschland lasting a thousand years. At present the big fascist of today wants to give "ruski mir" to unwilling neighbours. Our local followers here in Scandinavia - very marginalised, fortunately - adores old warrior kings who wanted to create and expand a Swedish empire. Nationalism should be kept to sports. Wanting to be rich has nothing with fascism to do nor connections with business life. Neither has police, unless it is used to oppress opposition and implement "might is right". However, it seems that "fascism" have become an comfortable etiquette to stamp on anything vaguely "right" that you happen to dislike. But the fact is that fascism has a LOT to do with being left wing. Mussolini wanted to care for the poor masses and tame "big business" though corporativism (collective corporate management). Nazism is short for national SOCIALISM, no less! Hitler improved unemployment benefits and pensions, created new jobs and offered the poor a new life in the SA. Iut was national...socialism. □ □ □ We know how one historically knowledge-challenged on a worldcon suddenly yelled "Campbell was a bloody fascist!". No he wasn't. JWC was only vaguely "right", believed in individualism and mankind's progress through science and technology, and during the war was a strong supporter of the war AGAINST fascism. One of the most well-known left-wingers in sf, Harry Harrison, edited a very appreciating memorial anthology of John W Campbell. □ □ □ No, Ronald Reagan began showing signs of Alzheimer towards the end of his second term, from the medical observations I've seen. □ □ □ No, the Swedish language sees less difference between science and social sciences than English. □ □ □ Set theory and formal logic ARE "numerical" in the sense they are math. Bertram Russell spent three thick Principia Mathematica volumes on showing that logic is just another version of math, using set theory...before Gödel came along and put the fundamentals of math in doubt. □ □ □ Interesting APA list. Thanks for that! From what I see these are electronic: Apaplexy, EAPA, Frank's APA, N'APA, SNAPS. Maybe I should try *Intermission* in some of them?

Henry Grynsten: I don't find much to disagree with about models and dolls. Interesting that early dolls made of clay influenced religion to claim man was created out of clay... Also interesting about the origin of some words. □ □ □ No comments otherwise. Henry seems to refrain answering my latest comments, because it could be an endless debate going nowhere. (You should have seen the long, private environmental debate we had last year...) □ □ □ About Garth's comment: Actually in England and her former colonies copyright (before signing conventions of it being a right for the author plus 70 years) was based on an entirely different idea. The "Anglosaxon copyright" if we may call it that, was a right handed out by the king, the exclusive right to create copies of work. That's why it's called "copy RIGHT". The Americans belong to the same sphere here: copyright is a limited right handed out by the constitution and the congress, "to promote art and science".. We others belong to the continental sphere, where copyright is seen as an author's "natural right", originally a French idea, called *droit d'auteur*, the natural right of the author. This has through the years fostered different ways to think of copyright. In Swedish "copyright" is called "upphovsrätt", approx "origin right" - loosely, I guess, meaning "the right that comes from where it originated", ie the creator. That follows the French and continental thoughts. I'm BTW, as stated before, a strong critic of copyright holders always trying to expand their rights. It was totally wrong to expand the monopoly concession period to 70 years, in a time when people live much longer and increased media output makes the commercial life of work shorter. Information, the immaterial, isn't something you can own. You have concessions for it, in the same manner you get concessions for mining. Immaterialities ultimately belong to humanity, anyone's "rights" to it are and shall be limited. Disney who takes all European folk tales, makes their own versions and then claim owning the tales themselves, can go to the same hell Hitler is (the years comes from that Germany in 1995 wanted to stop old Nazis' work for another 20 years).

William McCabe: Is your town considering closing public libraries? □ □ □ In Stockholm, the city has actually opened 2-3 NEW public library branches the last 10 years! (In Hammarby Sjöstad, Stureplan underground and I think somewhere else.) □ □ □ Right, there is natural climate variability too and we do have to take a bounceback from the earlier "little ice age" into account. □ □ □ I've met Lionel Fanthorpe, ca 40 years ago on a con in Basingstoke. England. He was quite open about his writing. He knew most saw it as junk. He had a lot of stories about how he wrote, and saw the fun in all of it.

Time to round off. Protests to ahrvid@hotmail.com or make a write up in your own zine, site or fridge door scribblings. Do a fanzine! In the shadow of bureaucratic cons inventing "codes of conduct" we forget that fanzines have been the backbone of sf fandom. We need them back. Games aren't necessary, neither masquerading, plastic models...Scribere est necessarium! To write is necessary!

Слава Україні!

Ye Murthered Master Mage 267

George Phillies
48 Hancock Hill Drive
Worcester MA 01609
phillies@4liberty.net
508 754 1859

N3F

Elections are soon upon us. Please vote. Something triggered one of the antispam shields at the ISP level. Mailings were partly blocked. We are not sure what. Hopefully the shield will after a bit calm down.

Comments

When I became President, N'APA had been reduced to two of our fine members exchanging emails. It has now become a fine, large APA. Given my time commitments are severe, I will likely be significantly less active here than in the past. I will maintain the mailing effort. The rest of you are doing a stupendous job of keeping N'APA active. Please keep it up.

The cover art was remarkable.

Intermission

Indeed, the Russians have been seen breaking out of storage their stock of T-10 tanks, formerly known as the Joseph Stalin-10 tanks, an early 1950s model. Alas, the T35s and the Tsar Super-heavy tank were almost all scrapped.

My, some SF people have also generated some strange magazines and motion pictures, The con report was interesting. There are a few two-story trains in the US, but the safety requirements are so stringent that they are not economical.

Campbell said he would happily have published Delaney's "Time Considered as a Helix of Semi-Precious Stones", but it was not submitted to him.

Archive Midwinter

As we are separated by a continent, you will have to miss my collection of rolegaming and wargaming fanzines. A&E is still published.

I will be sending you my latest novel when finished, on which you may or may not want to comment. It closes the Eclipse cycle. There is a fair amount of internal monologue.

However, I shall propose a story. It is almost all internal monologue. Every paragraph or three is a different point of view. There are almost no descriptions of anything. It is several people playing poker, or a foursome playing bridge, and each player is considering his options. Yes, that was P.D.Q.Bach.

I would settle for a USB device that can read floppy discs.

I have very little time for reading these days. I recall having read Vance, many years ago, but do not remember what. Latest novel, "The First Cylinder", Wells' invasion from the PoV of a Martian, complete with a solid Victorian explanation for how the publisher obtained the material: Above the Stratosphere is the thanatosphere. However, these Martians are very much not what you might have expected.

I am also fond of Telemann, but rarely have time to listen, though a Telemann opera that does not exist, and was played repeatedly well before it was composed, plays a significant role in the final Eclipse novel.

Intermission

Putin's difficulties are even worse than earlier. I am not heartbroken. America is spending 0.5% of its defense budget to destroy 50% or so of the Russian Army. On your next topic, I fear that disapproval of Islam and its opponents has in recent weeks increased markedly.

Scientific Detective Monthly I had not heard about. Writing a completely scientific detective story is difficult. However, I am reminded of the Nick Carter novel in which the villain was able to break safes because he amplified the sound of the tumblers with

that tool of superscience, the micro-phone. Having said that, some of Gernsback's recommendations on writing are still good. And he was certainly a prodigious inventor and creator. Thank you for this wonderful and extremely extended biography of him.

Oh, yes, in 1960 or so Hugo Gernsback was a member of the National Fantasy Fan Federation.

The Hugo is, of course, the second SF Award to be launched, the first being the N3F Laureate Awards, first given in 1941.

The late 1930s television as made e.g., by Atwater-Kent, used an oscillating mirror to put a scanned spot of light on a screen, the light brightness being modulated with a Kerr cell. The scheme had the advantage that you could readily increase the size of the screen (a brighter light source being needed) until the screen was, say thirty feet across.

Brownian Motion

Fanzine revivals are good! Three cheers for Minnesota. Your account of being a CUFF candidate is truly different. Perhaps someone read from The Golden Amazon or from Pel Torro's Galaxy 666? (I have read both of these.) Your con report was most interesting. The report on SF Canada, and perhaps there will be other points of view on the topic in the future, was of some interest.

In the late 70s and early 80s there were a considerable number of American roleplaying fanzines. However, you had to find them first. Alarums & Excursions, The Wild Hunt, Domesday Book, ... Thank you for the comments on my last issue.

Synergy

We think on somewhat different lines. However, I heartily endorse your call for a fanzine reviewer.

Brandy Hall

A truly interesting personal account of your involvement in fandom. Thank you.

Snow Poster Township

Getting people together to watch a video at the

same time can be challenging. Real-time online requires people all be available at the same time. Judy Carroll and the correspondence bureau have an alternative that seems to work...you can read about it in The National Fantasy Fan.

Fan comics are definitely a fannish activity!

If we published a single monthly clubzine, it would be several hundred pages long, challenging to email, and more than most people would want to read.

You ask 'what are Heath Row's productions that were nominated for a Laureate Award?' I am not sure. I report the nominations. I think reference is made to the programming you did for the film and tape bureau.

Esmeralda County Line

Kevin, please do stay in better health.

I agree that the N3F tries to bring different fandoms together. That is a good thing.

Your distribution of N3F Memberships appears to have been successful.

The MIT library is MITSFS. NESFA has its own building and library.

The Tsar tank simply needed rear treads rather than a rear roller, to reduce ground pressure.

Eclipse actually died. However, her ideonic dual was active at the time, it did not die, so she was able to return. I will send you a copy of the manuscript when I am finished with it. Reviews are appreciated. I see a novel I can skip reading

Thank you for running your convention. This was a truly fannish action. The thank-you note for the supporting membership was indeed appreciated.

Samizdat

Hawthorne as an SF writer is new to me. Thank you for the description.

INTERMISSION #138.5

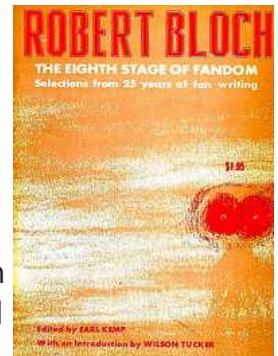
E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, a special edition mainly for APA:s. The story is too long for a regular issue and zinemakers deserve a reward! Follow my @SFJournalen newstweets before Musk fuggs up Twitter too. Typos? No weigh! Bloch is brilliant! Nov'23

Bloch is superb!

A beautiful day I was taking a stroll on the net. The screen was shining and I heard the headphones sing merrily in the forest of information. Small icons peered from the electronic undergrowth. Suddenly I stumbled upon a Bloch, Robert Bloch.

So I began picking up info this legend. We all of course I know who Robert Bloch (1917-1994) was. For the citizens of Mundane he was the one writing the book Alfred Hitchcock made into the classic horror flick "Psycho". For us who has acquired residency in Fandom he was the fan who became a successful pro, but still kept in touch with us fannish types. We loved him - and he loved us back. (Not writing from personal experience because I was too neofannish during the main Bloch era. But I've read about it, in fanzines. All knowledge is contained in fanzine.)

In next *Intermission* I'll have more on this remarkable man, buddy of HP Lovecraft, active through the atomic age and into the start of Al Gore's Interweb... But I have one thing I want to share with you now, that will be too long for a regular issue. Bloch wrote a lot in fanzines besides being a productive writer of regular science fiction and



horror. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Bloch lists over 30 novels and more than 30 short story collections. I've only read a minority of it, but from what I've read it's clear he was a first-rate writer. As a boy he became a fan of Lovecraft, writing to the the Master with shaking hands c/o *Weird Tales*, and HPL replied! Through correspondence young Bloch became somewhat of a disciple of him and snuck into fandom through the Lovecraft circle. He found fanzines in the mid 30s and begun releasing his golden nuggets to them. 44 pieces and 3 poems of that is collected *The Eighth Stage of Fandom*, which AFAIK doesn't have what this special ish will present. His "unauthorised autobiography" *Once Around the Bloch* is worth your attention too. Bloch is superb! And brilliant! How do we know?

Who'd dare to accuse *Fancylopedia* of lying! This is what it says, actually already from 1959 and Fancy2: https://fancylopedia.org/Robert_Bloch:

"Bloch is the Only True Ghod" was the gospel initiated by Vernon McCain, who received the Revelation in 1955 but, Bloch reports, was singularly lax in sacrificing any virgins. "Bloch is Superb" is the motto of Blochists; its popularity reached horrid heights when Dick Ellington had a rubber-stamp made with this phrase and Jack Harness had a set of pencils blazoned with the slogan. (To date no authenticated instances of tattooing have been uncovered.) This traces back to a letter in which Walt Willis was supposed to have suggested making up a rubber stamp with that legend, an obvious timesaver when commenting on any fanzine with Bloch material in it. But Dean Grennell, checking his back files, finds that in the original instance Willis' words were "Bloch was brilliant. (Will you makes me a rubber stamp for this?)" All fandom could be plunged into war [divided into two camps, the Superbists and the Brilliantinees] over a thing like this.

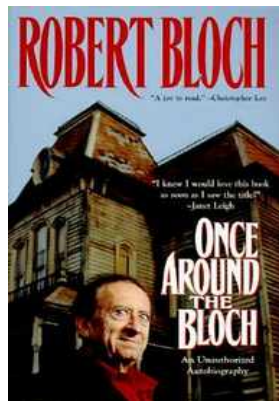
As said, nextish will have more on Bloch. But I here I'll give you a *fannish sf story* by our superb man, "A Way of Life", originally from *Fantastic Universe SF*, Oct 1956. It seems the copyright has lapsed - I skip intricate details but at one point with out renewal © lapses and work becomes PD, especially before 1964 - since the story is freely available in the magazine at:

https://archive.org/details/Fantastic_Universe_v06n03_1956-10_AT/mode/2up

I limit this "half-ish" to mainly APA members, to reward you who really write fanzines and help trufandom's so important fanzine tradition. We need more fanzines - or fandom will die! Bloch would agree. Movies, comics, costumes etc are at best a silly fringe of fandom. But one question remains:

Is he brilliant? Or do you think Bloch is superb?

--Ahrvid Engholm, *faned*



A WAY OF LIFE

by Robert Bloch

Twirling the top of his propellor beanie nervously, the next President of the United States peered through the curtain at Convention Hall.

"Now?" he murmured.

The girl beside him shook her head. "Not yet. Let them get the demonstration out of their systems." She smiled. "Are you happy, John?"

John Henderson nodded. "Yes, but scared, too."

"Don't forget, you're the next President," the girl reminded him.

"If I'm elected." Henderson grinned. "This was only the nomination, remember? And that NFFF crowd is tough."

"FAPA will win, though." Avis Drake squeezed his arm reassuringly. "How did you like Daddy's nominating speech?"

"Terrific. It really did the trick."

"Yes, didn't it? Listen to that demonstration."

Together they stared through the aperture in the curtain and watched the conventioners parade through the hall.

Somewhere in the background the organ was playing a wild medley - everything from the religious Kyrie Ellison to the old traditional FAPA drinking-song, Yes, Sir, That's My Burbee. But it was impossible to hear the melodies plainly, for the fans were on the march, spilling down the aisles of Gernsback Hall and shouting Henderson's name. They were tossing their beanies, spraying one another with zap-guns, waving copies of their state magazines. All of the delegations joined the demonstrations, clustering around the banners borne aloft by standard-bearers from every club in the land.

John Henderson peered at the legends. Here was the contingent from Silverbergh, there the flag of the Swamp Critters, and in the back of the hall rose the snowy emblem of a small group from the faraway North Pohl. Interspersed with the HENDERSON FOR PRESIDENT signs swirled other printed declarations - GRENNELL WAS A GOOD MAN BUT HENDERSON IS BETTER, and WHERE THERE'S A WILLIS THERE'S A WAY, and because there's always a joker in the crowd some place, BHEER IS THE ONLY TRUE GHOD!

But now Avis's father, Lionel Drake, had mounted the rostrum once more and was pounding for order, his gavel giving forth a rising rhythm.

Gradually the Big Name Fans found their seats. Lionel Drake was holding the microphone, uttering the short introduction.

"Ready?" Avis whispered.

John Henderson nodded. The girl put her arms around his neck and kissed his cheek. "Go out there and pour it on," she murmured.

He heard Lionel Drake speak his name, heard the roar of the crowd, then stepped through the aperture of the curtains and faced the convention.

They cheered him, and when the cheers subsided he began to speak. There was a mimeographed copy of his talk on the lectern in front of him, but John Henderson found himself ignoring it.

He talked slowly, at first, eyeing the faces in the crowd. They were so young, so absurdly young!

Many of them seemed scarcely out of their teens, and less than a third were in their thirties. Out of the entire assemblage there couldn't have been a dozen old people: Lionel Drake's gray head was singularly conspicuous. But then, Lionel Drake was one of the rare exceptions, one of the rare survivors. Why, he'd been alive in Ellison's day, in the actual time of Rog Phillips and Dave Kyle and Ackerman! Of course, he'd just been a baby and he'd never seen them, but he'd been alive. And so had hundreds of millions of others. What made old Lionel Drake so unusual was the fact that he'd stayed alive when the hundreds of millions perished. Lionel Drake had survived, and as a survivor he was one of the few remaining actual links with the distant past.

John Henderson found himself talking about that distant past now; speaking not from his prepared message, not from his head, but from his heart.

"You want to know my plans, my program," he was saying. "But the statement of my platform will have to wait. Today I have one thing, and only one thing to say to you. In the immortal words of the sainted Tucker - Fandom Is a Way of Life."

He paused until the cheering subsided.

"Strange, isn't it, how that phrase has survived in a shattered century? Incredible as it may seem to us here today, it was first uttered less than a hundred years ago. We do not know the circumstances which gave it birth. We do not even know too much concerning its creator. The man that was Wilson Tucker, or Arthur Tucker, or Bob Tucker is today merely a legend; we know less of the actual facts of his existence than we do of Shakespeare, or H. G. Wells, or Aldous Julian Huxley and the other great fantasy and science writers of the more remote past.

"But the words survive. They survived in the old days, before fandom rose to bring light into the darkness of men's minds. When our ancestors - yours and mine - were a humble and persecuted minority - those words gave them strength. Strength to endure the jibes and the ridicule of the uneducated masses; the television worshippers, the sports-lovers, the Cadillac-minded who ruled the world.

"You all know the story, of course; the story of fandom's early martyrs, gathering secretly in little bands to form the first fan clubs and hold the first conventions. They had no power then, no recognition. They were jeered at and despised, mocked as wild-eyed visionaries and fanatics. And yet they persevered. They toiled over their crude mimeographs, turning out their magazines, "those magazines have long since crumbled into dust, but who amongst us can ever forget the names? Grue and Hyphen: Amazing and Astounding: Galaxy and Quandry and The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. Fantastic Universe, Startling, Confidential, Infinity, Dimensions - these names will never die!

"Nor will the names of their creators. And yet, they were not famous then. There was a John W. Campbell, yes, but no Campbellites to follow him. There was an Aitchell Gold, but no Aitchellians. And when St. Anthony Boucher was writing, of painting those marvellous works under the pseudonym of Francois Boucher, canonization was far-distant from his thoughts. Why, then, did these men continue in the great work? I like to believe it was because all of them followed a single inspiration, the inspiration found in that great motto of theirs and ours - Fandom Is a Way of Life.

"Surely that motto must have inspired the great fan scientists of that era: men like Asimov, E. E. Smith, Arthur C. Clarke, Dr. Barrett and Willy Ley. The immortal Heinlein, or Einstein must have known it when he created Heinlein's Theory of Relativity which resulted in the development of thermonuclear weapons.

"And yet, at the time, the masses laughed. Today we know that all science, all invention, sprang directly from the work of these men. We still have their hardcover books attesting to their knowledge of nuclear fission, rocketry, radar and all the other marvels of the First Age of Fandom.

"But the power they possessed fell into evil hands. The bombs fell and the intercontinental missiles landed. And from Moscow - which we know today as Moskowitz - came the war that ended the First Age of Fandom and almost ended the existence of all fankind.

"We are well aware, all of us, of the black years that followed. The years when men of good will - the few who survived - went underground. The years of plague and radiation and ceaseless surface warfare; the years of almost total disintegration and destruction. Fankind's political structure, religious structure, social and economic structure vanished. Even the military structure could not long endure. And what was left? Only the faith of fandom. When they burned the universities, burned the libraries, burned the books - what remained? The treasured possessions of a handful of surviving fans. In the burrows beneath the ruins of cities; in rural fastnesses like buried Bloomington and faraway Weyauwega, the few existing mimeographs continued to turn.

"When survivors sought the surface of the world again, when the few millions left out of hundreds of millions walked the face of the earth once more, many found a fate worse than their fellows. They looked upon the shambles of civilization and went mad. There were those who turned upon their fellows and sought to enforce their rule through force. They warred upon one another and perished. There were those who tried vainly to re-establish the old order, but in vain. Fankind had lost faith in industrial science, in military science, in so-called political government and the religious creeds that sanctioned the horror of war.

"And it was then, we know, that Fandom came into its own at last. Fandom International - founded on friendship, on mutual knowledge and mutual faith in true brotherhood and trite scientific knowledge. Fans did not go mad. Fans did not resort to force. Fans were prepared for a new order, and a new day. Why? Because even through the time of darkness and destruction they clung to their motto - Fandom Is a Way of Life.

"It was Fandom, then, that rose to leadership. The children of the First Fans received the carefully guarded knowledge of the past. They rallied to the organizations known as FAPA and - yes - the NFFF."

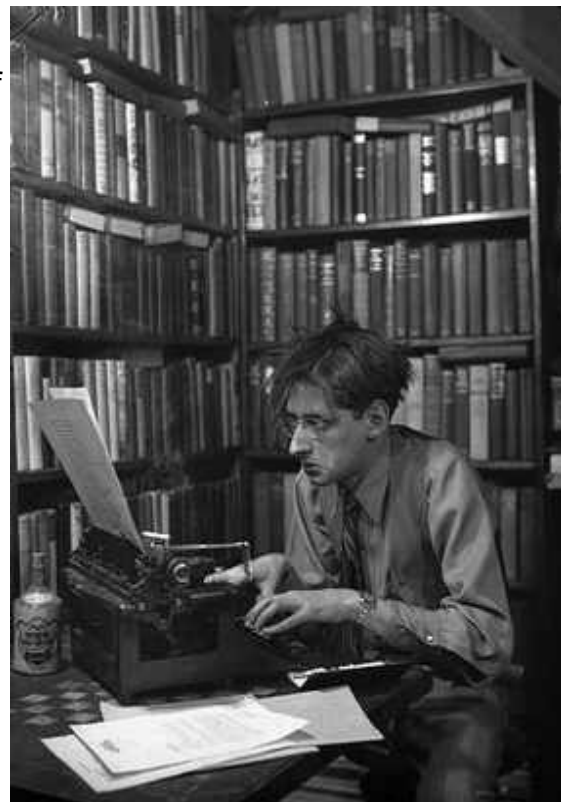
At the mention of the rival party's name, the crowd booed. John Henderson raised his hand for silence.

"Do not allow sentiment to overthrow reason," he cautioned. "We of the FAPA - the Fantasy Amateur Press Association - know that the NFFF is a deluded minority. The so-called National Fantasy Fan Foundation will never win a national or international election."

The crowd applauded, but Henderson overrode them. "Still, the NFFF are Fans. Fake-Fans, perhaps, but still Fans. They too believe that Fandom Is a Way of Life."

He paused, clearing his throat. "Remember, we once worked together, all of us. Our fathers helped to rebuild the cities, helped to restore reason. Using the scientific knowledge and the wisdom preserved in the science-fiction books, they brought order out of chaos. It was the application of Fannish principles that rebuilt the world. In the past thirty years we have gone far. Our world is still woefully underpopulated. Great cities, entire nations, are yet in ruins. But we make progress. Under the guidance and leadership of our local Fan Clubs, under the supervision of Big Name Fans like yourselves, we are reshaping mankind.

"First Fandom's dream of reaching the stars is still a dream. But once again the jet planes are beginning to soar - the great silver Heinliners streak across our skies. Once more we are building factories and laboratories; training our future leaders at Fredric Brown University, peering up at the planets from the Mount Richard Wilson Observatory, creating new developments like the Bradbury Ray.



Mr Bloch in creative craze at his typewriter. Photo from collection of Harold Gauer, a friend from boyhood with a photo studio and lab in his attic, where he and Bloch had lots of fun dressing up and staging whacky pictures. More in coming Intermission!

"There will be no more war. Fandom has seen to that. Now that all of us are united as True, Serious Constructive Fans, our racial and political differences will never matter. Nor will religion divide us. For whether we choose to worship Ghu or Foofoo, whether we exalt the Poo or the Yobber, we unite in one belief. And it is this belief I intend to carry forward; it is this belief which will become the keynote of the coming campaign. Fandom Is a Way of Life!"

John Henderson bowed his head and stepped behind the curtains, not waiting to acknowledge the roaring applause from the crowd below.

He faced Avis Drake and her father with a wry grin. "Well, that's that," he sighed. "Now - what about that little vacation you promised me?"

The farmhouse stood just outside what had once been the city of Reading, in Pennsylvania. It was Lionel Drake's own private headquarters, and here John Henderson found the weeks of rest he needed before embarking on the presidential campaign.

There was work to do, of course: the Big Name Fan delegations from every state came to lay out their plans and to pledge Henderson's attendance at their rallies - the Midwestcon, the Oklacon, the Westercon and all the rest. And in the evenings, Henderson plotted strategy with old Lionel Drake.

But there were long golden afternoons spent wandering with Avis hand in hand over the enchanted countryside. For this was Pennsylvania, and magic ground - the land of Harry Warner, of Bill Danner and Madle and Rothman and many another legendary figure from the distant past. The ghosts of Damon Knight and Judith Merrill hovered in the haze.

Such notions were childish, Henderson realized, but at the same time he understood that he and Avis were in a sense seeking to capture childhood. They had never known what it was to be a child.

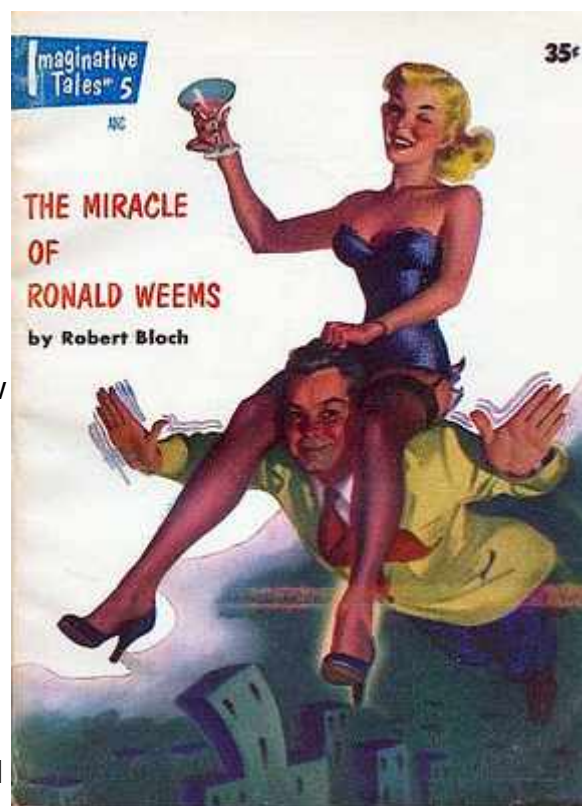
One day they talked about it.

"I never had anyone to play with," Avis confessed. "When I was born, just about everybody in Daddy's generation was sterile, because of living at the time of the radiation. Besides, Fandom was just getting established and sometimes we had to hide. There was still part of the old Armed Forces in existence, and their leaders were trying to take over the country. And the General Party was operating - you remember. General Motors and General Electric and all the rest."

"Daddy says that Fandom won because we were better organized for communication, with our tapes and short wave and our mimeographs - but most of all, because fans trusted one another. And the military and industrial groups were always fighting amongst themselves. You must remember how it was when you were a boy; we had a new President every month or so, because of all the assassinations."

Henderson nodded. "That's why my folks went underground for a while," he said. "Out near Peoria. They say Philip Jose Farmer lived there, too, you know."

"Then you know what I mean," Avis told him. "Daddy was a psychologist and he helped found the new Fandom. Naturally, everybody was out to get him. Even some of the first Fan Clubs were against him - those Shaverites and Palmerites and the other religious sects. We kept moving from place to place, never stopping for years. So I never knew any other girls my age and I never had any toys. By the time I was seven or eight, Daddy had me slipsheeting and cutting stencils for fanzines. We must have sent out millions, before he really got an organization going and we took over the newspapers. Gradually his plans took hold, though, and we got our people into radio and general publishing. And with their help we won the first real election."



A humour story by Mr Bloch.

"Seems hard to realize that was only sixteen years ago," Henderson mused. "I was still in Peoria when it happened. Finishing up my courses in a private school run by an old fan named Shaw. Claimed to be a grandson of the great Shaw, but couldn't prove it, of course. Said his father had been a member of the old Hydra Club. He was a bug on psychology: always talking about Hubbard and his disciple, Freud. He got me interested in the field - and that's how I met your father. And you."

"It worked out wonderfully, didn't it, darling?" The girl squeezed his hand. "And it's going to be even better from now on. You'll win the election, and we'll be together, and -"

John Henderson shook his head. "Don't oversimplify things," he answered. "You know, that's one of our big problems today. Everything is oversimplified. Did you know that there were over two billion people in the world at the time of the war, and almost a hundred and eighty million in this country alone? What's the population today? Maybe twenty, million, at the most. Nobody knows, really, because we've never had a census. There are so many things we've never had, and must have. Public schools, for one thing. We can't go on educating our children in fan-groups forever. And we've got to teach them more facts and less legends. We've got to train more engineers and scientists and technicians and fewer artists and writers and multigraph operators. It's all very well to say we have half the population working the land and keeping us going, and that we have a few railroads running and some main highways in order, and even a fleet of Heinliners. But we need so much more! Why, it will take us another fifty years just to dig out the ruins of our cities, and then -"

"Please, you sound as if you were making a campaign speech," Avis protested. "'You're talking like Daddy now."

"Your father is a wonderful man," Henderson said. "I don't know how I'll ever repay him for all he's done for me. He taught me, trained me, groomed me for this step by step ever since I was just a neo in the Beanie Brigade. He says he picked me for a future President, and I often suspect he picked me for your future husband."

"That happens to be my doing," Avis murmured. "Now, let's forget politics for a while."

And so they did, for the remainder of that afternoon and for the rest of a glorious weekend.

It was on the following Monday that disaster struck. Lionel Drake received the sudden short-wave message summoning him to FAPA Headquarters in Sturgeon - the new city which had risen on the outskirts of what had once been Philadelphia. And Avis accompanied him there for the day, leaving John Henderson alone at the farmhouse with a few servants and a secretary.

Henderson spent the morning going over his press notices in the current fanzines and preparing a statement denouncing the mutant theories of a rabid Van Vogt cult which had arisen to harass both FAPA and NFFF during the campaign. He did not go so far as to advocate the suppression of Van Vogt's books - it was a cardinal principle that everything rescued from the past be preserved and kept in print for educational purposes— but he cautioned fans everywhere not to take their reading too literally. "What would happen," he wrote, "if we accepted Bester and de Camp and Kornbluth as historians? We must remember that many of the Masters wrote in parable and allegory. Some of them, in their deep wisdom, saw fit to satirize their contemporaries and their times.

Others, like the learned Poul, or Hans Christian Anderson, wrote outright fables. Van Vogt's extrapolations were not meant to be taken as gospel."

But were they?

Afterwards, in the early afternoon, Henderson slipped away and went for a walk. He did not choose



Indeed an astonishing story to see rocketmen kidnapping girls. Where did Bloch get his ideas?

the country path Avis had selected for their previous strolls, but struck off across the fields toward a cluster of abandoned farmhouses near what had once been a crossroads.

Henderson wanted to think. Here he was, a presidential candidate, a Big Name Fan among Big Name Fans, an ' authority who handed down pronouncements on the meaning of the scientific scriptures. But what did he know about it, really? Oh, he'd read all the books, of course - everything that had been salvaged from the rubble. The torn and battered Gnome Press editions, the dog-eared Doubleday relics now carefully preserved in a few remaining collections had long since been reprinted in the standard editions which served as texts in every fan group school in the country. He'd studied them, just as the small contingent of technicians studied them; for clues to the past, for knowledge and guidance.

Henderson had never been one to question their authority. When excavators had come across actual college texts in the razed archives of the universities, they had collated them with the work of the great fan-writer Masters and found that these men based their work on sound scientific principles. This was definite proof that they wrote out of revealed wisdom. But some of their more advanced concepts - this business of mutant powers, of ESP, PSI, of anti-gravity, of space-travel - seemed unknown to the textbook writers.

Henderson had asked Drake and some of the others about this point. Drake told him that undoubtedly men like Heinlein and Margulies and Howard Browne were in possession of still greater secrets than they had chosen to reveal at the time - given another thirty years and probably they would have gone to the government and offered formulae which could send men soaring to the stars. But they didn't have another thirty years. The governments of the world, misusing Heinlein's theory, had chosen atomic destruction instead.

That was the story.

But was it true?

Several things puzzled Henderson. He was no heretic, no Fake Fan, but he couldn't help wondering. If fans had been so persecuted and powerless in the old days, how was it that Heinlein had gone to the government in the first place?

Why was it that some of the Masters' work survived in hardcover books and the writings of others equally famous had never been found in the ruins? Why weren't there any copies of the first fanzines? Granted, almost everything had been destroyed in the years of warfare, and paper was most perishable - but surely somewhere a few samples should have survived. The addresses of many of the Masters were known; why hadn't the reclamation parties and the excavators made special efforts to seek the collections of Don Ford, Bea Mahaffey, Redd Boggs?

As it was, nothing remained but their names. Henderson had to admit it was all hearsay. He didn't know if Don Ford had been related to Henry Ford, the automobile manufacturer. Was Bea ;Mafahaffey a stern-faced old lady or a brassy blonde? Had there really been an omniscient genius like Redd Boggs or was he just a FAPA legend?

Henderson found himself approaching the crossroads. To his surprise he discovered that a small group of farmers and local citizens were engaged in clearing the area surrounding the demolished dwellings. An ancient bulldozer had swept a swath at one side and allowed access to the crumbling foundations of four or five structures.

He approached, idle curiosity mingling with sudden fancy. This was Eshbach country, wasn't it? Nobody remembered the exact location of the Lloyd Eshbach residence, but here the famous fan publisher had lived and died. Suppose a miracle occurred, and one of these ruined houses turned out to be his home? Suppose the searchers uncovered a whole cache of fan literature, something he could use in the campaign? It was a wild, impossible thought, of course, but suppose - the diggers.

Obviously the name meant the diggers. "Need any help?" he asked.

A short, stocky man lifted his head and stared at him without recognition. He wore no beanie and was obviously just a farmer.

"Sure, if you want to lend a hand. Grab a shovel." He indicated a pile of implements at the side of the road.

Henderson selected a rusty specimen and clambered down gingerly into the nearest cleared foundation.

"What are you looking for?" he asked.

"Typewriters, I guess." The stocky farmer wheezed as he worked. "District headquarters had an idea we might find some business machines here. Gang of us been donating one afternoon a week to excavating, these past few years. Turned up quite a bit of stuff around Reading. Now we're getting at these villages and crossroads places. Been at this one a month. But we've got down far enough so's we may strike something today."

"Any idea who used to live here?"

"Dunno. Headquarters tells us this might have belonged to an old-timer name of Polk."

Henderson gulped.

Polk. Was his dream about to come true after all? He knew that name, knew it well. There had been a Polk in ancient fandom - Chester A. Polk.

Obviously the name meant nothing to the farmer or his companions. They were just doing an assigned job. They lent their muscles to a routine task, shovelling out debris, stooping to pick up battered artifacts. But Henderson dug like a demon.

He wasn't interested in the antique furniture, the broken springs, the shards of chinaware. He didn't join the group that puzzled over the wallpaper pieces, or even stop to examine what had once obviously been a television set. There was no more television today, Henderson knew, and ordinarily he'd have been interested in seeing what a machine had looked like.

But not now. Not when there was a possibility of finding something greater. Filing cabinets, perhaps, and maybe a desk with a locked drawer -

He dug, and the sweat poured down his face. The sun sank lower and the farmer climbed out of the pit to join his fellows.

"Guess we'd better call it a day," he said. "Mebbe we'll strike something next week. Getting right down to the basement level: see where we can pry up the floorboards. This house must have been burned, not blasted."

Henderson nodded, but didn't look up from his digging.

"Aren't you coming out, fella?"

He shook his head. 'Tve got another hour to spare," he panted, "Mind if I just keep going?"

"W'ell, suit yourself." The farmer hesitated. "But remember, if you find any machinery, stuff like that, it's public property."

"I'll remember," Henderson promised. "If I turn anything up. I'll bring it in to your district offices."

They must have left, but he didn't pay any attention to their departure. Because he had reached the floorboards now, and he was prying them up, and then he was down in the basement area. He waded knee-deep in debris, and clouds of dust arose to choke him. He blinked in the gathering twilight. Here was the rusty remains of an old-fashioned furnace; there was a broken table- and on it something that gleamed dully.

Typewriter? Henderson approached it, then gasped: It was a Gestetner. A mimeograph machine - its drum broken, its crank dangling! And beneath the table was a large metal box. He stooped and pulled it free of the rubble, wiped the dust from the top.

He read the lettering crudely daubed in black paint. Chester A. Polk - Private.

Files? This was a file, a portable, two-drawer file. And the drawers could be opened. Henderson tugged at the rusty handles, and it wasn't exertion that made his heart pound.

The top drawer came open. Yellowed folders cascaded forth. Henderson picked one up at random. It bulged with letters - typewritten letters, handwritten letters.

He looked at the date of the topmost sheet. April 1, 1956! He glanced through the message, then

turned the page hastily and sought the signature.

Jim Harmon!

Jim Harmon, one of the oldtime Masters - the man who had first advocated Harmony, or Universal Brotherhood in Fandom, in the pages of the old PEON magazine.

What if he found some copies of PEON itself?

Henderson hastily pulled open the second drawer.

He found PEON. He found PEON, and HYPHEN, and INSIDE, and a complete mailing - a FAPA mailing, the 75th. This was the fanzine collection, the fabulous fanzine collection of Chester A. Polk!

There was no thought in Henderson's mind now concerning district managers or the necessity of turning this material in. There was only the need of gathering up the magazines, gathering up the few hardcover books at the back of the file, and taking them to a safe place where he could read them. The sun wouldn't set for over an hour yet. If he carried everything to that spot under the trees where he and Avis usually rested, he could go through his find at leisure. And then, when he went back to the farmhouse, he'd find Avis and Lionel Drake and tell them, show them. An hour was all he needed. Just one hour, and then -

It was almost three hours later that John Henderson staggered into the farmhouse.

Lionel Drake and his daughter heard the heavy footsteps in the hall, and Avis ran to meet Henderson as he leaned against the doorway.

"John, where have you been?" she murmured. "Daddy and I got back hours ago - nobody knew what had happened to you." She paused and stared up at his face. "What's the matter?"

Henderson didn't answer. He brushed past her, stumbled to the sofa, sat down, and buried his face in his "trembling hands.

"For the love of Leiber, what's wrong?" the girl gasped.

Lionel Drake rose and walked over to the young man.

"Yes, what's the trouble?" he demanded. He nearly added, "You look as though you've seen a ghost," but there was no need to. For Henderson had produced a ghost. He pulled it out from his jacket pocket and extended it: a solid, palpable revenant in the form of a battered book.

Drake took it and read the title. "THE IMMORTAL STORM," he whispered. "A History of Science Fiction Fandom by Sam Moskowitz." There was silence, then a sharp intake of breath. "Where did you find this?"

"Where I found the rest of the stuff," Henderson said, dully. "The copies of Oopsla and Inside and Skyhook and A Bas and all the others. In Chester Polk's basement." He nodded. "Yes, the Chester Polk. The one who got letters from Nancy Share and Joe Gibson and Earl Kemp and even William Rotsler. He went to Conventions. He played poker with Tucker, once. It's all there. Everything."

"Tell us about it," Avis soothed. "From the beginning. Daddy, isn't this marvellous?"

There was nothing in Lionel Drake's demeanor to indicate that he agreed. He stood there for a minute, holding "THE IMMORTAL STORM" in his gnarled hands. Then he put it down on ^ the table.

"How about a drink?" he suggested. "After that we can talk."

Henderson accepted a drink, and downed a second one without an invitation. Then he just sat there and stared.

"Come on," Avis urged. "Tell us, now."

He didn't look at the girl when he replied. He stared at Lionel Drake.

"What is there to say?" he whispered. "You're not surprised, are you, Drake? You knew about the magazines - what they contained?"



The Superb One as a Mad Professor. He didn't have to pretend much... (From the Gauer collection.)

The older man nodded silently.

"Other copies have been found before, I suppose; even copies of "THE IMMORTAL STORM?" And you and a few Big Name Fans have kept the discoveries from the rest - from fools like myself."

Avis Drake glanced at the two men in bewilderment. "What's all this about?" she asked.

Lionel Drake made a sudden gesture, but Henderson shook his head. "She might as well know the truth," he said. "It's about time somebody learned the facts. The way I learned them, this afternoon."

He faced the girl now, talked to her directly. "I found the old fanzines," he said. "And I read them. Oh, I couldn't go through everything thoroughly, and there are a lot of old letters, too, but I read enough to know what I'm talking about. For the first time in my life, I do know what I'm talking about. And that means everything I've ever believed in, everything I've been taught, everything I've tried to tell others as a candidate - is a lie.

"No, don't stop me. Your father knows. He and a few others have known all along, and deliberately withheld and distorted that knowledge, deliberately upheld the lies.

"First of all, fandom was never a persecuted minority. There were no martyrs, no dedicated group of scientists seeking a solution to the problems of the future. There were just men who wrote stories for publication - in the hard-cover books that survived and in the commercial magazines that have all been destroyed. Perhaps some of them were found again, "hut hidden away by your father and his friends.

"The men who wrote these stories were called 'pros' or even 'dirty pros' by the fans of their day. Some of them were talented writers, some of them even possessed sound scientific backgrounds - but they were not the inventors of the things they described. They were not even the greatest writers of their time.

"And the fans themselves were another, separate group. The legend has mixed up the commercial magazines with the fanzines. But fanzines were just amateur publications, privately mimeographed and distributed amongst a small circle. Most of the fans were quite young. Some of them were serious, yes, but not all of them. And they weren't bent on saving the world. They poked fun at themselves half of the time. Do you know what I read in one fan magazine? It said. Fandom is just a goddam hobby."

Henderson paused and glanced at the copy of "THE IMMORTAL STORM." "There's more in the book. It tells about the very earliest fan organisations - how they fought and feuded, quarrelled among themselves. The Big Name Fans weren't supermen. Tucker was a motion picture projectionist. Wollheim became an editor. So did Lowndes - he never was doctor, and 'Doc' was just a nickname.

"So you see, it's all a myth, this story of Fandom keeping the torch of knowledge lighted in the darkness. They weren't saints, they weren't dedicated - just a gang of people who joked and bickered about a hobby. Yes, they had clubs and they had conventions, and they formed close friendships, and sometimes fans even married one another. But the rest is delusion. Lies and propaganda to feed the silly multitude - to elevate men like your father to power on the shoulders of stupid dupes like myself."

Henderson poured himself another drink. Avis began a silent sobbing. Lionel Drake sighed heavily and sat down in the armchair opposite the younger man.

"There's an old fannish saying," he murmured. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." He paused, then continued. "What you say is true, of course. That's the way things were, and a small group of us has always known. We did find fanzines from time to time, and we have concealed them. Also we deliberately helped to create the myth of Fandom. But not because we wanted personal power."

"What other purpose could you possibly have had." John Henderson demanded. "Setting up a falsified version of history, suppressing the facts, making what almost amounts to a religious cult out of Fandom?"

"We had one purpose, ' Lionel Drake replied. "To restore the world to sanity."

"You call this sanity? Elevating juvenile antics to heroic status, putting laurel-wreaths on the brows of money-grubbing writers, inventing a Golden Age out of whole cloth?"

"I do," said Drake. "Remember, I'm a psychologist. Oh, not one of the old-time, orthodox psychotherapists you read about. My field is mass-psychology, sociology perhaps. What I've done, and the others have done, is necessary.

"It's true we invented part of the story - the part concerning life before the coming of atomic warfare. But the rest, my boy, is true. You know it. Fandom did constitute the sole reliable nucleus remaining after the world was razed and ruined. As such, it formed a small operating-force that could help to restore order; at that time a very few men capable of operating a hand-cranked mimeograph could become a potent force. Remember, they trusted one another in an age where all men seemed surrounded by enemies.

"But rudimentary skill and simple trust were not enough. As a student of history, of sociology, we knew that. ' Every important group, every important political or religious or social movement, gains its strength from other sources; from, legend. It is belief in legend that made the old-time movements strong - in the labor unions it was the story of Joe Hill and the Wobblies; in the Nazi Party it was the story of Hitler languishing despised and ignored in prison; I needn't remind you of the early Christian martyrs, or of the Young Republicans and their stories of Lincoln the rail-splitter. Out of the legends come the songs and stories, the fables and the folklore that gives men faith. Faith in their destiny, faith in their future. Fandom had to find its legends in order to grow strong and succeed. An old psychiatrist named Jung pointed out the pattern common to all mythologies; demonstrated that men need heroes and sagas and epics to believe in, in order to survive in a civilized state."

"But you can't found a firm future on the basis of lies," Henderson whispered.

"Who says we can't?" Drake countered. "Our country was founded on the myths which sprung up around the Founding Fathers - Washington and the cherry tree, and all the rest of it. From the time of Romulus and Remus in ancient Rome, the myths have played their part in progress; giving men something greater than themselves to cherish as a heritage. And more important, in this instance, the legend has done its work.

"Fandom did help rebuild our world. Fanciful forms of government have succeeded in restoring order. We no longer need armies in the nations founded on International Fandom. We have a working economy, yes, but it no longer rules the world through monetary power. For the first time since the days of Greece under Pericles, the artist and the creator play a respected and important role in life. Our commerce and our industry is slowly being rebuilt, but under sounder concepts than before. Educational facilities are increasing."

"You mean you're organizing means to spread more lies," Henderson retorted bitterly. "You've no real newspapers, no motion pictures, no television - "

"In time they will be restored," Drake said, calmly. "And so will the knowledge that we've retained for ourselves. Don't you think we know more than we've seen fit to reveal? We have the data with which to build atomic powerplants once more, to continue our rocketry experiments, perhaps to build an actual Moon-rocket within a generation. But our first concern must be to build a foundation for the better world to come. Yes, we choose to build it upon a myth - but surely it's a better myth than that which upheld the civilizations which have gone before. Would you want us to return to the old ways and the old myths - the Divine Right of Kings, the myth of Communism, or our own mindcrushing myth of the past which proclaimed that the Customer Is Always Right? Should we choose military mass-murderers as our new heroes, or exalt those who perverted pure science to the ways of destruction? The legend of the Big Name Fans preserved sanity in the world for the past generation. We can't abandon it now.

"I know what you're thinking, my boy. You'd like to quit the campaign, or go before the FAPA group and blurt out the truth. But what could you possibly gain? Isn't it better to aid in the cause - knowing that in the generations to come, men will continue to grow in knowledge and in achievement? The time will come when we can allow the legends to die; when we can take pride in present achievement, learn to dream about the future instead of the past. But for the moment mankind needs a dream of the past to counteract the nightmare reality of what actually occurred. That is the purpose of Fandom, the true and only purpose - to give men that dream and keep them sane."



Photographic proof that Gauer (left) and Bloch (right) committed the crime of partying, possibly with booze, but worst of all with...girls! We are shocked! (From the Harold Gauer collection. More in nextish.)

Henderson glanced at Avis. The girl wasn't crying any longer. She was looking at him, waiting for his answer. In her eyes he read a curious mixture of

love and loyalty, shame and fear. These emotions, he knew, were mirrored in his own gaze.

"If I go along with you," he said, softly, "I'm choosing the easiest way."

Drake opened his mouth to reply, but the girl spoke before him.

"No you aren't, darling," she murmured. "It will be the hardest way. To know the truth and yet not tell it. To carry the burden of guilt and deceit because it's necessary. To live a lie so that all other men can- live the truth."

"Part of the truth," Henderson said.

"Yes, part of the truth. But their children - our children - can know it all."

Henderson rose and went to her. "Perhaps," he whispered. "We can try, anyway. I suppose we must try."

They walked outside together, out under the stars. Far overhead a Heinliner thundered across the sky. Henderson thought of the dreams that had made it a reality - the dreams, shattered for him forever, which he must help preserve for his fellow men.

Lionel Drake would help. Avis would help, and maybe he could endure the years to come. Fandom was still a way of life. Quite suddenly, John Henderson remembered another saying that had survived from the olden days - a saying he had read again in a fanzine just this afternoon. Now, for the first time, he grasped the ironic truth of its meaning.

Softly, still staring up at the stars, he quoted it aloud:

"It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan."

Слава Україні!

Time to end this very special issue of the international journal of scientifiction, mimeography and all knowledge, ie a fanzine. Do one yourself! We need more fanzines! Otherwise we'll suffocate from stupid "superheroes" and brainless games. Ask me how to join an APA. In #139 - it'll be superb! - more on Bloch. And if you know who sawed Courtney's Boat, tell ahrvid@hotmail.com ...

Brandy Hall Issue 3 (November 2023)

Brandy Hall 3 is produced for N'APA mailing 267 (November 2023) by Mark Nelson.

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This is West Riding Press Publications ??? This is West Riding Press Publications (Australia) 16

In my first issue I followed in the spirit, if not the flesh, of Garth Spencer (*BROWNIAN MOTION* 1, mailing 263), by discussing my involvement in non-SF fandoms. In my second issue I followed Garth more directly by discussing my interactions with SF fandom. In my third issue I discuss my involvement with APAs. The following is mostly based upon material I wrote for *Mathom* Volume 1(1), distributed in ANZAPA 203 (October 2001), and Volume 3(1), distributed in ANZAPA 332 (April 2023).

Hello, I am Mark and I am very poor at contributing to APAs.

The first APA that I contributed to was *Drunk and Disorderly*, which was an APA devoted to role-playing games run by Pete Lindsay. I produced two issues of *The Raven Speaks*, the first issue appearing in *Drunk and Disorderly* 30 (towards the end of 1986?) and the last in *Drunk and Disorderly* 31 (sometime in 1987). I don't remember why I stopped contributing, but this was about the time that I stopped playing role-playing games and my fanzine interests moved away from RPG fanzines to postal diplomacy fanzines. It was an inauspicious start to an inauspicious career as a contributor to APA's.

Drunk and Disorderly was run a little differently to your classic SF APA. You did not send Pete the required number of copies of your contribution for him to redistribute in the next mailing. No, you sent him a camera-ready copy of your contribution. He ordered the contributions, printed *Drunk and Disorderly* as a single fanzine and mailed it to subscribers. I don't remember if you needed to subscribe to submit a contribution, I assume so. I don't believe that there was any minimum fanac, if you didn't contribute anything you could still receive *D&D* by subscription. Most of the contributors wrote up their campaigns.

We now fast-forward to the early 1990s, but before doing that we must backstep to 1989. Through my involvement with the student Science Fiction Society I ended up attending four conventions – all in Leeds. All except one were held on campus. The second was Iconoclasm (June 16-18th 1989), held at the Griffin Hotel. My dim recollections of the con are as follows.

- 1) It's the only convention I intended which had an exhibition of fan art. Rather than a traditional auction, there was a piece of paper below each piece of art and you wrote on it how much you were willing to pay, which had to be more than the previous bidder.
- 2) There was a panel which ran a fannish version of the radio show "I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue". This must have seemed a good idea to the organising committee, but the execution was very underwhelming.

- 3) There was a panel about (SF) fanzines. Vinc Clarke was one of the panellists and I spoke to him afterwards. As a result he printed my name and address in a zine that he was editing and this resulted in me receiving a few (SF) fanzines.

Some time later in the 1990s... one of the zines mentioned an APA that had a short waiting list and I put my name forward. I don't remember the name of the APA, but it was probably *Pieces of Eight*.

I received a mailing and read it with great interest and decided that I wanted to be involved. But I never found the time to write my contribution. I received the subsequent mailing, again reading it with both great interest and with great intent. But once again, I did not write up a contribution. Unsurprisingly, I received no further mailings.

Around this time one of the most prominent UK postal diplomacy fanzines was Ian Bowen's *Y Draig Goch*. It had a large letter column with much discussion of books. With the support of the letter writers Iain decided to hive this activity off into a book-orientated APA. I forget the name of the APA. Guess what? I didn't write a contribution for the first mailing. But I read the contributions that comprised the first mailing with great interest and with great intent. Can you guess what happened next? I failed to write a contribution for the second mailing. But then, almost everyone failed to write a contribution and there was no second mailing.

Here concludes my account of my ignominious contribution to APA's in the 1980s and 1990s. But why did I put my hand up for two and then fail to follow up? I didn't give it a second thought at the time, but looking back I see the beginning of some unfortunate character traits that have extended into my professional career. Firstly, procrastination. Secondly, poor time management. I'll put a job off by saying to myself that I'm too busy to do anything on it now and that I will deal with it at some later time when I will be less busy. But I'm always busy, to a larger or lesser extent. Putting off tasks until some hypothetical time when I'm less busy means in practice having to deal with it at the last possible moment: it would be better to strike, if not when the iron is red hot then at least when it's moderately hot.

That isn't quite the end of the story. Mark Plummer wrote in *QUOZ* #89 (ANZAPA mailing 333, June 2023).

“And I think I've found another piece of your past APA history, Mark. I've just learned that John Bray started a British electronic APA in 1991, almost certainly the first such in the UK at least. There are five mailings archived on efanazines.com and there's a Mark Nelson in there with a leeds.ac.uk email address so I'm guessing that's you. 'All issues were named after biscuits, for no good reason.' I'm not sure it's really an APA in any way that I'd understand the term. Rather it looks like a periodic assembly of emails.”

Fancylopedia calls *Earth Calling Biscuit Barrel* “the UK's first electronic APA”. I see that my APA zine was called *Tarnover City* and it appeared in the second and third issues (1st April and 2nd May, 1991). This APA seems to have stopped after five mailings.

We can now fast forward to October 2001 when I joined ANZAPA. I mentioned in the previous issue that Stephen Glover was the most prominent SF fan that attended the weekly meetings of the university Science Fiction Society. (More exactly, he was only the SF fan to attend our meetings). I

discussed some of my interactions with him over the years. Sometime in 2001 I was sitting at my terminal, procrastinating rather than working, and I wondered “what ever happened to Steve Glover”? I booted up Netscape, went to my favourite search engine, and answers were soon rolling down the screen. I failed to find his then current personal web-age, perhaps he no longer had one. Along the way I discovered the ANZAPA “Index to Mailing” page, from which I discovered that Steve's wife Jenny had contributed to ANZAPA. I then remembered that they had been involved in several APA's.

I thought to my self that contributing to an APA was a Good Thing and something that I should aspire to. So I submitted my name and joined ANZAPA. The connections bringing me to ANZAPA being that I once had a friend who had a wife who for some time contributed to ANZAPA.

My membership in ANZAPA was short. I produced five issues of *Mathom* volume 1 and one issue of volume two (December 2002), a total of thirty one pages, I then moved to Wollongong where I became too `busy' to write a contribution and dropped out. Although a poor show, thirty-one pages over six issue, that poor show was my best ever APA contribution.

Why did I return to ANZAPA in April 2023, with my tail between my legs, after almost an absence of over twenty years? As I've mentioned before, originally I was into RPG fanzines (c. 1983--1986). Then I moved into postal diplomacy fanzines. Every so often along the years I've dipped my toes into the waters of SF fandom, always staying in the shallows. I was not exactly a seven year hitch, but I began to feel that it was time again to wet my toes. Using the internet I searched high, I searched low. But I could not find any Australian SF fanzines. I contacted Clare McDonald on the grounds that as a recent DUFF coordinator she might know a thing or two about Australian SF fanzines. She told me that

“I'm not particularly involved with fanzines any more, but ANZAPA seems to be still going strong. It's done online now, but there is a website with an email address you could try.”

So in April 2023 I returned to ANZAPA, The second run of *Mathom* has to-date produced four issues and exactly one hundred pages. Thirty-seven years after I produced my first APA zine, for *Drink & Disorderly*, the second run of *Mathom* is now my second `best' – in terms of issues - and `best' - in terms of pages.

In July 2023 I distributed the first issue of *Brandy Hall* with NAPA mailing 265. This is the third issue of said APA zine. Thirty-seven years after I produced my first APA zine, *The Raven Speaks*, *Brandy Hall* is now my third `best' APA zine: both in terms of the number of issues and the total page count.

If this account of my involvement with APAs since 1986 has demonstrate anything to you, I hope it has shown what an appalling (apa-ling ?) track record I have in producing APA zines. Given this, you may be wondering why on earth I decided to attempt running zines for two APAs? One factor was that I didn't think I could do worse than I'd done previously. After all, producing a single issue of *Brandy Hall* was already an improvement upon my two worse attempts at engagement with APAs. Secondly, producing an APA zine is fun and rewarding - in a different way to producing a fanzine. Why did I pick N'APA? That N'APA is electronic was certainly one factor, I can't now imagine writing an APA zine, copying it, and posting it to an OBE to include in a mailing. (Particularly if the OBE is overseas.) A second reason was that the N'APA deadline alternates

monthly with the ANZAPA deadline. Finally, a significant factor was the small number of contributors to N'APA and the small page count of recent mailings.

ANZAPA has been all-digital since mailing 314 in April 2020. It went all-digital because, due to COVID restrictions, it was no longer feasible to post mailings to the US. It was also becoming inordinately expensive to mail out each issue. Since going digital there have been no mailing fees. Unlike, *EAPA* there are no restrictions on the size of contributions as these are combined together to make a single PDF which is made available through dropbox. The last paper mailing (313, February 2020) contained 334 pages. The most recent electronic mailing (335, October 2023) had 674 pages, though only 570 pages counted for credit. (The missing 104 pages were genzines that are circulated through ANZAPA, but which do not count for minac purposes). N'APA mailings are much shorter: 66 pages for mailing 263, 68 pages for mailing 264, 89 pages for mailing 265, and 105 pages for mailing 266. I was perhaps foolhardy, but I thought that if I could handle the demands of reading ANZAPA mailings that I could handle the demands of reading N'APA mailings.

So, here I am. If this history teaches anything it is that sooner or latter, and sooner rather than latter, I will drop out of N'APA. In which case you can look forward to me contacting you in another twenty years.

The Mathom House

The Official Organ #266 (Jefferson Swycaffer)

Question for the Members:

Do we want to include participation from "Public Members" of N3F, members who are not paying dues?

I voted against this proposal. I do not believe that the membership dues of \$6/year are a financial barrier to participation in NAPA. Further, if you can participate in NAPA without paying dues then why pay dues?

INTERMISSION 135 (Ahrvid Engholm)

"His ((Ralph Lundsten)) first electronic music was made with a tape recorder, on which he recorded strange sounds and then cut and glued with small tape pieces."

This brings back some memories. Not of early electronic music, but of using tape recorders. I used to record Jazz programmes from the radio and then I'd want to move tracks onto a different tape. In those days, the late 1970s and early 1980s, I didn't have a cassette deck that held two tapes. To make the transfer, I needed two cassette players and the right cable to connect them. (Luckily, my dad had figured it out years before.) Sometimes the tension on a tape cassette went. When that happened I had to cut out the mangled tape and stick the ends of the good tape together, using a special type of tape.

“Diane Duane's GoH interview”

Diane Duane was one of the GoH's at the second SF convention I attended: Iconoclasm (June 16-18 1989, Leeds). I have no recollection of her GoH speech, I don't remember attending it. I hadn't read any of her books when I attended the convention, this was always the case for any GoH, and I still haven't

“On a conference in 1972 the Association in Scotland for Technology and Research in Astronautics (ASTRA) a scientist Duncan Lunan - writing about it in a new book, Stars: Contact and Communication with Other Intelligence - claimed there were radio signals from a system a dozen light years away that could be interpreted as intelligent...”

At the present standpoint of science it's totally impossible to travel in the Milky Way. This doesn't deter Lunan and his colleagues, who seem to be inspired by sf, as some of them are active sf authors.”

Duncan Lunan was one of the two GoH's at the first SF convention I attended: LuCon I (February 26-28, 1988). I don't remember anything about his GoH speech, but this time I'm confident that I attended it.

“to reach 99% of light speed on a trip to Tau Ceti”

Is it pedantic of me to wonder how I ship travelling at such speed avoids collisions?

Ryct Henry Grynnsen:

“It's likely Vermeer and others used Camera Obscuras...”

David Hockney wrote a book, “Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the lost techniques of the old masters” (2001), in which he argued that hyper-realistic painters such as Caravaggio, da Vinci, and Vermeer used “optics and lenses” to create their impressions. I haven't read it, but I saw several reviews of it when it was published. I believe his thesis was examined in a TV program (BBC?). The proposal that the camera obscura was used by many artists is contested by art historians, although it's use by individual artists is recognised.

Ryct me

“For me RPGs or gaming in general doesn't belong to fandom, by which I mean the literary fandom with roots from the early pulps, the Worldcons, the sf fanzine sphere etc.”

That's an uncontentious statement. However, it doesn't distract from the fact that I discovered fanzines through RPG fanzines!

Archive Midwinter (Jefferson P. Swycaffer)

Ryct Ahrvid Engholm

“but I do want to see some protections put in place against pattern-matching that is indistinguishable from theft. i.e., it would be simplicity itself to input several thousand “Peanuts” comic strips, and then obtain an unlimited number of “new” such strips, without the permission of the legal copyright holder.”

An article that I read some time ago mentioned that several Australian authors were going to be part of a US lawsuit. I believe that the basis of the action is that feeding a complete novel into ChatGPT does not constitute ‘fair use’. A more recent article, within the context of the recent Hollywood strike, mentioned that film companies had not taken action against AI engines being fed movies. It’s perhaps a little far-fetched at the moment, but not inconceivable in the future, that an AI fed a sufficiently large number of movies might be able to generate its own movies. Perhaps it’s not just actors and writers that should be concerned about AI, but the movie companies?

Ryct Heath Row:

“Nice that you still have a working VCR and can play tapes. My situation is one that is repeated all over the country: I have a glompruous lot of tapes...and can’t play them! Someone needs to market a USB capable “play only” videocassette player! I’d buy one!”

Like you I have a number of VCR tapes that I can no longer play. I used to have a working VCR, but my wife made me throw away. I know you can pay to have VHS tapes converted to DVDs, not sure I want to go down that route as I’m uncertainty as to when I’d ever watch them. But it would be nice to have a working VCR so that I had the option of watching them.

Ryct John Thiel

“To my mind, ‘believability’ isn’t an issue at all! IMO, the key to enjoying imaginative fiction is ‘Suspension of Disbelief’.”

My perspective is that it depends upon what is meant by ‘believability’. I’m willing to accept any number of fantasy/SF paradigms which I don’t consider to be believable, that’s par for the course. (Exception, I’ve decided that time travel is not believable.) But once the framework has been setup, I want the resulting story to be believable. For example. Suppose that in Season 2 Episode 7 a specific piece of equipment is used to solve a problem. Then in Season 4 Episode 11 I want the same characters to remember that they have piece of equipment of the ship that can be used in this way. It’s not believable to me that characters in a SF universe forget what they’ve done before.

INTERMISSION 136 (Ahrvid Engholm)

“We’ll have a peek at Hugo’s long series of Christmas booklets, and study a few other of his wacky ‘inventions’ - VR glasses, land dreadnoughts of ridiculous size.”

Even Hugo didn’t envisage land dreadnoughts the size of a city! (Philip Reeve’s *Mortal Engines* series.)

"I'm against bans to burn books, including the Quran, but I urge everyone to refrain from it. [...] If you want to protest against religion, there are better ways. A suggestion is to bring along a dustbin, throw the book there and hold a short speech about why you do it. Throwing things in a dustbin is a clear gesture people often use, so why not!"

I agree. Burning books, such as the Quran, is an inflammatory act.

"Swedish freedom of expression laws are rather wide, covered by the Freedom of the Press Act with roots from 1766 (the world's first with constitutional status) and a later Freedom of Expression Act. And constitutional changes need two Riksdag votes - and there's no majority for that - with an election in between."

That is a very interesting statute, requiring two Riksdag votes with an election in between. When did this become the law and how many constitutional changes have there been since?

"We see similar tendencies of intolerance for sf conventions BTW. Concoms of certain ideological stance create "Codes of Conduct" to ban anything that may make some 'feel uncomfortable'."

I won't comment about the use of Codes of Conduct at SF conventions, as I've not attended a SF convention for thirty years. Their use has become common at academic conferences. Although I have some reservations about the Codes of Conduct used by the Australian Mathematical Society, I don't have a problem with delegates at conferences being told that homophobic, racist, sexist, language is not acceptable. (It says something sad that delegates need to be told that.) On the other hand, I've never heard of anyone at a mathematics conference in Australia using such language.

"While someone traced the first arbitrary use of the term "science-fiction" to a 19th century British writer - one William Wilson"

The Oxford English Dictionary identifies the original meaning of 'science fiction' thusly.

1. Fiction or poetry depicting some aspect of current scientific knowledge. Obsolete. Rare.

It gives its first recorded use in English as follows.

Campbell says that 'Fiction in Poetry is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanting resemblance.' Now this applies especially to Science-Fiction, in which the revealed truths of Science may be given, interwoven with a pleasing story which may itself be poetical and *true*—thus circulating a knowledge of the Poetry of Science, clothed in a garb of the Poetry of Life.

W. Wilson, A Little Earnest Book upon a Great Old Subject (1851) x. 139

The second meaning of 'science fiction' is given as

2a. An apparently unlikely scientific theory or assertion. Obsolete. Rare.

This led into one variation we use today.

2b. A work of science fiction (see sense [A.3](#)). Apparently rare before the mid 20th cent.
It's first recorded use in this sense is given as follows.

1897

My last remembrance had been of reading Mr. [J. U.] Lloyd's *Etidorhpa*... The complete arrest of bodily function and tissue waste which the central figure of that remarkable science-fiction achieved at the point where gravitation ceases, somewhere between here and China, impressed me deeply.

H. B. Mason in Pharmaceut. World 20 May 592/1

The final use of 'science fiction' as a noun is given by.

3. Fiction in which the setting and story feature hypothetical scientific or technological advances, the existence of alien life, space or time travel, etc., esp. such fiction set in the future, or an imagined alternative universe. Abbreviated sci-fi, n., S.F. n. Cf., speculative fiction n

Originally with reference to literature; now also to film, television, etc.

Occasionally used more narrowly to designate fiction based on possible or probable advances in technology; frequently in contrast to science fantasy n. 2b.

The first recorded use in this sense is from 1898.

Mr. H. G. Wells, the imaginative writer of , has recently brought out a thrilling romance whose basis is the intended conquest of the earth by the inhabitants of Mars.

Bulletin Pharmacy October 466/1

"In Sweden most of the privileges of the old nobility ceased in 1866 when a constitutional changes scrapped our House of Lords and made the parliament bicameral. Our king had the formal right to knight people until 1974, when the constitution once again changed but it wasn't used. (The last person to be knighted in Sweden was explorer Sven Hedin in 1902)."

I am enjoying reading about Sweden's constitutional history. Please keep it coming. It's a great pity that we (the British) have yet to scrap our House of Lords.

Ryct to Garth Spencer

"I didn't know that there was an English word 'sloyd' (handicrafts) derived form Swedish 'slöjd'... It joins smorgasbord, ombudsman, moped, gravlax, Celsius, Angstrom. TV here has recently aired the World Cup of running in the woods with a map, a sport known as orienteering (from Swedish 'orienteering' - I guess the word 'orientation' would be confusing), another Swedish language derivate."

Prompted by your comment I searched the Oxford English Dictionary to find all words that have entered the English language from Swedish. It identifies 133 such words, some of them are now obsolete. It gives the most recent Swedish entry into English as 'pirk' (1975). It doesn't consider orienteering to be one such word. The etymology of orienteering is given below.

< orient v. +eer suffix2 +-ing suffix1. In sense 1 after Dutch oriëntering getting one's bearings (1870–2 in the passage translated in quot. 1874 at sense 1). In sense 2 probably after Swedish orientering (1931 or earlier in this sense); compare mountaineering n. Compare later orienteer v.

“The SF-Bokhandeln chain with stores in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö is among the most profitable bookstores in the country. (Unfortunately, they seem to sell more games, comics, movie paraphernalia and such than books.)”

When I went up to Leeds as an undergraduate in September 1987 I quickly discovered the SF bookshop Odyssey 7. This shop contained a large number of book cases, stacked with SF novels. Over time the number of SF novels steadily decreased whilst the number of comics correspondingly increased. By the time I stopped being a regular visitor, November 1997, SF novels had nearly vanished. The number of comics stocked was large but decreasing, though the amount of manga was increasing. General SF paraphernalia was increasing.

Brownian Motion 4 (Garth Spencer)

“St. Mary’s Cathedral, directly across St. Mary’s Street from the Delta Hotel and the Elephant and Castle Pub.”

This put me in mind of one of my first visits to Brisbane. I took a shuttle from the airport to my hotel. The driver was providing a running commentary on Brisbane. It wasn’t that type of shuttle, it was just something that driver did to make the drive more interesting. As we drove past a large vacant block of land he said “this is where they were going to build the new Cathedral in the 1920s”. Someone asked him, “why isn’t there a Cathedral there?” He continued, “the Catholics wanted to ensure the best possible start to the building of their new Cathedral, so they gave all the money they had raised to the priest. He was tasked to take the money to Italy and have it blessed by the Pope.” Someone asked him, “why isn’t there a Cathedral there?” The driver finished his anecdote “Well, you see, the good Catholics of Brisbane are still waiting for the priest to return with the blessed money”.

I’ve never heard that story from anyone else. St John’s Cathedral remains to this day a major landmark in the Brisbane CBD. Over the years I’ve come to suspect that the driver was pulling our legs.

“At 4:00 p.m., “Rebuilding Fannish Community” drew at least twenty people, and turned into a productive discussion. To my satisfaction, we got beyond the usual cliches frequently observed about ageing fannish fans, and younger fans in several specialized fandoms.

In the end, the sense of the meeting seemed to be that it simply isn’t the job of elder fans to recreate the fan activities they knew”.

I’m sure that’s the crux of the issue. As fandom continues into the 21st century, it will not be in the form that it existed for most of the 20th century. There may be fannish activity using the likes of blogs, podcasts, and youtube channels, but that’s different to what preceded it. My usage of the aforementioned, almost archaic, forms of communication undoubtedly, and correctly indicate, that I am not `with it’. For me, fanzines are the only fruit. When fanzines are no more then I will diminish and pass into the west.

Ryct me #1

“About RPG fandom – it seems that in writing your apa contribution, you identified ‘fandom’ with fanzine activity. In contrast, when I tried running a newszine in Canada in the mid-1980s, it was forcibly brought home to me that an immense amount of fanactivity goes on without any fanzines being involved.

Occasionally I would hear evidence that fans in Calgary or Halifax were very active in LARPing or comics or other fandoms.”

I’ve been involved in three fandoms (initially RPG fandom, mostly postal diplomacy fandom, and an on-off flirtation with SF fandom). In each case I’ve associated fandom with fanzine activity. Perhaps that’s because in RPG fandom there wasn’t any form of fan activity other than fanzines? Or, if there was I never knew about it. I suppose most people played RPG games with their friends. Some people joined, if they existed, RPG clubs. There were only one or two RPG conventions in the UK at this time. Most people who attended these conventions were not involved with fanzines. There was a commercial LARPG company, which didn’t last very long. I don’t consider any of these to be a form of fanactivity, though that could be my pro-fanzine bias coming to the fore!

By it’s very name all forms of fan activity associated with the playing of postal diplomacy, and other boardgames, by post had to be associated with playing such games by post. And in fanzines!

Perhaps as a consequence of my involvement with RPG fandom and postal diplomacy fandom the only part of SF fandom that I’ve found interesting is fanzine fandom.

Ryct me #2

“In fact, I am interested by the fact you were aware of a number of RPG fanzines, in the U.K.”

The UK RPG prozine *Imagine*, ran by TSR (UK), had a very pro-fanzine outlook. Firstly, it had a fanzine review column which primarily covered RPG fanzines but also covered postal gaming/diplomacy fanzines. Secondly, it had a column which discussed the games that were ran in postal gaming/diplomacy fanzines. (One game described in each issue). Thirdly, initially it had a RPG fandom gossip column. The last of these was eventually dropped.

By way of contract the only fanzine coverage provided by the UK RPG prozine *White Dwarf*, ran by Games Workshop, was in the small adds section, where sometimes you’d see adverts for RPG fanzines. Games Workshop did eventually run an informal newsletter which carried reviews of RPG fanzines.

Ryct Archive *Midwinter* (Jefferson P. Swycaffer)

“Re the residential schools that First Nations (and Australian aboriginal) children were subjected to ... In retrospect, I really question whether they were intended to make the world’s culture available to them.”

No need to question this, it was not their intention. In Australia there’s a period of history in which the purpose of most of these schools is to prepare the children to enter white society in the role of servants. Sometime before this there was a strong conviction that Indigenous Australians were a “dying race”. Even as late as the 1950s Australian (white) children were being taught in schools that

Australian Aboriginals were a dying race who would go extinct. One reason why Indigenous Australians didn't go extinct is that white settlers found it tremendously difficult to keep it in their pants.

Ryct *Synergy* #46 (John Thiel)

"I thought synergy was a natural phenomenon of complex systems, including biochemistry or weather patterns"

Perhaps synchrony is not exactly the same as synergy, but it's often a form of synergy. A good non-technical book on synchrony is

Steven Strogatz. (2003). *SYNC: The Emerging Science of Spontaneous Order*. Hyperion Books.

Strogatz is famous for his expository writing aimed at non-mathematicians, this is a book aimed at a general audience

Synergy 47 (John Thiel)

I should start by apologising for not providing any mailing comments on your last two issues. I'll try much harder in the future. The future starts now!

"I think a better answer to the question is that we should just stop paying as much attention to European thought as we have been doing"

It isn't clear to me what the question is, neither is it clear to me in what way 'Americans' have been paying too much attention to European thought. If you were thinking about existential philosophers, then I doubt that, outside of a few post-modern cultural thinkers, anyone these days is paying too much attention to them.

Ryct *Brownian Motion*

"It's a pity to think of someone working each and every day to better himself, and acquire intelligence and wisdom, and as he does acquire what is ideal and the mark of a good life, that's it; he never puts his acquired wisdom to good use, and having things figured out to his satisfaction and being at peace with himself after life's storms, some unsuspected internal sickness carries him off and all of it vanishes from the Earth."

For an unknown reason, reading this paragraph put me in mind of *The Ruler of the Universe* from Douglas Adams' *Mostly Harmless*. (I don't think I've read *Mostly Harmless*, but I listened to it on the radio.)

"I'd have to go back to typewriters if I lose my printer or word capability (that is, if word ceases functioning), and then have to quit fanning because there are no more typewriters available, at least around here. They're being laughed at by technologists and called "antiques". Having a typewriter used to put me up front when I was twelve."

In retrospect, my typewriter breaking in 1991 (?) was the beginning of the end of my active involvement in postal diplomacy fandom and of my flirtation with science fiction fandom. I don't want to go back to writing fanzines or locs using a typewriter, but it would be a cool to own a working typewriter. There is a lego typewriter set. Perhaps one day I'll buy and make that.

“Perzine means that; personal fanzine. It so happens that that would be the opposite of a magazine or fanzine. Both are intended to be social. That ends up indicating that the editor is a solipsist. In short, there is no such thing as a personal fanzine.”

The first time I came across the phrase ‘personal fanzine’ was when I was still involved in RPG fandom. RPG fanzines were about RPG games. Some of the editors who stuck around in RPG fandom became tired of writing about RPG games. They wanted to write about their lives or to offer their thoughts on contemporary events. Unfortunately, these editors neither led interesting lives nor had interesting perspectives on contemporary events. (Or they didn’t have the writing skills to make interesting reading of their uninteresting lives.) Most of these personal zines folded very quickly, barely making any ripples on RPG fannish waters during their short life span.

I found it interesting to read what fancyclopedia has to say about perzines in SF fandom.

perzines or **personalzines** (formerly [individzines](#) or [personalized fanzines](#)): Personal fanzines usually written entirely by their publishers. Small [perzines](#) are sometimes called [letter substitutes](#), a product of the time before word processors and mail-merge programs, when it was considered easier to send out a little fanzine than to retype the same tidings for all one’s [correspondents](#). A perzine may have outside contributors, particularly of [fanart](#) and [locs](#), but the bulk of it will be by its originator. Perzines are often diaries but they may also feature [articles](#), [trip reports](#), book reviews or whatever it occurs to the [editor](#) to include.”

Ye Murthered Master Mage 266 (George Phillies)

I’m curious as to how many individuals voted in the Laureate Awards?

Ryct me

Thanks for filling me in on the history of RPG fandom in the USA. I was vaguely aware that Gygax had been involved with board wargaming prior to developing D&D. I have distant memories of reading about Chainmail, perhaps in a history of RPGs article. I’m curious as to how RPG zines in the USA attracted readers? I only bought a small number o issues of *Dragon*, I didn’t find it that interesting. (TSR UK’s *Imagine* was miles better than TSR’s *Dragon* in my book.) I don’t remember now if *Dragon* ran small adds, but if it I never saw any adverts for fanzines of any colour.

“(The Wild Hunt)) writers took note of Gygax’s belated claim that his magic system was based on Jack Vance, a magician being able to cast a spell once a day and that only with access to his books of magic, but that claim was not supported by the rule books and was widely ignored.”

I enjoyed playing D&D (only the basic and expert sets were released when I played) and then AD&D. The latter was the fantasy RPG I played the most, though I preferred RuneQuest. There was one part of the D&D/AD&D rules that I really disliked because it clashed with my vision of magic in a fantasy setting... yes, you guessed it. I disliked the magic system. By the time I was playing, level one magicians were restricted to one spell a day and you had to nominate your spell before play began. Clerics with a wisdom of 18 were able to cast spells three-times a day (do I remember that right?) but regardless of intelligence (was that the main character attribute for magicians?) a level one magician was limited to one a day. I remember reading a Lew Pulsipher article, perhaps published in *White Dwarf*, in which he introduced lower-level spells. (I’ve long forgotten what he called them.) I think the idea was that instead of casting one level-one spell a day, a magician could

cast a number of these lower-level spells. I believe that these lower-level spells were themselves split into two levels. Perhaps you cast two of the upper level zero spells a day or four of the lower level zero spells a day or one of the upper and two of the lower spells.

Sometimes I'm amazed at what I can remember of articles I read forty years ago.

Sometimes I'm amazed at what I can't remember about events that happened yesterday.

Ryct *Brownian Motion*

"In the United States, one also encounters non-alcoholic cider."

I hadn't heard of non-alcoholic cider until one of my wife's friends visited. She doesn't drink, so she brought some non-alcoholic cider with her. Both my wife and I really enjoyed its taste, so we now buy this particular non-alcoholic cider more often than we buy cider.

Ryct *Snow Poster Township*

"I tried to revive the N3F book reading group, some years ago, but failed. There are so many titles out there that it is unlikely that two members will have read the same book. Perhaps we would try again."

Perhaps it's worth trying again? My suggestion to reviving is perhaps to cover six books a year and to announce the reading list at the start of the year. That gives potential members of the reading group time to track down each book and read it before the time at which comments are due. It sounds like the kind of group that I would like to join, but in practice I wouldn't... because I don't think I'd be able to find the time to read an additional six books a year. OTOH, if the six books were announced at the beginning of the year I'd try to prioritise the time to read one of the books due for the end of the year.

Ryct *Samizdat*

"Were the Dark Ages dark?"

In a word, YES. The Dark Ages were Dark, in terms of culture, economics, and intellectual activity, compared to the heights achieved in the Roman Empire. That isn't to say that there were no developments.

"They built fewer large engineering works than the Romans did, but they were inventive. The Dark Ages gave us the humble clothes button, meaning that robes needed far less fabric than a Roman toga did, the moldboard plow, good windmills, and algebra."

I'm happy to take your word on buttons, the moldboard plow, and good windmills. I have some reservations as to whether the Dark Ages gave us algebra, what did you have in mind?

"The first algorithm, alphabetical order, was a bit later."

One unexpected side effect of become a dad last year is that my wife and I have started visiting our local public library. (I stopped using public libraries about the time that I started playing RPGs. Is there a connection or is it a coincidence?) A book that I've seen on the shelves is "A Place for Everything" by Judith Flanders. It has the subtitle "The Curious History of Alphabetical Order". I'd like to borrow this book and read it, but don't really have the time to read it. (I've plenty of unread

books at home.) The next time I visit the library I'll try to look through the book to see if it states when alphabetical order started. At least according to Wikipedia, the use of alphabetical order dates back to at least "the 1st millennium BCE by Northwest Semitic scribes".

Let's for the sake of argument accept the statement that alphabetical order was developed after the Dark Ages. In that case it would not be the first algorithm. Babylonian mathematicians developed algebraic methods to solve equations and were able to estimate square roots accurately using division and averaging. I'd contend that these are examples of algorithms. I don't know the dates for the first use of these algorithms, but it's possible that these mathematical algorithms pre-date or are contemporary with the first use of alphabetical order.

Snow Poster Township 12 (Heath Row)

Thanks for your warm welcome to NAPA, and to everyone else who welcomed me on board.

Ryct me

"Particularly if one already owns a lot of books they haven't yet read—or frequents used book stores — there's plenty to be gained reading out-of-print writing. Or older books by inactive or dead authors. One can still be an actifan even if you're not still buying new books at scale."

I've kept a list of all the novels I've read since moving to Australia in 2000. I've read very little SF or Fantasy in the last twenty-three years. (If I can summon the energy, I'll have a look to see which SF novels I've read.) Mostly I've been reading books that have won the Miles Franklin Award or the Booker Award or, in general, literary fiction. I recently discovered a second-hand bookshop that had a large collection of novels published by Penguin in the 1960s and 1970s. I bought one novel by Fred Hoyle and two by John Wyndham: at the time they were the SF authors that I thought Penguin would have published. After polishing these off it will be time to return, which authors should I be looking for?

"In Brownian Motion #3, Garth Spencer discussed the importance of being organized, excerpted his 2020 Confabulation, and commented on N'APAs' contributions... I occasionally review comic books, as above. We discuss sf, fantasy, and horror—and we include books and media fandom, talking about movies and TV shows. Disrespecting the traditional boundaries of fandom in our own fanac models the world I'd like to see".

The other APA that I'm involved with is ANZAPA (Australia and New Zealand APA). This was started in 1968 and the original members included a mix of science fiction fans and comics fans. I'm not sure when comics fandom started (the early 1960s?) but I believe that many of the first comics fans were also members of SF fandom. The ANZAPA constitution neither encourages nor discourages any particular content that should or should not be covered in contributions. It states that "What counts as acceptable material for the purposes of minac is at the OBE's discretion".

Ryct Jefferson P. Swycaffer (*Archive Midwinter*)

“At 50, I am among the youngest members of LASFS, other than a few children of other members. I’m also on the younger side of most faneds. Fan clubs occasionally face challenges connecting with college fan clubs. And young people in general might not be finding their way to our fanzines, Web sites, and other centers of fanac—which tend to concentrate on time binding as much as on contemporary fandom.”

It’s more than a bit sad to read that the membership of LASFS is ageing, with no input of youth. I suppose that the society has appropriate records so that in theory you could investigate how the age profile of the society has changed over time. Could you pinpoint when the flow of younger members started to decline ? My impression from a random sampling of fanzines from efanazines suggests that the same is true in fandom, or at least that part of fandom that uploads fanzines to efanazines. We are alone. We are a dying people. We will pass.

“This also ties into Nelson’s remarks on prioritizing living, contemporary authors rather than the out-of-print and perhaps dead authors we might love and enjoy most.”

Just to clarify, I wasn’t claiming that we should prioritise living contemporary authors. I certainly do not do that in my very sparse reading of SF authors.

“Are we even reading or watching the same things—which might be a requirement to at least have something in common to talk about?”

I suspect that “we”, whoever we may be, are mostly not reading or watching the same things as younger SF fans. In a recent email Bruce Gillespie told me about the experiences of Dick Jensen

“Dick Jensen has some very bitter stories of being scorned or punished for even mentioning science fiction when he was at school in the 1940s and 1950s, especially when he once pointed out the great scientific ideas that he found discussed in the SF magazines.”

Bruce also commented that

“While I was commuting during my university days and early working life (1965-1973), I used to put a brown paper cover over my SF paperbacks, or remove the dust jacket from hardbacks while reading them in the train or on the tram.”

In 2023 science fiction fans are not faced with these types of problems. These days SF, at least in the form of films/TV, has broken through into the mainstream. Do ‘young people’ watch the likes of Star Wars, Superhero Movies (mostly not SF in my book), and Star Trek and associate to their liking of these programs the words “science fiction”? I find it difficult to believe that these days someone would be scored at school for mentioning science fiction. They might be scorned for admitting that they liked reading books...

Ryct George Phillies (*Ye Murthered Master Mage #265*)

“The two most common pieces of feedback I encounter about the N3F is that it’s a joke or has an unclear purpose (the former is false, in my mind, though the latter could be true), and that we publish two many clubzines instead of one general clubzine—which might be true, but solving that needs even more volunteer editing.”

What is the purpose of the N3F? According to the first sentence of the web page: “The mission of N3F is to help members enjoy and discuss science fiction and science fiction fandom in all media”. That is a very admirable sentiment. How well does it do it? Does N3F “help members enjoy and discuss science fiction and science fiction fandom” in a way that’s distinct from other modes of “discussing science fiction and science fiction fandom”. Incidentally, I see that latter on in the web page it’s stated that N3F has “a Games Bureau”. Does it though?

“Regardless, I’m curious whether focusing on people who don’t have local clubs or who are new to fandom might be promising. If you’ve just self-identified as a fan, where do you go (clubs, cons)? What should you make sure to read, watch, and listen to? Where’s other fanac centering?”

What does fandom mean in this context? My guess is that N3F should concentrate on people who have only recently self-identified as fans of SF. How do such people discovered more about SF? Most likely, they do a goggle search or they use something along the lines of reddit which they are already using for other purposes. How do such people discover N3F? Why would they chose to join N3F? What does N3F offer that they can’t discover elsewhere?

Ryct to Samuel Lubell (*Samizdat #20*)

“Thank you for shining your spotlight on Keith Laumer. I can hardly believe that [n]early everything by Laumer is out of print. He’s definitely a past author who should still be available and read, if not just his Retief work.”

Thank you! In the mid 1970s there was a short-lived UK postal diplomacy fanzine called *Retief* edited by Craig Nye: issue 1 appeared in August 1974 and issue 12, the last, is dated June 1975. Now I know where the name comes from.

“Does ‘KTF’ mean ‘Kill the Fanzine’?”

KTF, standing for Kill The Fuckers, is a style of fanzine criticism that was (unfortunately) prevalent in British SF fanzines in the 1980s. There was more than an element of being mean-spirited to it.

Esmeralda County Line #5 (Kevin Trainor Jr.)

Ryct me rmct Ahrvid

*“Drugging the populace to sleep is a recurring SF trope. I first remember seeing it in an undistinguished story in Harlan Ellison’s *Dangerous Visions*, and more recently of course in the movie *Serenity*”.*

It’s interesting that I remember the plot of an episode of *Blake’s 7* that I watched over forty years ago, but I forget that the same trope was used in *Serenity* which I’ve seen much more recently, though not for a couple of years. I was surprised to see that *Serenity* won a Hugo for Best Dramatic Presentation (Long Form) in 2006. I was wondering if there was an element of fans giving Joss

Whedon a consolation prize for the cancelling of Firefly. OTOH, when I saw the other nominations for 2006 I thought it deserved to win.

Ryct me rmct you:

“The story about the mathematicians sounds apocryphal, unless it dates back to the Mob era.”

At first glance the story sounds plausible, but I am sure that you are correct about it being apocryphal.

Ryct me rmct Sam

“As for the canon, as late as the 1970s you could point to about a dozen or so SF novels as classics, plus another couple of dozen short stories.”

Please tell me what you consider to be the classic SF novels as of the late 1970s. I’ll definitely put your suggestions onto my list of books to read, though that doesn’t guarantee that they will be read as the number of books on the list grows quicker than my ability to read them.

Ryct Intermission #134

“I’m not sure about SF fans, but in baseball fans are generally considered to be short for ‘fanatics’.”

I don’t know about the word ‘fan’, but I did check the Oxford English Dictionary for the word ‘fandom’. This gives the definition “The world of enthusiasts for some amusement or for some artist”. The first recorded use of fandom was in 1903 and there was a baseball example from 1928.

“Ty Cobb, the idol of baseball fandom.” (*Publishers’ Weekly*, 30 June 1928)

Ryct Synergy #46

“I would further disagree that people can’t identify with the various characters from Star Trek, and in particular Worf. The existence of a sizeable contingent of Klingon fandom would seem to contradict your assertion.”

I’ve attended one Star Trek convention (in Leeds of course). I don’t remember the year, but it must have been around 1994. The Guest of Honour was Robert O’Reilly (Gowran). There were a quite a few delegates who’d come as Gowran. When he entered the room to give his presentation he was accompanied by an honour guard of Klingon warriors. He made some quip that he was glad that the *Duras* sisters had not attended the convention, by which I guess he meant that no-one had come as them. Don’t remember anything else about his speech, other than it was amusing, and little more about the convention.

Samizdat 19 (Samuel Lubell)

Ryctm

“Excellent idea of what would go into “The SF Novel 101, 201, and 301” I might ~~steal~~ borrow that idea for a future con”.

I’m looking forward to you reporting back what the suggestions are!

“What happens when they get better? If readers can have online AIs write them custom stories, why would they pay for a magazine that might have stories that they don't like?”

This puts me in mind of something... I think it was a short story, but I don't remember the title or the author. In this story there was a famous book reviewer who'd fed all of his reviews into an AI program so that the AI could review in his style. (I think the idea was that the AI program would read through new reviews to make sure they were consistent with previous reviews.) Someone had stolen the program and was now using it to write their own reviews. The famous book reviewer wanted to retrieve the program. To echo your question, if you have an AI program that can write high quality reviews do you need the human to read the books? Maybe at the time this story was written there wasn't the idea that AI would be able to 'read' books.

“*Author Spotlight: Sheri S. Tepper*

Sheri Tepper was never widely known while she was alive and I suspect her books are mostly out of print (except as ebooks).

*I recommend easing into her work with *Beauty* a science fiction version of the fairy-tale or *A Plague of Angels* that also combines SF with fairy tales before venturing into her more polemical *Grass* or *Gateway to Women's Country*.”*

When I was a final year student I was editor of the Leeds University Science Fiction Society club fanzine. (In the intervening years I've tried as hard as possible to forget about this.) One of the perks of being editor was that publishers sent the editor books. In my case I opened the parcels and put the books into a big box in my room. Not sure what happened to all those books at the end of the year. I read hardly any of them and gave even fewer out to reviewers. One author that I discovered that year was Sheri Tepper. I read several of her books: *The Gate to Women's Country* (1988) and *Beauty* (1991) being the two that I remember.

“A Knight's Tale: [...] It completely misrepresents the medieval period..”

Which movies don't misrepresent the medieval period?

SWEDISH WORDS IN ENGLISH 1

A section in *Brandy Hall* devoted to words that have entered the English language from Swedish. (I ignore words which are now obsolete.) I provide the original meaning of the word, a shortened etymology of the word, the first recorded use of the word, and a more recent example of its use. This information comes from the Oxford English Dictionary.

Osmund (1295-) A type of high-quality iron formerly produced in the Baltic region from bog iron ore, imported in very small bars or rods, and used for the manufacture of arrowheads, fish hooks, etc., and for hardening the edges of tools and weapons. Also osmund iron. Hence more widely: any iron produced from bog iron ore.

Etymology. Perhaps of multiple origins. Partly a borrowing from Swedish. Perhaps partly a borrowing from Middle Low German. Perhaps partly a borrowing from Dutch.

Etymons: Swedish *osmunder*; Middle Low German *ōsemunt*; Dutch *ōsemont*.

1295 In..viii. garbis ferri quod dicitur Osemund.

in Antiquaries Journal (1927) vol. 7 428 (Middle English Dictionary)

1995 The Prussian staple supplied hemp, flax, yarn, and Swedish bog iron called osmund.

J. D. Fudge, Cargoes, Embargoes, & Emissaries 30

Skip (after 1300-) To raise oneself off the ground by a light and graceful movement; to spring or leap lightly and easily, spec. in the exercise of skipping with a rope.

Etymology. Probably a borrowing from early Scandinavian.

apparently related to Middle Swedish skuppa, skoppa in the same sense (compare also scope v1), but the history of the vowel is not clear.

After 1300 For to skip and for to rin, Quen it war better for to blin.

Cursor Mundi 23569

1877 He skips, and screams, and grins like an ubiquitous goblin.

A. B. Edwards, Thousand Miles up Nile x. 259

Rock (after 1325) A distaff. Occasionally also: a spindle. Now archaic and historical.

to have tow on one's rock: see two n.1 2b.

Etymology. Perhaps originally spec. the distaff forming part of the spinning wheel (introduced into England during the 14th century), but subsequently sometimes denoting the forked stick used in the earlier method of hand spinning.

Of uncertain origin. Perhaps a word inherited from Germanic. Perhaps a borrowing from Dutch. Perhaps a borrowing from Middle Low German. Perhaps a borrowing from German. Perhaps a borrowing from Icelandic. Perhaps a borrowing from Norwegian. Perhaps a borrowing from Swedish. Perhaps a borrowing from Danish.

Etymons: Dutch rocke; Middle Low German rocke; German roc; Icelandic rokkr; Norwegian rokk; Swedish rokker; Danish rooc.

After 1325 (?After 1300) Wit my roc y me fede; Cani do non oyir dede.

in G. H. McKnight, Middle English Humorous Tales (1913) 23 (Middle English Dictionary)

2003 The yarns, spun by either the 'rock' or the 'wheel', were..strong and tightly twisted.

J. H. Munro in D. Jenkins, Cambridge History of Western Textiles vol. I. 184

Clint (After 1300. Chiefly Scottish. Obsolete exc. Dialect.)

a1400–

A hard or flinty rock; a hard rock projecting on the side of a hill or river, or in the bed of a stream; a part of a crag standing out between crevices or fissures. Used locally, and in Geology, to designate: (a) a crack or slit in rock, a grike; (b) esp. A hard bare eroded rock-surface, spec. one developed in limestone regions in the North West Pennines in Britain.

Etymology Of multiple origins. Partly a borrowing from Danish. Partly a borrowing from Swedish.

Etymons: Danish klint, Swedish klint.

After1400 (*after*1325)

Pir caitif Iuus, Sent in to clinttes and in to clous To seke iesu.

Cursor Mundi (Vespasian MS.) l. 17590

1963

Clint, a bare, level surface developed on horizontal beds of limestone. The vertical fissures formed by solution along the joints are termed *grikes*.

D. W. Humphries & E. E. Humphries, translation of H. Termier & G. Termier Erosion & Sedimentation 402

Bail (1447-) A hoop or ring; a half-hoop for supporting the cover of a wagon or cradle, the tilt of a boat. Etc.

Etymology. Probably a borrowing from early Scandinavian.

Etymons: Norse beygla, Danish böile, Swedish bögel.

1447 My right hand arayid..Wyth a precyous beyl of gold hath he.

O. Bokenham, Lyvys of Seyntys 120

1884 A capital large rick cloth, with bail.

West Sussex Gazette 25 September 2/10

Brownian Motion #5

For N'APA 267

To Jefferson P. Swycaffer - abontides@gmail.com

Blah Blah

On original ideas:

Recently I was corresponding with Andrew Murdoch, another fan in Greater Vancouver, and I found myself saying,

“I would have liked to live in a community of active, unconventional, even creative minds - actually comprised of actual readers with actual educations and actual language skills. Isn't that allowed?”

“Apparently not. Instead of original science fiction or fantasy we have, apparently, an increasing flood of sliced processed standard imitation near-SFFH products. Rather than fans interested in learning how the technical stuff works, or following out the consequences of new innovations, we have a lot more visual arts graduates in the film and TV industries fascinated with superficial special effects, presenting just the appearance of technical and producing thinly-disguised fantasies on screen. But this is a twice-told tale.”

Obviously I'm showing my age, and my failure to keep up with change. But I think I am not wrong to be unenthused with the changes.

Where is the reasoned imagination and speculation in current SF? In novels and stories, apparently, and not on screen. Where are the majority of contemporary fans, and what sets the definition of contemporary SF? On-screen entertainment, apparently.

Mailing Comments

Front Cover: Internet Public Domain Art

That's a great dragon figure. Is it guarding a library somewhere?

Intermission 135, by Ahrvid Engholm

It's curious that Ralph Lundsten revealed a self-promoting streak in his character on the "Summer" show. We have had a few characters in Canadian fandom, or prodom, who were also mainly interested in self-promotion.

It's also curious that you found Finncon, and Eurocon (at least when it was in Uppsala), to be rather sercon and bureaucratic. I tend to think of sercon fandom as a phase that dated back to the 1930s and 1940s, at least in North American fandom, before fannish fandom appeared. I suppose it's all a matter of what people are first exposed to when they encounter the subculture.

The curious thing I noticed about Corflu in 2022 was that almost all of us who attended were grey- or white-haired.

You started out your mailing comments with an enthusiastic paragraph saying "I want to promote the fanzine world! ... Fanzines should lead fandom, underpinning [that] it's about text, writing, literature!" Beware the use of "should" or "ought", especially if you use it yourself. We might better say that fanzines *used* to lead fandom, or at least provide the main channel of communication. Now, there are multiple channels of communication ... and fanzines, even in electronic form, seem to have become a backwater. But I said something like this before.

Re your comments to Henry Grynsten: I won't go into detail at this point, but I begin to suspect Henry had a very different exposure to the sciences, and to philosophy, and to history and anthropology, than you or I have had. Consequently we're inclined to argue past each other, starting from quite different definitions and referring to different subjects under the same names.

Re your initial comment to me: interestingly, my observations of local fandom – admittedly, a few decades ago – was that it wasn't organized *enough*. It was as if everyone was still, in their mid-twenties or mid-thirties, emotionally reacting against an abusively rule-bound experience of high school in their teenage years, and abhorred anything that looked and sounded like bureaucracy or structure, or forethought, or budgeting, or just thinking about what they were doing. Just my opinion, of course.

Re your later comments to me: I encourage you to look up Sweden's and the EU's patent, trademark and copyright office websites. What terms do they use in Swedish, as opposed to English? I begin to suspect you are starting from quite different definitions and referring to different things under the terms "intellectual" and "property".

For that matter I have a very different evaluation than you have of diversity and representation in creative circles, or literary circles, or SF publishing and awards. So far from punishing the usual white straight male population of writers, I am given to understand that there is a movement for representation of creatives who aren't male, or white, or straight. I am given to understand

this is a legitimate movement, in that straight white males always get the lion's share of publication and recognition. But again, we are starting from different definitions and points of reference.

Archive Midwinter, by Jefferson P. Swycaffer

Thank you for your remarks about my learning experiences. They would be a lot less unpleasant but for the distinct air of humiliation about them ... or the strong implication that I was another victim of Dunning-Kruger syndrome, never as smart or capable as I thought I would be. (I got entirely too much deprecation and contempt from my family in my formative years, contrasting with good grades and people *outside* of the family reacting as if I was brilliant.)

Don DeBrandt, who wrote the fanarticle about cider, would be glad to hear his piece took you in at first.

I'm also glad to hear that San Diego concommittees have members with dual or triple involvements.

Re your comment to Heath Row: there's an interesting parallel between the short-lived Star Trek Association for Revival surviving for decades in a health STAR San Diego branch, and a short-lived Canadian SF Association of the 1940s and 50s surviving for some years in the Winnipeg SF Association, and finally in the person of Chester Cuthbert. When some young men took up fan publishing in Winnipeg, they came into contact with Mr. Cuthbert, attended meetings at his place, and thus created fabulous 1970s Winnipeg fandom – at least, fabulous in the sense that people were entertained by zine such as *Laid* (Garth Danielson), *Schmag* (Steve George) and others. When Mr. Cuthbert passed on, his extensive SF collection was curated by Randy Reichardt for a western university; at least, he gave the collection some indexing numbers.

Re your comments to Kevin Trainor: I also enjoyed Jack Vance's Lyonesse novels more than his other works, realizing that he was indulging in a variation on English that not everyone enjoys. (We have a Canadian author who emulates his style, one Matthew Hughes; worth looking up his works.) I didn't know there were more than two Lyonesse novels, though.

Intermission 136, by Ahroid Engholm

Can you explain to me why Russia's oligarchy, and Mr. Putin in particular, are still pursuing a war and still holding on to power? I keep expecting what passes for a Russian government to fall.

Can you explain Rasmus Paludan to me, or anyone who is burning Qurans? I don't grasp why anyone would have the motivation. Is there some economic

problem in Sweden with immigrants, specifically Muslim immigrants, that I hadn't heard about?

Re Hugo Gernsback ... okay, I'm going to admit it. Increasingly I feel Gernsback was another example of Dunning-Kruger syndrome, a man who wasn't very bright but imagined he was a genius, so he went ahead and acted as he thought a genius would act. Maybe that's a worthwhile exercise, if it stretches someone and forces them to do some research and learn something; but it may just as easily lead someone to invent pseudosciences and pseudopsychology and, well, look where L. Ron Hubbard ended up.

Re celebrities, whether royal, cinematic, or whatever ... I was well aware that aristocrats were the first celebrities. I happened upon a book documenting the rise of 17th-century gossip magazines, which evolved into the earliest newspapers; their subjects were often aristocrats. Not sure whether modern gossip magazines are more an expression of many people daydreaming of a larger life, or an expression of envy and spite.

Synergy 47 September 2023, by John Thiel

Synergy: "the extra energy, power, success, etc. that is achieved by two or more people, companies or elements working together, instead of on their own."

From Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary online

Syzygy: "the nearly straight-line configuration of three celestial bodies (such as the sun, moon, and earth during a solar or lunar eclipse) in a gravitational system."

From Merriam Webster Dictionary online

Daco florets: (I could not find a definition online)

I'm sorry, John, I don't understand these terms the way you do.

But I well understand the idea of "the malady of our times," existential anguish, and living in quiet desperation. Humans were not cut out for our post-industrial high-density urban lifestyle. We are, therefore, under pressure to adapt. For my part I have been feeling a lot better since I started withdrawing from contemporary life and being as hermitic as I can be, in a large city. Of course, it means living in reduced circumstances, but I have survived so far this way.

Re your comments to me: What brought *this* on? Conceivably, the path to self-actualization is learning *by practicing* how to be a more functional, empathetic, neighbourly human, and all that there good stuff. I suspect we're using the same words but with different meanings. It isn't like an education spent in

closed rooms always preparing, and then you're let out to actually use what you learn. (Which was the fallacy my grade-school education was based on.)

About what happens when fans metamorphose into their adult form – funny, old Hugo thoughts fans would grow up to be scientists; that was the Gernsback Fallacy. I was introduced to Vancouver fandom by a motherly lady who believed fans would grow up to be writers; this appears now to be another fallacy. Perhaps the contemporary fallacy is that fans will grow up to be professional artists, cosplayers, bloggers, game designers, or other entrepreneurs.

I think growing up is overrated.

Re your comments to *Intermission*: I still wonder why people anticipate artificial intelligence, and why people think an artificial intelligence is even *interested* in affecting human lives, either benevolently or malevolently?

Ye Murthered Master Mage 266, by George Phillies

Thank you for your good wishes on my withdrawal from arranging conrunners' meetups.

Brandy Hall Issue 2 September 2023, by Mark Nelson

Well, gosh! I'm flattered that you're emulating me with this issue.

Little wonder if your first exposure to fan fiction left you unimpressed. "Faanfiction," to use the specific term, was admittedly an extended in-joke, a case of casting your friends and corresponds into a fictional setting; I've seen it done well, and I've seen it done badly, and I've tried writing it myself. (I still have fragments of an epic based on a real disaster-convention, satirized as an adventure involving the other worlds that some softheaded people *really* live in; but perhaps the joke is stretched too far and it snaps.)

Your early conversations with the Glovers doesn't surprise me. It took a while, but I began to see fandom as Steve Glover gave you to understand – an unstructured realm of several subcultures – *and therefore* a realm of conflicting assumptions. For one thing, it was normal in fanzine fandom *both* to offer fanzines for trade or contribution, *and* for a nominal sum. But there was no reason why anyone outside the same channels of communication (e.g., Star Trek fans) would know or care about that norm. Equally, by the time I came across fanzines in the early 1980s, it was normal for fanzines to focus on personal journalism, opinion/editorial pieces about fandom more than mundania, and observation of fandom itself, rather than of science fiction. What I generally noticed was the same more or less humorous, satirical, ironic take on reality, as if it were itself a broadcast entertainment and not to be

taken seriously. This, I came to believe, was Fannish. But there was no reason why anyone outside that milieu would buy into that worldview.

I see that you were using a typewriter in 1990/91, and not a personal computer. That says something, either about your means as a graduate student, or about the availability of personal computers, or about their availability and cost in your region. At that time I think I was already starting to use an obsolete personal computer for fanwriting and fanpubbing, but not yet sending and receiving them online. Our experience in my part of North America was that desktop publishing and quick-copy centres were available, both in terms of cost and in terms of available computer systems. But the costs of postage and printing/copying would soon rise beyond reason.

Re your comments to me:

I see you have cider lore at your fingertips. Indeed is all knowledge contained in fanzines. And APAs. And websites. And so on.

Snow Poster Township #12, by Heath Row

Re your comments to me: you're quite right, it's past time that we broke down the barriers between fandoms – as witness Mark Nelson's history of RPG fanzines – but even more important to bridge the generations.

How do we overcome mutual disinterest, not to say contempt, between generations?

I don't know how. But then I'm a glass-half-empty kind of person.

Esmeralda County Line #5 July-August 2023

I wish the best of health to you and yours, from now on!

Re your comments to me:

The remnants of the West Coast Science Fiction Association – the overseeing body for VCON, Vancouver's longest-running convention (dormant since the pandemic started) – may be getting their act together. I await developments.

Being organized ... see my comments to Ahrvid Engholm (*Intermission* #135).

Re the cider article ... yes, I thought that DeBrandt was very much in the fannish spirit.

Re Esperanto ... yes, I gather that several language creators, not just Zamenhof, imagined that using a lingua franca would overcome people's antipathies. Another fallacy, under the category of missing the bullseye.

If Convergence succeeded Minicon as a gathering of the fannish clans, and one of the concom asked you what anime fans were like, evidently the gathering was not working as well as it could. My own reaction in your place would be less terror than a sour recognition of the divide. But I have lived my whole life struggling with such failures of awareness and communication. I kid you not.

In connection with which, you may expand on the subject of Geek Social Fallacies to me. I don't think there is enough awareness of social fallacies, and I would like to incorporate this into my website, or at least find a link to a list.

Reyct *Synergy*: it occurred to me one day to wonder if Frank Herbert's *Dune* was an allegory of the rise of the House of Sa'ud in Arabia? Not that I have very strong evidence for it.

Samizdat... Ish #21, Se7/Oct 2023, by Samuel Lubell

I read and enjoyed your whole zine, and yet ... I have no comments. Strange.

Maybe I should induct you into one of my nonexistent clubs, like the Royal Swiss Navy, or the Liberal Secular Rational Humanist Cult, or the Anarcho-Surrealist Party, and we can plot against the Belgian Global Elite Illuminati and the worldwide underground Cult of Kali. Or something.



Snow Poster Township #13

Nov. 16, 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

Even though not many people participated in the N3F Tape and Video bureaus' online screenings and listening events, "Heath Row's productions"—presumably the bureaus' activities, because I don't actually produce anything—were nominated for Best Television Show, Film, or Video in this year's Laureate Awards.

Despite going up against *The Mandalorian*, whose third season streamed this year, and *Avenue 5*, which streamed in 2020 and 2022, the bureaus' screenings and listening events won! I am seriously honored. I enjoyed *The Mandalorian* very much, and even though Cathode Ray wrote about *Avenue 5* in late 2022, I haven't watched it yet—it looks awesome. Now, if only more people had chosen to participate in the bureaus' events when they were occurring!

I learned about receiving the award by way of a wonderfully printed certificate that arrived in the mail, and since then, another Laureate winner reached out to me to share in the experience. I was definitely not expecting this recognition, and I am flattered and pleased.

So I feel like a cad that I missed the deadline for the most recent *Fanactivity Gazette*. I hope Mindy Hunt publishes my late submission for November in December's issue, but I'll also include it here to take advantage of some increased timeliness. Much of November remains.

Hear No Evil, See No Evil

Did anyone listen to or watch the recommendations offered last month? If so, email Heath at kalel@well.com or message him on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/h3athrow>) with your thoughts, comments, and other discussion—and we'll publish the best commentary in this bureau's report! Let us know what you think about each month's recommendations. We even welcome recommendations and requests.

For the month of November 2023, we recommend the following:

First Fridays: Shorts

This month's short film recommendation is the 1964 fan film *Castle of Terrors* produced by the Delta Science Fiction Film Group in England. Runtime: 20 minutes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFonwW3M5M4>

Second Saturdays: Feature Films

November's movie selection is the 1957 *Attack of the Crab Monsters*, an inexpensive but fun Roger Corman film. Runtime: One hour. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMWDTVNDiVg>

Third Thursdays: Old-Time Radio

We suggest two episodes of *Dimension X* this month.

"Universe" (Nov. 26, 1950)

<https://youtu.be/zT00TyxIKWo>

Based on the short story by Robert A. Heinlein in the May 1941 *Astounding*—seek it out and read it afterward to compare!

"Untitled Story" (Aug. 23, 1951)

https://youtu.be/hfrpnAjpZ_o

Based on the short story by Frank M. Robinson in the September 1951 *Astounding*—seek it out and read it afterward to compare!

If a URL doesn't seem to work, email or message Heath, and he'll seek a replacement. The Web is a fickle place.

In any event, we'll see if Neffers send in comments and thoughts, or requests. No one's said anything about the October recommendations, so we shall see!

astounded with its muted color palette and suitability for *World War 3 Illustrated*. Enrique Ventura offered two page-long “Grouñidos en el Desierto” strips featuring a Groucho Marx-like character who, in one instance, encounters God. I will seek out more Eneko and Ventura, for sure.

But the real magazine news this is the French relaunch of *Metal Hurlant* magazine (<https://www.humano.com/metal-hurlant>), which I’ve heard absolutely... nothing... about... in the United States—perhaps because of the current *Heavy Metal* magazine (<https://www.heavymetal.com>), which seems to have recently gone through a change in ownership and brief lapse in publication after going monthly not long ago. (More recent news—<https://tinyurl.com/DeathOfHM>—suggests that the magazine might now be defunct.) Not even the domestic Humanoids (<https://www.humanoids.com>) seems connected to the relaunch in Europe.

In any event, *Metal Hurlant* has resumed publication in France and has published eight issues since September 2021. Eight issues! A ninth issue is expected by the end of November. The French relaunch is much more in the spirit of the original *Metal Hurlant*—and the original *Heavy Metal*—than the current *Heavy Metal* has been (though Grant Morrison’s stint as editor was excellent). Each quarterly issue is about 250 pages, and you can order single issues or subscribe. I have yet to see any information about receiving it stateside.

I ordered the most recent issue for delivery from France in Portugal and cannot wait to see it. *Metal Hurlant* relaunching—two years ago—should be bigger news than it has been. Crickets!

Comments on N’APA #266

In the Official Organ, our Official Collator, George Phillis, asked: Do we want to include participation from “Public Members” of N3F, members who are not paying dues? That is an interesting question, and it makes me wonder—are all of us currently participating actually dues-paying members of the N3F? If so, our membership has grown to include some people I wouldn’t have expected to join! (Or at least, I was unaware that many of you lot had joined.)

In the past, I was all for keeping member activities and benefits to members. As it stands, I don’t think being a dues-paying member has much meaning or value for members—because most of our benefits and services are extended to everyone—and I’m concerned about what that might mean for the ongoing financial stability of the organization. Rather than concentrating on figuring out what benefits and

services will meet the needs of members—and recruiting members based on those benefits and services—or focusing on the purpose of the N3F, we seem to regularly broaden who can gain access to member benefits... weakening the meaning of membership and decreasing the motivation toward paid membership.

But do I really care about such exclusivity or inclusion any more? I’m not sure I do. Regardless, in the case of N’APA, I’m not sure it matters. We currently have—based on the most recent edition—nine active participants. That mailing is more than 100 pages. It doesn’t seem to me that we have a membership or activity problem currently in N’APA—especially if we’re all members of the N3F already. Personally, our page count growing that much greater will make participating more challenging... I’m not sure we need to aim for the size of ANZAPA. So I don’t think N’APA has a problem to solve.

Would involving public members in N’APA lead to more paid memberships—the goal I think the N3F should be focusing on rather than increasing unpaid membership, which is largely meaningless—or involvement in other N3F activities otherwise? Would involving public members in N’APA help us clarify the club’s purpose? What goals would including public members in N’APA serve?

I remarked on **Ahrvid Engholm’s** *Intermission* #135 in *The Explosion Containment Umbrella* #12 for eAPA, reprinted here: “Engholm’s *Intermission* #135 invoked the Swedish idea of jantelagen, which I was introduced to by a Swedish friend while working as a young journalist in the early 1990s. We often talked about how the idea that no one should ever try to be special might very well quell the entrepreneurial spirit in his home country and was very much the opposite of American sensibilities. Do you think jantelagen has softened any in the last few decades? Thank you very much for your memorial to Ralph Lundsten, who deserves exploration!

“Similarly, your remarks on *Breaking Point* make me want to see the movie, if not just for Lundsten’s music. Apparently the negative has been located, and there was some online gossip of a possible Vinegar Syndrome release, perhaps with Bo Arne Vibenius’ *Thriller*, even if an easter egg. I’ll have to look further. I was unaware that Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson of Abba also composed music for softcore movies. I just recently started using Tor and will see if I can locate it.

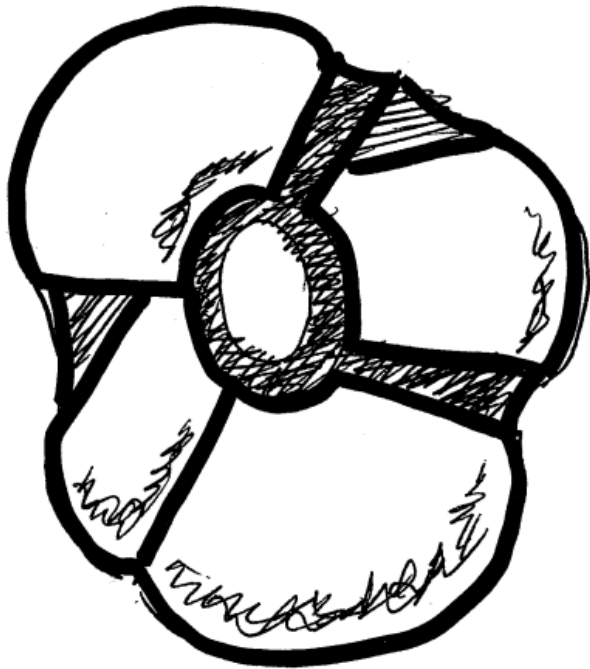
“Like your Eurocon report mentioned above, I also appreciated your Finncon report. As a member of the cons you participate in—rather than an attendee—

perhaps you could bring some more of the fannishness you seek.

“Your commentary on Hugo Gernsback’s *Sexology* reminded me that many of the early publishers of sf magazines (or books) were magazine... publishing... people first—and sf people second, if at all. We can see that in Pulp Trader’s (<http://www.philsp.com/pulptrader>) list of titles published by Curtis Books in England. First active in 1947, sf doesn’t come into play until 1950. In 1954, Curtis switched to other fare, petering out after 1955.

“While we celebrate Gernsback’s sf contributions, maybe—and I’m only half serious—he was just a savvy publisher, catering to the tastes of the reading public.

“I really did tell the Swedish American Institute’s new leader about you and your knowledge of Swedish sf. Whether she’ll reach out to you—or when—I don’t know.”



OBJECT OF WORSHIP - WR

—William Rotsler

In *Archive Midwinter* dated Aug. 28, 2023, **Jefferson P. Swycaffer** commented on having been able to participate in *Alarums & Excursions*. That apa is still active, publishing monthly, and if you have a hand or interest in roleplaying games, we’d welcome you. I currently participate, and you can read my contributions in my monthly bundlezine *The Sff Amateur* even if you don’t participate in A&E.

Inspired by your remarks, I’m currently listening to “Pervertimento For Bagpipes, Bicycle And Balloons, S. 66,” from the P.D.Q. Bach album *An Hysterical Return*, recorded live with Professor Peter Schickele. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjqW3ec5_Nk) It reminds me of Dr. Demento, the Firesign Theatre, and Spike Jones, all of which are wonderful. (And the later “Oratorio - ‘The Seasonings,’ S. 1/2 Tsp.” is, oh, so very good.) I appreciated your information about the recent activities of S.T.A.R. San Diego. Did you go to the reunion?

You might be onto something here. I think the difference between believability in fiction and being able to suspend disbelief might be meaningful. Is it that we believe that allows us to suspend our disbelief? Or is belief—or opportunity to believe—unnecessary to suspend one’s disbelief? I’ll need to think about that a little more.

I commented on **Ahrvid Engholm’s** *Intermission* #136 in *The Explosion Containment Umbrella* #13 for eAPA, reprinted here: “Engholm’s *Intermission* #136 opened with an energetic analysis of the Russo-Ukrainian War. Will Vladimir Putin fall prey to the sunk-cost fallacy? He might be stubborn and maniacal enough to do so. May the Kremlin never obtain the desired copies of your fanzine!

“Your comments on being against burning books while also being against banning the burning of books intrigued me. What do you think about flag burning? What do you think about book burning in which the book burned is a proxy for a hated minority or other? How thick is the line between burning the Quran and a hate crime against Muslims?

“My distaste for burning books is similar to my distaste for throwing away books. Both seek to minimize knowledge and access to knowledge. Or at least devalue knowledge. Because most book burning is done by people who want to obliterate a way of thinking or living, it seems to me that book burning opposes freedom of expression rather than asserts freedom of expression. Freedom expression for me, not thee. None of my response addresses whether banning book burning is acceptable, but your comments were thought provoking.

“Thank you for reprinting Hugo Gernsback’s “How to Write ‘Science’ Stories.” I wonder how it’d compare to a similar piece written by the current editor of *Analog*, *Asimov’s*, *Clarkesworld*, or *Interzone*. I can imagine an anthology of stories written following this guidance—it’d be wonderful.

“I was unaware of the tragic death of Gernsback’s daughter. I’m curious whether anyone has written a story about that—surely Gernsback might have tried to go back in time to avoid the tragedy. I’m somewhat

surprised there isn't yet a definitive biography of Gernsback. We have Michael A. Banks's 20-page ebook *Hugo Gernsback: The Man Who Invented the Future*, Tim Black's 14-page ebook *Hugo Gernsback: An Amazing Story*, Larry Steckler's "un-attributed autobiography" *Hugo Gernsback: A Man Well Ahead of His Time*, and Gary Westfahl's more widely ranging *Hugo Gernsback and the Century of Science Fiction*. Are you aware of any good biographies? I appreciated reading about his work in multiple communications media. This is an issue to return to.

"Your remark to Garth Spencer about television viewing rooms resonated with me. Before TVs were a device found in many homes, people watched TV together in public: store window displays, bars, friends' homes, and other locations. Now communal TV viewing is mostly limited to catastrophes and disasters, and I wonder what collective TV viewing was like—compared to the individual or family-oriented experience today. When *Game of Thrones* was on, my wife and I would go next door to watch it with our neighbors as a social occasion. I watch a movie weekly with a friend in my home. Those experiences might be close but aren't entirely similar."

In *Brownian Motion* #4, **Garth Spencer** announced the then-pending relaunch and revivification of *Rune*, associated with the Minnesota Science Fiction Society. With the deadline of Oct. 1 now being well past, has the issue been released yet? I look forward to seeing the new edition. Your list of upcoming Canadian conventions was well worth compiling—and might be welcomed by Mindy Hunt as fodder for her con calendar in *Fanactivity Gazette*.

Is this your Canadian Unity Fan Fund report, right here in the pages of N'APA? This sentence gave me no end of delight: "Amusingly, they had no record of my membership, and had to write me into the records on the spot—#1000, as it happened. . . ." This happens all the world over. A new friend in Portugal told me a story about how he'd helped organize a con in Europe, even securing pro guests of honor, and when he arrived at the con, no hotel room had been arranged for him. You, CUFF delegate, were not alone and continue a time-honored fan tradition, bearing the brunt of the neglecting of details important enough that they could very well lead to insulting or offending someone. I'm glad the gaffe was resolved easily and readily. But, welcome to Pemmi-Con, honored guest, indeed!

"A fanzine table (empty)"? Oh, foo. What was supposed to be there, I wonder? Because I'm currently in Portugal, I won't be able to help staff the Fanzine Corner at the upcoming Loscon over Thanksgiving

weekend, but I'm confident that John Hertz and Krystal Rains will do a wonderful job—and I look forward to seeing the *Losconzine* they plan to publish after the con! I bet Pemmi-Con could've published one heck of a conzine. And Worldcon has its WOOF.

I read but tried not to engage with the Del Valdron/SF Canada drama. Regardless, thank you for sharing it for those who were interested in learning more about what you'd written about previously. "An immense amount of fanactivity goes on without any fanzines being involved." 'Struth! Fanzines are just one form of fanac. So are clubs. And cons. All are examples of what could be considered organized fandom. Whither disorganized fandom?

Here in Portugal, there are currently reportedly... no fanzines. Not one. As I write or type these very words in a house in Taide, outside Povoia de Lanhoso, I might be the only active faned in the entire country. That strikes me as odd, but there is still fanac galore. There are plenty of fan. There's an animation festival this week and weekend. There's an alternate history conference next week. There are Facebook groups. And Sic Radical just started airing *Space: 1999*, which I can watch subtitled in Portuguese.

Dawn of the Living Socks? I do believe you just recommended one of the next Video Bureau suggestions if they continue into 2024. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krr-Jt18Fyw>) I look forward to watching it!

John Thiel's *Synergy* #47 gets a little—and delightfully—new age-y and woo-woo: "It is my aim to bring about Group Wholeness through the medium of discussing the art and science of synergy, individually practiced as Syzygy, and to energize the apa with Solar Therm." Right on! This Californian approves of your postmillennial scientific wellness cult. I encourage more along those lines.

I disagree with your contention that "Mystics don't say anything much that adds up." Even if a piece of mystical writing only serves as a disruptive force momentarily jarring or interrupting my usual thought process, perhaps causing my line of thinking to veer slightly or get out of its well-worn track of complacently briefly, I value its impact. I occasionally read poetry, spiritual writing, kook theory, and other forms of literature from the edges in order to seek this effect—a brief interruption of my usual thought processes. One can even read material they vehemently disagree with—to your question "Should we not coexist with those who are opposite to us?"—in order to reconsider their current beliefs. Even if the end result is the mere reaffirmation of previous beliefs, the exercise still had merit.

Thank you for the reminder of the opportunity to

review fanzines for the N3F. I'll give it some thought. I'm relatively overextended these days and recently declined a nomination to serve on the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society's board of directors in order to be able to continue to meet my commitments. Most weeks bring at least one deadline, if not two or three. Right now, I'm loath to seek more.

You suggest that "Scientology got into fandom by way of the Cult, via Ray Schaffer and Jack Harness." I'd like to learn more about this. L. Ron Hubbard was a member of the LASFS. There's a Mesmer Avenue in Culver City. Kudos on making your apazine a genzine rather than a perzine... after a fashion. Ain't nothing wrong with perzines, mister. But a genzine apazine!

In *Ye Murthered Master Mage* #266, **George Phillis** announced the Laureate Award results. As mentioned above, I am deeply honored to have been so recognized. What a delightful surprise it was to receive the certificate in the mail. Your remarks on roleplaying game apae, fanzines, and related topics were much appreciated.

Mark Nelson's *Brandy Hall* #2 continued exploring his fannish bona fides, moving on to sf fandom more explicitly. Does the Leeds University Union Science Fiction Society still exist? As editor of *De Profundis* for the LASFS, I exchange clubzines with a number of college clubs and would love to learn more. Poking around a little, the club does still exist, under the same name! Refer to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Luuscifiandfantasy> and <https://engage.luu.org.uk/groups/6M6/sci-fi-and-fantasy>, and they even utilize Discord. (That is not an uncommon combination among university groups: Facebook or Instagram plus Discord as their primary modes of communication.) The question is: Do they still publish *Black Hole*? This faned needs to know!

I found your evolution from member to meeting-going member to reader of fanzines an interesting developmental progression. What got you over the hump to go to a meeting? What led you to go to your first con? This is an issue I shall return to—it contains multiple references worth exploring.

Haruki Murakami's short stories are glorious. *The Elephant Vanishes* is well worth checking out if you haven't already. *Resident Alien* (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #49, 50, and 52) is great fun. Keep watching.

In *Esmeralda County Line* #5, **Kevin Trainor Jr.** informed apans of a bout of cellulitis. I hope you've healed fully and easily, Mr. Trainor. Change those bandages as needed! "SF fandom sometimes forgets there are other fandoms who publish zines, have conventions, etc., though with the younger generation (the fans who grew up with social media) this seems to be less of a problem." This is interesting...

multifandom or pan-fandom—perhaps what I've been calling One Big Fandom—encouraged by online communication... but primarily among the young. They might not even consider what they're doing fandom or fanac! Do they even know they're fen?

The Science Fiction Research Association still exists at <https://sfra.org>. I joined in mid-September but haven't really gotten the lay of the land yet.. David Schroth recently informed me that the Timebinders mailing list will soon dissolve entirely. "The list is going to lose its host in the near future," he wrote to me in September. "There are no plans that I am aware of to host the list elsewhere."

"You don't have to like the people you're working with, but you do have to be polite and give respect when it's earned." Hear! Hear! I had been unaware of the Five Geek Social Fallacies. (https://fanlore.org/wiki/Five_Geek_Social_Fallacies) The Walter Breen (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #4) reference makes me think I should learn more.

The New England Science Fiction Association does have a library, but it's not at MIT—it's at the NESFA clubhouse. The MIT Science Fiction Society remains active and continues to claim the "world's largest public open-shelf collection of science fiction." Of the two, NESFA is more active, at least in terms of interacting with other clubs and faneds. I used to participate in an MIT anime club—i.e., go to screenings of fansubbed anime—but don't remember what the group was called.

As a supporting member of Son of Silvercon, I was pleasantly surprised to receive a handwritten note not too long ago, and I think a sticker, from an artist supporting the effort. It was a nice piece of mail to receive. And a real touch of class.

Sam Lubell's *Samizdat* #21 posed the questions "How does one find out about these media programs in advance? Is the schedule posted somewhere?" Programming was published in advance in *Fanactivity Gazette*, as well as on Facebook by way of a schedule flier. Even though we're no longer hosting real-time shared sessions, I continue to recommend viewing and listening options in *Fanactivity Gazette*. I would have welcomed your participation! We did eight months of low-turnout events before changing the approach. I appreciate your openness to a reading discussion group of some kind!

I appreciated your author spotlight on Sheri S. Tepper, a writer with whom I'm unacquainted. Thank you for continuing to publish your undergraduate thesis. I'll definitely return to it in the future. I really enjoyed *The Secret World of Arrietty* and *Pan's Labyrinth*. As always, I love your project updates! Pittsburgh is a wonderful city.



Esmeralda County Line #6
September-October 2023
A zine for N^oAPA 267

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Introductory Natter

Well, this has been a wild couple of months, no doubt about it. Most of it, of course, has been spent on getting ready for Son of Silvercon, doing Son of Silvercon, and recovering from Son of Silvercon (about which more anon), but I have spent some time and energy on baseball – both the Dynasty League simulation league I'm involved in, where my Senators are doing well for once, and major league baseball, where I took some time to tease Texas Rangers fans that if they'd taken an expansion team instead of stealing the Washington Senators of my youth, they would have had that world championship sooner. Heh.

Back in September I noted in my ~~LiveJournal~~ Dreamwidth that since I'd finished onboarding with H&R Block, it was about time I started grinding on my continuing education. Did I? Like hell I did. Here we are in November, with the deadline on the 28th looming, and I have finished precisely one credit of the eighteen I need to have finished. Also, I managed to lose my wallet the day after registering with Block Academy to do my CE, so now I'm dealing with the headache of replacing all the credit cards, debit cards, and ID cards that were in it. I'm sure it's somewhere in the apartment, but after thoroughly searching my rooms (and throwing out a lot of trash in the process) I'm damned if I know where it could be hiding. No doubt Murphy will reveal it to me as soon as the replacement cards arrive and I've spent money on replacing my driver's license, because that's the kind of bastard he is.

Leg wounds are continuing to improve; the wound care doc was pretty happy when I saw her in September and October, and I expect she'll be happy when I go down to see her the day before Thanksgiving. Unlike previous years, I am not going to blow most of a C-note on the dinner package from the local grocery,

because for one thing, I am going to be on the road for most of the day, and for another, there are way too many leftovers. Good heavens, I still have odd bits of stuff in the fridge left over from last year's holidays. So I think I'll linger in Las Vegas and do Thanksgiving there, maybe at Main Street Station in the next block north of the Plaza, or maybe I'll drive a bit east and hit the Golden Corral. Decisions, decisions.

Comments On N'APA #266

Intermission #135

(natter) I don't have much to say on the war in Ukraine, because it's damned hard to sort out the propaganda from the psyops from the real news. Like a sizable number of people here in *los Estados Unidos*, I find it enraging that the Federal government seems very willing to spend billions on defense for Ukraine, but not one cent on securing the Mexican border. Can't help wondering how many politicians and former generals are going to get caught with their hands in the cookie jar after this is all over. 🍷🍷 Condolences on the death of Mr. Lundsten. As a fan of electronic music, I have probably heard his music over the years, but like many classical composers, I would be hard put to it to remember the names. 🍷🍷 I hadn't heard that LASFS was involved in *Flesh Gordon*. My impression was that a lot of the people who made the film were in Kansas City fandom, particularly Tom Reamy. It's been years, and I could be wrong.

(Finncon) I have mixed feelings about masquerades at SF and anime conventions. On the one hand, they are immensely popular, but on the other hand, they too often devolve into one amateur theatrical skit after another instead of being a series of people showing off their costuming skills. On the gripping hand, speaking from the organizational side of things, you have to be strict with the staff handling the masquerade or they will suck up all the time and space in main programming that they can get away with. 🍷🍷 Probably just coincidence, but Paradox Games just released downloadable content for their WW2 strategy game *Hearts of Iron* which has a bunch of (wacky) focus trees for Finland, Sweden, etc. Finnish World Domination, anyone? (RYCTo Mark) We are going to have to disagree about whether gamers (role-playing or otherwise) belong in fandom. There is considerable overlap between gamers and SF fandom; in fact, back in the 1970s when I was a neofan, I was attracted to wargaming by the SPI ads in *Analog*. Quite a few authors (Jerry Pournelle, Don Hawthorne, and William Keith, to name just a few) have written both SF and articles for wargaming magazines, and of course the library of SF written in various RPG universes (*Battletech*, *Dragonlance*, *et al*) is HUEG LIKE XBOX. 🍷🍷 There's no question that SF fandom—at least the part of it that stages/attends conventions—is very much part of the bourgeoisie. When I was poor, I had better things to do with my money than attend conventions. 🍷🍷 Agree that there's too much dystopian crap being churned out.

(RYCTo Jefferson) Poul Anderson could be pretty funny when he tried. His Hoka stories with Gordy Dickson were hilarious.

(RYCTo me) Agree completely on the subject of quotas and “diversity”.

Archive Midwinter

(RYCTo Garth) Yes, there should be a social safety net, but I would argue that having permanent, tax-supported bureaucracies providing it has left us worse off than when that was the business of churches, fraternal organizations, and the like.

(RYCTo me) Every minute wasted on reading James Joyce is a minute not spent reading Heinlein, Anderson, Asimov, and other Golden Age writers. 🍷🍷 Interestingly enough, I bought the *Lyonesse Trilogy* for my (now ex) wife but never got around to reading them myself. When I read Vance, I tend to prefer the *Demon Princes* and *Planet of Adventure* novels, which is perhaps understandable since my introduction to Vance was by way of his SF Hall of Fame & Hugo-winning stories and [The Brave Free Men](#).

(RYCTo Sam) Dalton's bluff of the Hukk in [The Glory Game](#) actually has precedent in Chinese history, as well as the classic Foreign Legion novel [Beau Geste](#). 🍷🍷 I gave up trying to track all my music in a spreadsheet some time ago. Nowadays I just open Windows Explorer to check the list of files I have in the My Music folder, or look at Winamp.

Intermission #136

(natter) Sea drones are hardly a new concept, any more than cruise missiles are. The sole differences between today's drones and the weapons of the Japanese Empire's Special Attack Corps are that we're using computers or radio-control devices instead of human brains.

(Gernsback) Gernsback's payment habits were directly responsible for the Golden Age of Astounding SF under John W. Campbell. Instead of paying on publication (if then), Campbell paid on acceptance, which made him a much more attractive market for pulp writers. Campbell's introduction of "The Analytical Laboratory" also made it possible for the readers to have an influence on who got paid bonuses for popular stories.

Brownian Motion #4

(Rune) Well, good luck to Jeanne. I was amused to see Stipple-APA, which was originally formed by people on the waitlist to join MinneAPA, outlast the latter, and wish her success in relaunching Rune.

(Canadian conventions) Interesting that most of these conventions seem to be furry cons or media cons of one sort or another. 🍷🍷 Thanks for the con report. 🍷🍷 This business with SF Canada seems unpleasantly common these days in fandom – not just SF fandom, either, as I have seen it in anime and media fandom as well.

(RYCTo Jefferson) If Facebook has become too arbitrary for you, may I suggest MeWe?

(RYCTo me) I suppose you're right and that there are a lot of fans who got abused by jocks in their formative years, but my experience in fandom has led me to believe that a lot of fans look down their nose at sports fans because it's the "in thing".

(RYCTo Sam) Any tools that come to hand are good when it comes to driving the Black Dog away from the door.

Synergy #47

(editorial) Your suggestion for dealing with the *sturm und drang* of the current year reminds me of the Booker T. Washington aphorism "Put down your bucket where you are," by which he meant concentrating on your local community and doing what you could to improve it and by extension, yourself. I personally am a lot calmer and less aggravated now that I am ignoring the news of the world and focusing on what I can do in my little corner of Nye County/N3F/Son of Silvercon. These are the things I can affect, whereas getting all wound around the axle about what's going on in Washington and abroad does me no good and doesn't have the slightest impact on these global affairs.

Ye Murthered Master Mage #266

(RYCTo Mark) I am old enough to remember when D&D was sold as a supplement to Chainmail.

(RYCTo me) If we have stfnal leeches, by all means! We must balance the humours of these wretched people! 🍷🍷 I agree, the Telzey Amberdon stories were not even vaguely engineering porn, yet we have ignorant yutzes running around claiming that everything ASF published had rivets. 🍷🍷 I hadn't heard that about Bova, and wonder what the story behind that was. He certainly had no hesitation about publishing other authors' stories involving psionics. 🍷🍷 I understand your reluctance to travel; even an overnight trip to Las Vegas these days requires a lot of preparation, and the less said about the logistics surrounding annual pilgrimage to the Washington area, the better. You did in fact shell out for an attending membership, which was greatly appreciated. 🍷🍷 People arguing with Larry is an amusing spectator sport. If he were that sort of person, he would have too many notches on his keyboard for it to be useful any more.

(RYCTo Sam) I think it's fortunate that Niven and Pournelle's updating of the Buck Rogers stories (and the new sequels, also published by Ace) came out in the 1980s before political correctness ran amok in the publishing world. I don't think you could get a 21st century Yellow Peril novel published these days, except possibly by Arkhaven.

Brandy Hall #2

Interesting account of how you got involved in SF fandom.

(RYCTo Jefferson) Weird that a “best of” collection of Pohl didn’t include “The Midas Plague”, which is perhaps one of his best-known stories. FWIW, I honestly liked Pohl better as the editor of *Galaxy* and *Worlds of IF* than as an author. 🍷🍷 If you are interested in the Great War (a.k.a. World War I) I recommend Alistair Horne’s *The Price of Glory*, which is mostly about the battle for Verdun, but also provides a good deal of context regarding how France and Germany wound up locked into that abattoir on the Meuse. I cannot recommend it highly enough.

(RYCTo Ahrvid) One of the long-standing problems in convention fandom is that there has always been a shortage of competent panel moderators. 🍷🍷 Codes of conduct certainly have their place, but at least in American fandom, they have too often been used to browbeat Wrongthinkers. 🍷🍷 I can’t speak to SCIS: Space Force, but there was a one-shot parody comic, *Trump’s Space Force*, in which the former President battled aliens alongside the men and women of the Space Force. 🍷🍷 I’d be very surprised to see Mandarin replace English as the Common Tongue of aviation, science, etc., since Mandarin is even harder to learn than English, what with its tonal variations in word meaning and its ideographs.

(RYCTo Garth) Regarding cider and small beer, modern folks are often appalled by the vast quantity of alcoholic beverages consumed by our forebears until you point out to them that the water supply was literally not safe to drink until the late 1800s when chlorination of water supplies became common. 🍷🍷 We need to bring back the practice of every tenth farm operating a cider mill.

(RYCTo Sam) IMAO, the “literary” mainstream of fandom was pretty much in charge until the 1970s, when Trekkies started showing up at conventions, and upon getting the cold shoulder, went off and started their own conventions, zines, and what have you. Media fans in the late 1970s and 80s repeated that experience, but didn’t start their own cons since a lot of the (commercial) Trek cons were more than happy to have them aboard. George is probably more familiar with the history of wargames than I am, but gamers were somewhat tolerated by litfans because a lot of them started out as readers of SF and got into gaming thanks to ads in *Analog* and other SF prozines. Fast-forward to this century: what with media cons, anime cons, and social media, there are a lot of fans who aren’t even aware of the long history of science fiction in book and magazine form because they’ve never been exposed to it. By way of example, during the years I was involved in “Space: Above and Beyond” fandom, we published a list of combat/military SF books, which was very popular among (mostly civilian) fans who had never heard of such books.

(RYCTo me) Having gone through a period where I manfully attempted to read a bunch of “classic” mainstream fiction, (including Joyce) I have come to the conclusion that a lot of it is simply not worth reading. I would much rather read new science fiction or fantasy. 🍷🍷 The funny thing about Star Trek was that I wasn’t allowed to watch TV when it was originally on the air, and it wasn’t until it was in syndication that my mother and I used to sit down and watch it together. 🍷🍷 I would agree that age has brought a certain amount of discernment, if only because it’s simply impossible to keep up with all the SF being published these days, not just by Baen, Orbit, and Tor but also by Amazon, Smashwords, etc. 🍷🍷 I have a complete set of the Elric novels from DAW, with the Michael Whelan covers, but I doubt I’ll be reading them again any time soon ~~if for no other reason than I have no idea which if these boxes they’re hiding in.~~

Snow Poster Township #12

(natter) My, you’ve been busy, and productively so. Thanks for the comics reviews; I think I may try to pick up *Wag Rag* on the strength of the Trudy Sweet recommendation; I’m a big fan of Howarth’s work, especially *Savage Henry* and the Fire Shrine Trilogy.

(RYCTo Mark) Part of the appeal of dead authors is that you can see how they influenced the field, and helped establish what Eric Raymond called the “deep norms” of the field.

(RYCTo Garth) “I’ll keep playing role-playing games and reading comics.” As one should. 🍷🍷 Getting young people involved in our fandom does indeed require us to reach out and discover what they find interesting, and meeting them in the media they use. My own experience with media fans is that they’re open to reading/watching the classics if you use the “You like this? Maybe you’ll like this, too. Try it!” approach, and it helps if you’re interested in some of the things they like. I have been fortunate in having a finger in several different fannish pies, which has exposed me to a bunch of stuff I never dreamed I’d be interested in back in the 1970s when I first started going to conventions.

(RYCTo George) I admit that part of the reason I started Son of Silvercon was to provide a venue for the N3F to get together, especially since so many members live in California or in/near major cities with easy air access to Las Vegas. Perhaps as time passes and the con looks to be a stable, ongoing thing, it will become so.

(RYCTo me) I'm glad you enjoyed the van Vogt recommendation. I don't think he gets half the recognition he deserves.

Samizdat #21

(RYCTo Mark) Fortunately, Amazon, Alibris, and Abe.books do carry the classics, and though it's been a while since I set foot in the place, Uncle Hugo's in Minneapolis seemed to have a healthy supply of new and used copies.

(RYCTo Jefferson) Multi-thread novels have actually been around for quite a while. Stand on Zanzibar was famous for its multiple plot lines, which I think Brunner picked up from the New Wave, which was importing a lot of mainstream story-telling techniques into SF. 🍷🍷 Most novels from the 50s and 60s were very short by our standards – about 100 pages or so in mass market paperback format.

(RYCTo Garth) I cannot remember a single hotel I dealt with for Anime Detour or Son of Silvercon where the sales rep didn't do the hard sell on the catering, with a couple of exceptions: the old Thunderbird/Ramada Inn Mall of America (RIP) which had a restaurant on the premises but realized we were mostly impoverished high school/college students who weren't into fancy sit-down banquets, and the Best Western Plus this year in Henderson, which had the free hot breakfast but no catering department, period. Somehow we managed.

(RYCTo me) I appreciate your sympathy regarding the problem at last year's Balticon, but I think I'll be skipping it this year, what with Son of Silvercon moving to July. I've never been to Philcon, oddly enough. 🍷🍷 I did see that cover, and yeah, maybe wouldn't have read that in public. In the field with my troops, sure. 🍷🍷 Regarding forgiveness and Reconstruction: sometimes there are no good answers.

(The 1619 Project) I have in my library a volume from the Official U.S. Army History of WW2, The Employment of Colored Troops In World War II, written by a black colonel in the Office of the Chief of Military History who became a history professor at Howard University after he retired. It is an unsparing look at the recruitment, training, and use of black soldiers, starting with the Civil War and moving forward through the Indian Wars, WW1 and WW2. It does not hesitate to criticize the racist and stupid policies of Woodrow Wilson that kept the Harlem Hellfighters (369th Infantry Regiment, NY Army National Guard) from fighting in an AEF division, and it also does not spare FDR's War Department from criticism for systematically stripping the experienced soldiers and cadre from the three black combat divisions in order to organize logistics and support units. It was published in 1953, at the end of the Korean War.

Similarly, Milton Rakove's oral history of the Daley machine in Chicago, Don't Make No Waves Don't Back No Losers, which included firsthand accounts of how the formerly solid Republican black voting block turned Democrat in the 1930s, was published in 1975.

It is simply untrue that American historians have ignored "the black perspective"; it is similar to the complaint that "there were no female/ethnic minority SF writers before the 2000s", which is to say it is a shameless lie intended to buff the credentials of authors with not half the talent of Alice Sheldon, Lester del Rey, Anne McCaffrey, u.s.w. Hannah-Jones didn't get half the public shaming and mockery she deserved. (Confluence) I'm confused. Did Chessiecon move to Pittsburgh, or was this an inadvertent error?

Here endeth the comments on N'APA #266

Son of Silvercon After-Action Report

"Much like the cake, the programming schedule is a lie." - Opening remarks by yours truly

We didn't get the turnout we were hoping for, to say the least, but everybody had a good time and said they'd be back next year. There was gaming, there were discussions in programming and the consuite, and a surprising quantity of books were sold.

So we're going to do it again next year! We have a contract signed with the Plaza Hotel & Casino in downtown Las Vegas, with lots of function space for programming and dealers, and a truly huge consuite that will probably also get used for some programming as well. Membership fees are mostly the same as last year:

\$40 for pre-registering attendees, \$20 for supporting members, and \$50 for vendors and artists, which includes a table in the dealers' room. There is the usual \$5 discount for N3F members and veterans.

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, which you can do by going to fissiochan.org and pushing the button on the main page. PUSH THE BUTTON. Feel free to e-mail me with questions.

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Image by J B from Pixabay

LOCs on N'APA 266

Intermission #135 - I cannot say that I've heard of Ralph Lundsten, sorry. Thanks for the report on Finncon. 1500-2000 would make it a large regional con in the U.S. but nowhere near the size of a comic-con. Interesting article on testing H-bomb on the Moon (if only we went to the moon often enough for this to be feasible). Yes, sf novels used to be 150-200 pages, but these frequently lacked room for anything but plot and sometimes science. Today's science fiction includes much more characterization and scene setting, so need more space. Poul Anderson was weaker on the science and grand scope compared to Isaac Asimov, but better on the writing and the characterization. And considering Anderson was half-responsible for the Hokus, and wrote *The High Crusade* I don't think you can claim Asimov had more humor. I disagree that recognition of minority writers in the Hugo/Nebula is a problem. To read the best of Hawthorne, it is important to understand the Puritan settlers of early America. But you can read "Rappaccini's Daughter" without that background and it is genuine sf/horror.

Archive Midwinter August 2023 - Attendees of a math conference would know that gambling in Las Vegas favors the house. I agree that a social

safety net makes for more happiness than cutthroat capitalism. Modern AI really isn't AI. It's just pattern matching. Current AI engines will spit out words without caring if they are right or even makes sense. I threw out a bunch of VCR tapes recently, even though I do have a VCR player (which I haven't used in about a decade). I've not read Jack Vance's Lyonese Trilogy. I'll have to look for it. I agree that sf needs suspension of disbelief but at the same time it needs internal consistency and at least hand-waving in the direction of actual science. If someone writes a book where gravity just stops working, I'm going to want the author to provide at least a somewhat plausible explanation. But if the space station has artificially gravity by rotating at a sufficient speed, I'm not going to do the math to see if that would really work (but I know people who would). On Keith Laumer, yes he knew he was writing light entertainment. And there's nothing wrong with that. Sometimes that's what the reader wants. I'm glad you like my "From Wizard to Scientist" thesis.

Intermission #136 - Sorry for not being a Hugo finalist. Better luck next time. I agree that Russia's failures in Ukraine make one doubt its superpower status. Book banning is never a good idea, even books of someone else's religions. But technically it should be allowed as freedom of speech. Robert Sawyer in his Neanderthal trilogy has his Neanderthals not understanding the concept of God which leads human scientist to isolate the God gene. In America, the religious still have enormous political power. Interesting bit about Hugo Gernsback's sf detective publication. I didn't know he started 60 magazines; I've only heard about Amazing. Lots of great history here.



Brownian Motion #4 - It's great that a clubzine is being revised. Good luck getting material. I ran *The WSFA Journal* for many years so sympathize. I had no idea that Canada had so many cons. Thanks for the extensive report on Pennicon. I'm sorry I missed it. Sorry about your experiences with SF Canada. Volunteer organizations need to be careful how they treat people, as it is too easy to drive them away. There's a long history of people equating science to magic, from Arthur C. Clarke's "Any sufficiently advanced science is indistinguishable from magic" to the "Dying Earth" style mingling of the two to the many writers who think by sticking the word quantum into an otherwise magical explanation, it becomes SF. I like your attempt to organize with a chart.

Synergy #47 - I'm not sure there is more angst today compared to the worries of the cold war, the world wars, and the turmoil in the 1960s. I think it is just that the media and social media make it so people are more aware of problems. I think mesmerism is frequently portrayed in fiction/media as a stronger form of hypnosis.

Ye Murdered Master Mage #266 - I suspect that sf cons are not as profitable for hotels as weddings or even business conventions as we use a lot of function space very late into the day and lack business expense accounts. I love the Telzey Amberdon series. Yes, I like James Schmitz generally but especially the Telzey stories. Why was Bova against Schmitz? Was his work insufficiently science-based? While war is certainly a part of televised SF, a lot of it is in the space exploration mode (certainly Star Trek). The modern consensus seems to be that the Renaissance painted the time before the Renaissance as dark ages to make themselves seem more enlightened and superior.

Brandy Hall #2 - Thanks for the discussion of your involvement in the fanzines of the 1980s. Are you familiar with the Internet Speculative Fiction Database? It shows everywhere a story has been reprinted. <https://www.isfdb.org/cgi-bin/title.cgi?45770> says your best bet for "The Midas Plague" is *the Science Fiction Hall of Fame Volume 2B*, which has been reprinted a number of times so should be easily found online. Since the N in NCIS stands for Navy and the Space Force is now a separate military department, we will be spared NCIS: Space Force. I think modern fanzines emerged from the literary sf community (as opposed to the fanfic fanzines that had Star Trek and Star Wars stories that dissolved when online fanfic chose to use a database format rather than a magazine format.

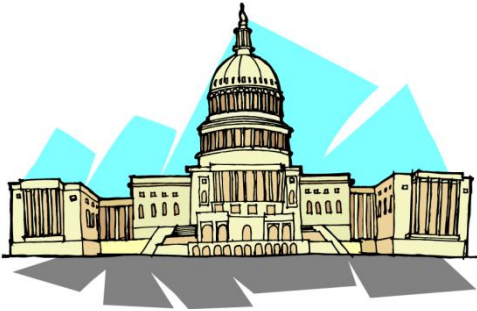


Snow Poster Township #12 - How does one know in advance what the Video Bureau is screening? You raise an interesting question about prioritizing living writers. Certainly living writers can be encouraged to produce more works while the dead cannot (with some exceptions like V.C. Andrews). I try to read both and I work on the Compton Crook Award for best debut author. Interesting point about television getting more complicated with arcs and multi-threaded storylines. But many movies have become less sophisticated. And if you look at both TV and movies, scenes are shorter and the pace is faster, without time to focus on character. Yes, bridging the generations is important. The younger fans are going to media cons, comic cons, and anime cons, and fewer are participating in the general/literary fandom/conventions. We need ways to attract them or no one will be running cons for us to enjoy when we are too old to run them. And you raise an interesting point that it may require relaxing some of our rules and "the way thing have always been done". I'm not sure what happened with Keith Laumer going out of print. At one point Eric Flint had edited a bunch of collections of his work for Baen, but that's all gone now along with his Bolo series. Kevin Trainor Jr. wrote that Laumer's heirs thought Baen wasn't paying enough I need to watch the Marvel movies you mentioned. I've seen Black Panther II but not the others.

Esmeralda County Line #5 - I'm glad you are feeling better. I've not heard of the Timebenders. I agree, there's just too much sf/fantasy to make up a list of what constitutes the definitive canon of must-reads for everyone. I think the New Wave played an important role in the maturing of sf and paying greater attention to characterization, writing quality, and literary values. Before the new wave, it was considered okay for a novel to have cardboard characters and pedestrian writing if the science was right. After the New Wave, this was no longer seen as acceptable by most readers/editors. I agree SF/fantasy has won the culture wars - comic book movies are routinely blockbusters, videogames (a lot based on sf/fantasy) make as much money as many movies, and some sf works are even taught in school.

Government Shutdown

I'm editing this on Nov 14, after the House of Representatives finally passed a Continuing Resolution to keep the government going just a handful of days before the Nov 17 shutdown date. This is the second barely adverted shutdown this year as we just experienced this uncertainty at the end of September when the new fiscal year started. Congress literally waited until the final hours of fiscal 2023 before passing a continuing resolution.

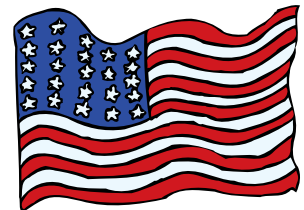


These last minute saves create a high level of uncertainty, as federal workers find it hard to plan their schedules when they don't know if their jobs will go away and for how long. Younger workers who have less savings may be worried about paying mortgages or rent. While government jobs have traditionally made up for lower wages with greater security, the frequent threats of government shutdowns reduces this security. And continuing resolutions don't really solve the problem, but merely postpones it.

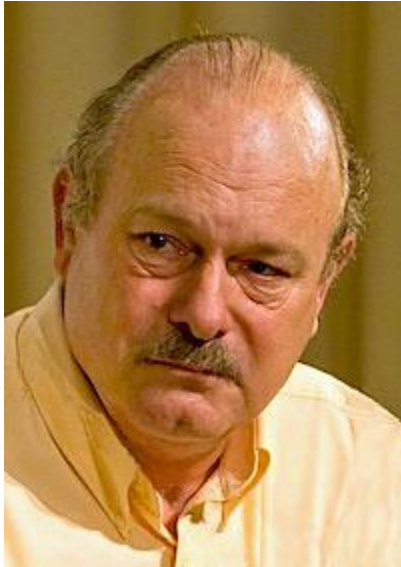
It's not like the budget sneaks up on Congress, the date for the end of the fiscal year is well known. Until very recently, past Congresses, with few exceptions, have been able to pass budgets without the threat of eminent shutdowns. But, in the 2010s there were three shutdowns, in the 1990s three, and in the 1980s four (not counting single day shutdowns). The longest was a 35 day shutdown in 2018-19 over Trump's border wall. One reason is that one political party sees government as the problem, not a solution to problems so have less reluctance to shutting the government down. Since they claim government doesn't work, they see no reason to take steps to make it work.

Government didn't used to work this way. The Congressional Budget Act of 1974 required Congress to pass budgets by the end of the fiscal year. But shortfalls did not cause government shutdowns until the 1980s. Even then, the shutdowns lasted just a couple of days. Before the 21-day shutdown was caused by fighting between Newt Gingrich and President Clinton from Dec 15, 1995 to Jan 6, 1996, the longest shutdown was five days (also during 1995).

Moreover, the newest CR does not solve anything but merely postpones the deadline a second time. Speaker Mike Johnson's two-tiered Continuing Resolution, in which part of the government will be funded through Jan 19 while the other part will be funded through Feb 2nd, doubles the dates of possible future partial government shutdowns. It also runs the risk that one party will, after the branches of government they like are safely funded, impose drastic cuts on the parts of government they don't like and are willing to see shutdown.



Author Showcase: Joe Haldeman (1943-)



Joe Haldeman published his first novel *War Year* in 1972, based on his letters home from the Vietnam War. His last book *Work Done for Hire* came out in 2014, giving him a respectable 42 year career. He is best known for *The Forever War*, often described as the flip side of Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* and based on Haldeman's Vietnam experience. The book won the Hugo, Nebula, and Locus award. He wrote a direct sequel, *Forever Free*, 25 years later and a thematic sequel, *Forever Peace* in 1997. The latter also won the Nebula and Hugo.

Although he wrote 24 other books, they were all in the shadow of *The Forever War*. *Camouflage* won the Nebula in 2005 and *Mindbridge* was a Hugo nominee and *The Accidental Time Machine* was a Nebula nominee. His novella, *The Hemmingway Hoax*, won both the Hugo and the Nebula. He was named a SFWA Grandmaster in 2011. He is also known for his *Worlds* trilogy and the *Marsbound* trilogy.

Joe Haldeman at Finncon 2007 in Jyväskylä, Finland - July 2007.
Licensed to Wikimedia by Mikko Aarnio

In addition to writing, Haldeman taught at MIT for 31 years and taught writing workshops. He has a DC fandom connection. He served as trustee for the Washington Science Fiction Association from 1967-70. His wife Gay, a prominent fan, was club Secretary from 1966-72. And his brother Jay, with whom Joe co-wrote a novel, was WSFA president 1966-71 and chaired the Disclave convention 1966-73.

The best place to start reading Haldeman is with *The Forever War*. Then I'd suggest the 2013 short story collection from Subterranean Press, *The Best of Joe Haldeman*. Haldeman has said that his favorite of his own works is the *Worlds* trilogy so give that a try too.

From Wizard to Scientist: Changing Views towards the Scientist from Hawthorne to Twain (Part III)

This is the end of the Hawthorne section of my undergraduate thesis from the faraway year of 1989.



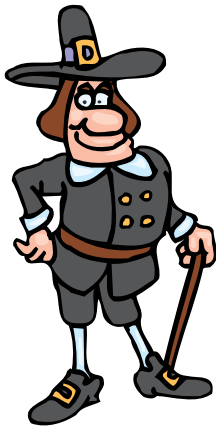
Sorcery, in "Rappaccini's Daughter" intrudes on science when the scientist attempts to turn the natural world to his ends. This blurred line between scientist and sorcerer continues in *The Scarlet Letter*, where the physician Chillingworth, through his use of science, transforms himself into a sorcerer and a servant of the devil. Early in the book he is called a "man of science,"[156] and a "practiced alchemist"[158]; he even builds a laboratory complete with needed equipment. Like Aylmer, Chillingworth is a former scholar and "book-worm," demonstrating an unbridled intellect. He has studied in Europe, and gave his "best years to feed the hungry dream of knowledge." [127] The Puritans, too, praise his scientific abilities and his medical knowledge, as "a man of skill in all Christian modes of physical science, and likewise familiar with whatever the savage people could teach." [125] Chillingworth always considers himself a scientist

and his motives scientific. He launches his quest for Hester's lover in this scientific spirit:

Believe me, Hester, there are few things- whether in the outward world, or, to a certain depth, in the invisible sphere of thought, - few things hidden from a man who devotes himself earnestly and unreservedly to the solution of a mystery... I shall seek this man, as I have sought truth in books; as I have sought gold in alchemy. [128]

This almost arrogantly declares the scientists' creed- that nature cannot hide secrets from a properly trained mind. A scientist is limited only by his will; nothing is unknowable. Clearly Chillingworth belongs in the company of Aylmer and Rappaccini in their shared search for knowledge.

Although a researcher and a student of science, Chillingworth's investigation transforms him from a scientific scholar to a sorcerer, from a scientist to a devil. The Puritan townspeople chart this transition. After originally viewing him as Dimmesdale's savior, believing that God had miraculously transported a skilled doctor from Europe to save Dimmesdale's life[155], when he begins his hunt they notice a change in his face reflecting his new evil. They begin to whisper about his activities while with the Indians, believing that he had practiced devil worship to gain magical powers.[159] The Puritans interpret the fires in doctor's laboratory as coming from the "infernal regions" and the man himself as an agent of Satan given Divine permission to test Dimmesdale's sanctity. [159] By the end of the book some people even believe that the "potent necromancer"[237] had conjured up the "A" on Dimmesdale's breast through magic and poisonous drugs in an effort to discredit the minister.



While Hawthorne places these opinions at a remove from his main narrative by crediting them to the townspeople, the idea of Chillingworth as a torturer for Dimmesdale depicts his role in the novel. He exacts revenge for the violation of his wife by constantly observing Dimmesdale, digging into the minister's heart to expose the secret guilt. Through this constant examination and prolongation of Dimmesdale's suffering, Chillingworth transforms himself into a devil, a magical creature living off the pain of others. When the doctor secretly examines the minister's bosom, always covered by his hand, the narrator compares him to Satan: "Had a man seen old Roger Chillingworth, at that moment of his ecstasy, he would have had no need to ask how Satan comports himself when a precious human soul is lost to heaven, and won into his kingdom." [166] Hester also notices the change in her former husband, and wonders whether the sun will still shine on him and whether the grass will wither at his feet.[188] Chillingworth then is the prime example of the scientist exercising secret control, a control similar to magic. While probing and manipulating Dimmesdale's conscience, he always remains hidden from his victim, never taking overt and visible action.¹ In this, Chillingworth is like Rappaccini, who also has a background role in the events he manipulates. Although Chillingworth's methods are scientific, what today would be considered psychology, his goal is the magical control of another person's soul. He directs his torture of Dimmesdale's heart, deliberately leading him away from repentance and thereby damning his soul. Here he is similar to the mesmerists in Hawthorne's other novels, whose power over the soul leads them into wizardry.²

¹ "Seen purely from without, it would be possible to regard him as completely blameless... Masquerading as a physician, he becomes to Dimmesdale a kind of attendant fiend, racking the minister's soul with constant anguish. Yet outwardly he has done him nothing but good." Richard Fogle, "Realms of Being and Dramatic Irony." in *The Scarlet Letter: Norton Critical Edition*. Bradley, Beatty et. al. ed. p. 328

² Holgrave, the social reformer and early photography pioneer in *House of the Seven Gables* has strange mesmerizing powers inherited from his wizard ancestor. Another mesmerist, Westervelt of *The Blithedale Romance*, is linked in a story narrated by one of the characters to a Magician, and in fact he claims supernatural powers during his stage shows.

. . .

Like the alchemists of the Middle Ages who studied only to learn how to turn lead into gold, Hawthorne's scientists gain knowledge to learn the secrets of controlling man and nature. In this desire to dominate they go beyond the proper role of scientist and doctor, and venture into the mysterious world of the supernatural. Through their science, Hawthorne's characters rival God, battling nature to wrench it into their plans. Nature's power, in Hawthorne's fiction, derives from its position outside of man's domain. In *The Scarlet Letter*, Nature is the forest; its location outside the community provides the freedom to choose good or evil. On the one hand the forest is the land of the heathen Indians who taught Chillingworth magic, the lair of witches, and the location of Mistress Hibbins' dealings with the black man, the devil. But at the same time, the forest allows Dimmesdale and Hester the liberty to reveal safely their true selves, to take off their respective scarlet letters, and to confess their love. Like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the original forest, they are free from sin, since they are outside the community that defines sin. Therefore, when Hawthorne's scientists try to control this great power that is nature, they are reaching for a force beyond their capacity to restrain. Nature is so unpredictable, so much beyond man's understanding, that the consequences of forcing it can never be the expected results.



Graphic from hotpot.ai

Nature, mysterious, dark, and secret, always resists man's authority. Aylmer tries to perfect Nature, only to destroy it. Rappaccini attempts to control Nature, confining it to a garden and creating new plants, but he can produce are poisonous hybrids. In trying to bend Nature to their wishes, the scientists delude themselves in their belief that they understand it. Their incomplete knowledge of Nature leads them to the misuse of its powers, into magic. Magic is the result of over ambition into areas that man can never know, and when Hawthorne's scientists enter these areas, they become sorcerers.

Therefore Hawthorne's scientists are not scholars engaged in learning but magicians using their knowledge and powers for their own ends. Hawthorne sees their science as innocent so long as the scientists remain content to stay and learn in their libraries and laboratories, but dangerous when they venture into the larger world to make active use of that learning. In these circumstances, the scientist perverts his learning through using it to control others, and turns himself into a sorcerer. This control is most obvious in *The Scarlet Letter*; but evident in the other stories as well. Through his hints in "The Birthmark" that the birthmark resides in Georgiana's heart, Hawthorne implies that Aylmer is really trying to control her very soul. Although Rappaccini appears to be interested only in science, he too desires control. The people he transforms are his daughter and his daughter's lover:

As he drew near, the pale man of science seemed to gaze with a triumphant expression at the beautiful youth and maiden, as might an artist who should spend his life in achieving a picture or group of statuary and finally be satisfied with his success. He paused; his bent form grew erect with conscious power... {1064}

Seizing control, Rappaccini becomes a perverted Creator/God, producing a poisoned Adam and Eve.

Hawthorne deliberately blends science and magic to tell a cautionary tale. He warns his readers of the dangers of science when unfettered by human conscience. His scientists misuse their science by applying it without regard to consequences. By leaving out concrete descriptions of science, Hawthorne stresses the similarities to magic. Wizards in disguise, his "scientists" wear only thin laboratory coats to establish them as scientists. They corrupt their learning through using it to violate people's souls; a control which Hawthorne

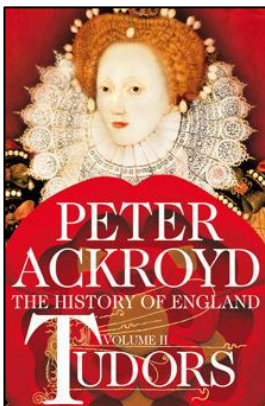
believes is magic. To Hawthorne, this control is the true evil, the "unpardonable sin." His fear of this aspect of science can be taken back to his letter to Sophia Peabody, when he feared mesmerism's power to make one person's soul subject to another's bidding. He fears science in "The Birthmark," "Rappaccini's Daughter," and *The Scarlet Letter*, because it has the same possibilities for subjugating people that magic does. In yielding to this temptation, Hawthorne's scientists transform themselves into wizards, sorcerers, and devil figures.

Status of Projects

Past readers of *Samizdat* know that I have started a number of life improving projects. Here's the latest update.

Project Video - I did not watch as many films/TV as I should have in the last couple of months considering I subscribe to two channels. Yes, I find myself in the odd position of needing to watch more TV and movies.

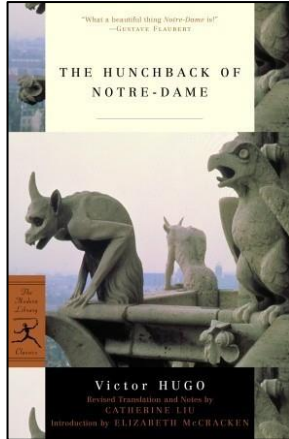
- I did watch *Terminator Genisys* - This film is better than the *Terminator* films since the first two. Making a virtue out of how twisted the time travel had become from the previous films, this movie addresses the problem of the corrupted timeline. At first it seems like a prequel to the original *Terminator*, with John Connor sending Kyle Reese back to chase the original terminator and save Sarah Connor. But instead of the naïve Sarah Connor from the original film, he meets a Sarah Connor who had been raised by Pops, a good terminator. They time travel to 2017 where Skynet is being marketed as Genisys and try to stop it. It was fun seeing Arnold Schwarzenegger again in his most famous role. It is a lot of fun as long as the viewer doesn't stop to try to think why all the action is happening. If you liked the original two *Terminator* films, but gave up on the series after that, give this one a try.
- I watched *Fast and the Furious* about a cop who infiltrates a gang of street racers who moonlight as land pirates stealing goods out of trucks. But he falls in love with the sister of the gang leader and starts to respect the gang leader too. A major problem is that the film makes the viewer sympathize with the bad guy (played by Van Diesel with a movie star's charisma) rather than the cop. It was fun, but I doubt I'll seek out the sequels
- *Girl Interrupted* is set in the 1960s with a Susanna, a recent high school graduate and would-be writer, played by Winona Ryder sent to a psychiatric hospital after a suicide attempt. There she falls under the sway of a rebellious sociopath played by Angelina Jolie, in her breakout role, whose misbehavior encourages Susanna to become worse. This is an interesting film about psychological disorders and how friendships form even among people with special needs.



- I started to watch *The Eternals*, a Marvel movie about an immortal race whose members each have their own superpowers. I found it slow and dull so gave up after the first hour, although I may give it another chance.

Project History/Nonfiction- I read *Tudors: The History of England from Henry VIII to Elizabeth I* by Peter Ackroyd. This is book two in his six-book series. This is straightforward political history with the focus on the Kings (and Queen) of England and the creation of the Church of England. I would have liked to have seen deeper analysis rather than storytelling and more on the ordinary people. Still, this is an interesting look

at a fascinating period of British history. I have book three somewhere and will read that soon. I've started reading *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity* by David Graeber and David Wengrow. This is a super-ambitious history going back to Neolithic times as the precursor for all later history. A lot of the early chapters in the book argue with historians and anthropologists and philosophers. They criticize the traditional Christian view of childlike innocents living in a state of nature who become tainted by original sin (agriculture) that led to the development of civilization and governments. For my nonfiction book group I read *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies* by Nick Bostrom about the possibilities of Artificial Intelligence and *Livewired: The Inside Story of the Ever-Changing Brain* by David Eagleman about how the brain works.



Project Classics - I'm almost done with *Hunchback of Notre Dame*. I've been reading it through an audiobook while driving. I've found that slower paced books work best while driving as they don't demand too much attention from driving and since I'm splitting my attention with the driving it doesn't matter that the book is somewhat slow in spots. I think the book should be named the Gypsy Girl of Paris as Esmerelda is on stage a lot more than the Hunchback and is by far the most interesting character in the book.

Project Short Story - I'm trying to read a short story a day. I've finished James Morrow's collection *The Cat's Pajamas and Other Stories* which has some wonderful satire. Highly recommended. I also enjoyed Sarah Pinsker's collection *Lost Places* and the two volume collection *The Essential Peter Beagle*, which shows him to be more than a one-hit wonder. I also read *Clarkesworld* and *Asimov's* for my magazine discussion group. And I've started the 990-page

The Ascent of Wonder: The Evolution of Hard SF.

Project Conventions - The big activity in September was Capclave, the DC-area convention. I did the program book. This coming weekend I am going to Philcon. And I continue to work on Balticon, which I am chairing over Memorial Day weekend in May.

Project Reviews - One review done (in early November) of *The Middling Affliction* by Alex Shvartsman.

Other - No progress on Project Shakespeare, Project Trek, Project Activities, Project Clean-up, or Project Exercise. I'm feeling guilty now.



Author's Note

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