

THE OBDURATE EYE #35

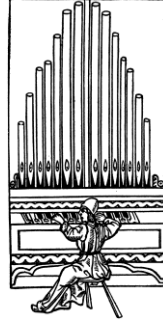
January 2024



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THE OBDURATE EYE #35, January 2024, a personalzine from Garth Spencer, 6960 Doman Street, Vancouver, BC CANADA V5S 3H7, Email garth.van.spencer@gmail.com or hrothgarweems@gmail.com . Garth acknowledges that he does this on the unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, səlilwətał, and s̓kwx̓wú7mesh peoples.



The organ of no clique or party

Art Credits

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Facebook clip art (Garibaldi on conventions).....	p. 6
Hugh Spencer (picture of Hugh Spencer)	p. 9
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William Rotsler	p. 12
Jose Sanchez (“Incident over Africa”)	p. 14



Solitary Poor Mean Nasty

Is it just my impression, or do Facebook posts and fake science shows on TV keep recycling the same old crank theories that so-called editors keep recycling in supermarket tabloids, and New Age bookstores? And have the same old crank theories been reheated and served up under new brand names for *at least five generations*?

Isn't it time we had a new generation of *original, creative* crank theories? Or at least some new, practical political platforms? Maybe, as I suggested to Nic Farey, the thickness of GovSpeak and the bureaucratic hoops we have to jump through, just for business licenses and taxation let alone social services, will be why the Great Wars of the 21st Century Have to Be.

§

I have an impression of a broader failure of imagination. Are the Powers that Be – governments, financiers, middle and upper managers everywhere – suffering from a poverty of ideas, or an overload of data? Consider only one public problem: in recent decades many people can't afford a house under any circumstances, or even go on living with their parents, who would have already had homes and families for ten or twenty years if housing and living costs hadn't risen enormously compared to wages. (I live in Vancouver, which by many accounts is one of the most expensive places to live.) You can easily think of a score of other public problems, and you may also have a suspicion that any of them could be solved with a rational solution – but the solution would be unobvious, however simple; as simple an idea as the arch, or horse collars, or crop rotation, or the number zero. Every one of these ideas was overlooked by major civilizations, and every one took thousands of years to develop.

§

Closer to home, I begin to realize that I have overreached myself. In fact, I have probably always overreached myself. In fact ... I think I have been one of those clowns who illustrate the Dunning-Kruger effect – if you're too dumb to realize it, then you think you're a lot smarter than you are, perhaps smarter than anyone around you.

I was dumb enough to need it *spelled out* that life works out like a set of activities – call them projects, call them obligations, call them social norms – and you have to schedule them or set priorities on them, to get anything done.

I was dumb enough not to know I was expected to train up for a career, saddle myself with a wife and a house and a mortgage and 2.5 kids, starting in my 20s. (I was the kind of schlub who would actually do this, *if I were just told to.*)

I was dumb enough not to work all this out for myself, until retirement age.

Granted, *nobody* spells out baldly what they take for granted, outside some families or religious/ethnic groups.

And granted, this sort of rule for living doesn't quite apply anymore, for the financial reasons I mentioned above.

§

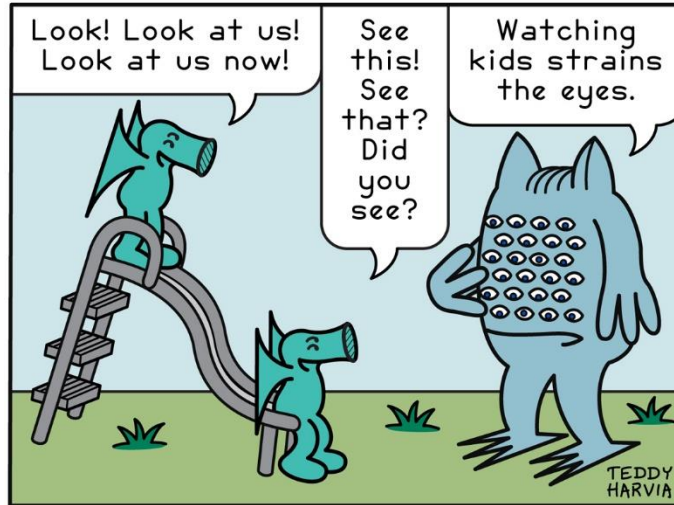
So I must content myself with using the time I have left as effectively as I can.

I boiled down my life to about fifteen activities or departments. It seems, though, that I don't spare enough time on the practical ones – documenting my finances and medical care and housekeeping budget, for example – and spend a bit much of my time on fan activities, and keep overlooking social ones. Is this effective? Now I ask you.

Meanwhile, my personal energy is not as much as it was. I really must start an exercise program. As I have told myself for twenty-odd years.

Interestingly, I defined the use of my time in terms of producing something, such as writing, before I shuffle off. Am I getting off on the wrong foot?





Sound and Fury Signifying

Mark Nelson mnelson@uow.edu.au, Dec. 6, 2023

I had a feeling that I was going to miss the deadline for issue 34. Good thing I sent a reply to your email.

As I'm British, the correct spelling of "titbit" is indeed "titbit" - "tidbit" is the American spelling. I thought I had better check this before committing myself to print and in the process I discovered something interesting. The American spelling is how the word was pronounced when it appeared in English in the 17th century as "tyd bit".

The *Oxford English Dictionary* lists the first use of "titbit", written as two words, as 1641.

1641 A Man-servant..should goe into a Victualers service, because he hopeth for tit bits either of gift, or by stealth, and relicks more ordinary of his Masters Dishes.

J. Dawson, translation of J. Drexel, *Right Intention Rule of All Mens Actions* ii. vi. 355

There are quotations from 1694 to 1866 for the hyphenated spelling. Churchill wrote "tit bits" in 1938.

The OED states that the first use of "tyd bit", again written as two words, is after 1641.

a1641 A tyd bit, i.e. a speciall morsell reserved to eat at last.

J. Smyth, *Berkeley Manuscripts* (1885) vol. III. 25

((Thank you. I still maintain that the Canadian spelling of "nerd" is nurd. For what it's worth.))

There are quotations from 1654 for "tid bits", 1701 for "tid-Bits" and 1834 for "tidbits". There is a quotation from 1968 in which it is spelled as two words.

As an update on fish prices: I recently saw whole Murray Cod at AUD 36.99/kg. I can't find my photograph, but Murray Cod fillets were over AUD \$60/kg. The Murray cod is a freshwater fish, that is not a Cod, it's a perch. It's only available, when it's available, as a farmed product. It's very well regarded in Australia as, if you know what you are doing, you can make the skin into something akin to pork crackling. In the wild it was an apex predator, but an exceptionally lazy predator. This means that it has "incredible fat content through most of the flesh". I've only cooked Murray Cod fillets once or twice - steaming it in a Cantonese style.

((Atlantic cod is, apparently, the staple of Newfoundland cuisine, and was the economic foundation of Atlantic Canada until the cod fisheries collapsed, like the whaling industry – from overfishing.

((By contrast, Pacific salmon in all its varieties was a staple for native nations on the west coast of North America, to the point that the word for "salmon" was the word for "food" in most coastal languages. Jerry Kaufman presented a fannish argument at an Australian Worldcon that the salmon is the national bird of Washington state. Somehow, the conversation then evolved into Spawncon, a Seattle bid for the Australian national convention. I was later informed that the bid became illegal as soon as it won the vote, due to the nature of Natcon bylaws.))

I was interested in your summary of Dale Speirs' views on the pricing of beef. Hopefully he will chip in to the current conversation. I think that in the twenty-plus years I've lived in Australia, there has been a change in attitude towards buying meat. This is based upon a feeling, not any real evidence, that individuals on higher salaries are now willing to buy more for a premium products. There are now products on the market which indicate the farm that the animal lived on.

For chicken it's been routine for numerous years to have free-range as a standard supermarket product (not just eggs). An exception to this, at least in our area, was the fleeting availability of Corn-fed free-range chicken. This was not popular as many customers found the yellow colour of the meat off-putting, too many thought that it was yellow because the meat had gone off.

Many years ago, on one of my rare trips back to the UK, I went to a CAMRA event. It was an opportunity for a large number of real ale and real cider producers to sell their products: both in the form of beverages to drink there and then, and beverages to take home. There were a number of manufacturers of perry. However, it's not something that I see very often in Australian bottle shops. I will check out the local bottle shop when I get a chance.

Don't get me started on the Norman French and their influence on the English language...

((I Hold Opinions on the Norman invasion, which should be ironic since my surname dates back to the Normans. But I also Hold Opinions about the current state of English, or whatever passes for it these days.))

P.S. There was a delightful article in the paper recently. Some time ago the New Zealand curling team qualified for the 2024 Men's Curling Championship in Switzerland. They also have the ambition of qualifying for the 2026 Winter Olympics. Unfortunately, their level of play has reached a plateau as there is no decent opposition for them in New Zealand. Their solution was to travel to Canada, on a self-funded trip, so that they could play against Canadian teams. Unfortunately on arrival they discovered that local accommodation was either too expensive and/or that landlords wanted a one-year lease.

((If youda ast me, I coulda told ya.))

The team put our feelers through curling networks on social media. And they have had success! The Chartwell Colonel Belcher retirement residence in Calgary had an apartment available. The team accepted and have moved in. A group of 14 fans from the retirement home even travelled 30-minutes so that they could support them when they played at the nearest Curling club.

((Hooray! The Worldwide Landlord Conspiracy Funded by Belgians is foiled for a change!))

Mark Nelson mnelson@uow.edu.au, Dec. 14, 2023

I have to confess that I wouldn't vote in any awards for written SF. I only read an exceptional small amount of SF in any year and what I read is predominantly old. I expect that by the end of 2023 I will have read two SF novels and part of one book of short stories. Since I moved to Australia in 2000 the mode for the number of SF novels I've read each year is zero. It must be about thirty years since I've read more than two SF novels in one year. This is one reason why I was never too excited by SF conventions. I had the impression that there was too much discussion of SF. (That may have been a false impression, but nevertheless it's the impression I had.)

((BAHAHAHAHA!! Too much?! I'm happy if there is any!))

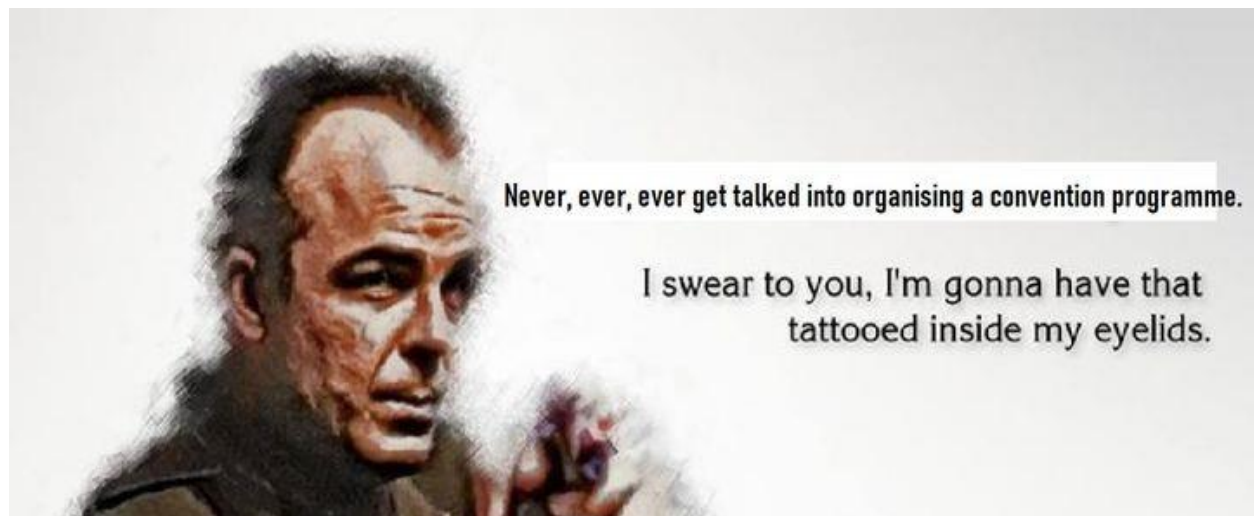
If my family circumstances were different, I'd seriously consider breaking my almost thirty-year drought of SF conventions and attend the Australian Natcon. However, the attraction of so doing would be to meet up with some ANZAPA members. Now, that's amusing. NatCon (notice the spelling) is also an Australian Alcoholics Anonymous convention. And NatCon is also one of Canberra's leading residential builders.

I would be very interested in reading an article which listed the first use of "SF concepts". It sounds like the kind of article that should have already been written, perhaps as a thesis. Is the introduction of "new SF concepts" something that is more likely to be associated with hard SF rather than soft SF? If so, has the flow of new SF concepts reduced because of the increased popularity of soft SF and a corresponding decrease in hard SF? Or is it simply the case that all the easy ideas have been mined to almost creative exhaustion? Given the sparseness of my reading of SF I offer no conclusions.

((Sercon fandom was typified by fans who listed SF ideas, and story tropes, and character types, and other details in published SF, just as if they were paid to do so by agencies that collect statistics.))

You may be pulling our legs about running a Worldcon bid for Port Alberni in 2030. But it sounds like a perfect location for Corflu.

((Apparently hoax bids are just non-starters, if Alex von Thorn and Kevin Standlee are to be believed. Too many people now would take the joke seriously and I could end up in serious trouble.



((I shouldn't be surprised. Back when I was trying to start a hoax SF club, the Royal Swiss Navy, I actually got several handwritten applications, mostly from Africans, who wanted to join. Over and over I had to explain it was a joke. And for years after I suspended The Maple Leaf Rag, which was a newszine about and for Canadian fans, I kept getting story submissions. Turned out that some Canadian market list persistently listed my old newszine, as if it were a market for fiction instead of occasionally listing SF markets.))

Regarding Lloyd's loc. Unfortunately, the idea of the 15-minute city wouldn't guarantee that you have a 15-minute commute to work. It'd mean that all your essential services are within 15 minutes of your residence.

((I know someone convinced that the 15-minute city concept is another plot by the Evil Sinister Global Elites to enslave us all.))

If one thing is for sure, it's that anything that you can do "to earn tons of extra money" is not going to earn you "tons of extra money". Though it might have the potential to own the proposer of the idea "tons of extra money".

((Another Evil Sinister Globalist Plot, apparently. I prefer to maunder inconsequentially about Belgian cultural imperialism or some equally amusing nonsense.))

I'm glad you mentioned "the Carl Brandon hoax fan". If I'd heard about it before I'd long forgotten about it, I've just read about that on the *Fancylopedia*.

***Lloyd & Yvonne Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2,
December 14, 2023***

Many thanks for *The Obdurate Eye* 34, and with so many time constraints these days, it being Christmas and all, I'd better get with it asap. Let see what I can say this time...

I am thinking that I should start up my interest in the Auroras again. I have no idea who is winning the fan Auroras these days, so I need to see if my nominations might actually bring fans to vote for fans.

I agree with the creativity issue for writers, we do need to address it, but is there a natural limit to what we can imagine and write about? Have we imagined it all, and can we imagine more? Fresh ideas seem to be few. I see lots of great stories in my job, but there are few that really attract my eye and imagination. Maybe I'm just jaded by having read SF all my life.

((Some story ideas that come to mind immediately:

- *Aliens who look like monsters but behave like utterly proper ladies and gentlemen*
- *Someone invents a universal translator that converts political speeches, sermons and management bafflegab into plain English, and the inventor instantly becomes a hunted outlaw*
- *Monsters from the Id that talk like Jewish mothers*
- *Discovering lost civilizations that fell because bureaucracy, and technological complexity, and unintelligible professional jargon prevented them from getting anything done*

- *Elder Ghods and Deep Ones from the Marianas Trench, launching an international class-action suit against maritime pollution*
- *An interstellar civil-rights organization soliciting our support against Mongols from deep space, and their persistent war crimes*
- *A sinister new nanotechnology for opening closed minds, which could lead to global mind control))*

You and I are from an era where Worldcon hoax bids were fun, tongue-in-cheek and the whole bidding process gave us something to smile about, and perhaps participate in with a bid support. I am not sure if a hoax bid today would reignite the fun, or go over like a lead balloon. I am not sure.

((See my remarks to Mark Nelson above.))

Jean-Paul Garnier interviewed me by e-mail, and the resulting article is on the *Worlds of IF* website. The first new issue of *Worlds of IF* is coming up in February 2024. I'd never heard of Hexagon, so I looked it up...looks very interesting, but wondered why I hadn't heard of it, and I see that it's in Saskatchewan.

My loc...Toronto is a very spread-out city, so I am not surprised that it can take me 2+ hours to get to work (got just such a day tomorrow), and 2++ hours to get back home. What cons did you approach for CUFF? I can think of Can*Con in Ottawa, When Words Collide in Calgary, and Keycon in Winnipeg, but that's it. What was your fourth con?

*((I have an expression of interest from a Can*con regular, but have to answer her question about how a CUFF delegate participates in a convention. I also have to pin down the procedures for nominating, then voting, for the next CUFF delegate. I wrote to Sci-Fi on the Rock, as well as the other conventions you mentioned.))*

Responding to zines has been full-time for me, but I have been responding for 40 years now. My comment about fanzine fandom being obscure for the average fan stands. If I was to stage a fanzine lounge in a convention outside of a Worldcon, I'd spend the weekend there by myself. No one seems interested, possibly because it may seem like too much work to do.

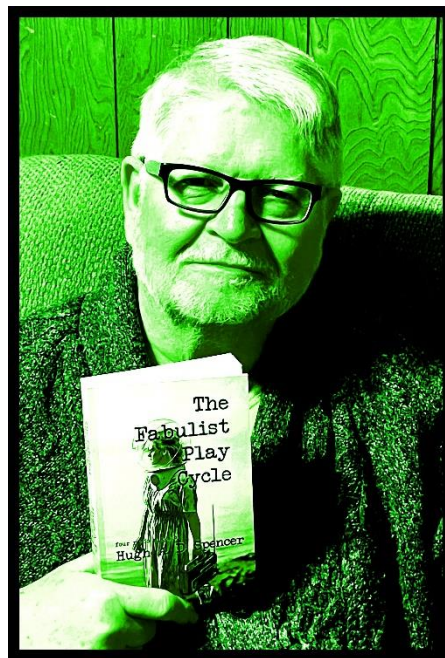
((We make fanzine fandom boring and unattractive. Time to change that.))

Our own side-hustles...Yvonne makes her Hawaiian-style shirts, I make my steampunk costume jewelry, we spend money on tables to sell those items and hope we make a few bucks. I was editing novels for a British SF author, but he has decided to try AI, and is spending less money, money I sure could have used, so I need to find more sources. I still work for the communication company in the east end (going there tomorrow), but my work has been cut

back to 3-4 days a month. I keep sending out resumes, but I retire in less than six months, and I can draw on my meagre pension and investments, such as they are, which should relieve the financial pressures a little bit.

At the end of the page...many thanks, and see you with the next.

We Also Heard From: *Den Valdron, Jose Sanchez, Heath Row* (“I found out that it works if I used a lower case k; kamchatka”), *Kent Pollard* (“Hi Garth, just letting you know that this ended up in spam at Gmail. You might want to assume some people missed it.” *Shazbat! Mep! Mep! Unacceptable! Censorings!*), *Perry Middlemiss, Bill Burns, Jean-Paul Garnier, and a cast of dozens*)



Notice from Hugh Spencer (the Retro Mentor Guy)

“Two things:

“1) The author's copies of my collection of science fiction radio plays arrived yesterday. Much happiness! (see attached picture of the book and me when I get happy) You can pre-order at

“https://www.brain-lag.com/product/the-fabulist-play-cycle/50?cp=true&sa=false&sbp=false&q=false&category_id=2

“or:

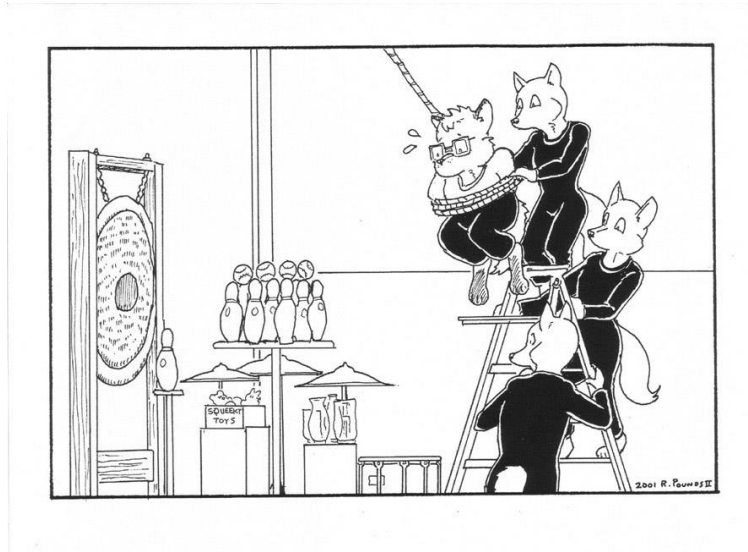
“https://www.amazon.ca/Fabulist-Play-Cycle-radio-collection/dp/1998795055/ref=sr_1_1?crid=M97CXG96YDTJ&keywords=The+F

*abulist+Play+Cycle&qid=1703799189&s=books&sprefix=the+fabulist+play+cycl
e%2Cstripbooks%2C140&sr=1-1*

“2) Recently I had the honour of interviewing Rebecca Hirsch-Garcia, author of a brilliant new book of short stories from ECW Press. I've posted it on my website:

<https://hugh6402.wixsite.com/fantasticwriter/post/enter-the-horror-of-the-mundane-an-interview-with-rebecca-hirsch-garcia>

Hugh Spencer, Dec. 28, 2023



Why the Heathen Tumultuously Assemble

Bits of News from the World of Garth Spencer

Aurora Awards - 2024 Dates

“A disclaimer to start with: these dates are our target, but some remain tentative or subject to change. If they do change, we will let members know through our newsletter and on our website’s News page.

“The most fixed dates are when we start and when the last activity for CSFFA happens. Payments for CSFFA members will be open within the first few days of January. At that time the Eligibility lists will also be open for members to add works you think should be considered for the 2024 awards.

“The only date that is fixed is when the Aurora Awards ceremony takes place. For 2024 our virtual awards ceremony will be on Saturday, August 10th at 7pm EDT. We are pleased to say that our MCs will again be Mark Leslie Lefebvre and Liz May Anderson. They did such an amazing job in 2023, how could we not ask them for an encore?

“The following are the main dates for CSFFA. From the various aspects of the Aurora Awards to the society AGM.

“NOTE: All memberships must have been purchased a week prior to the close of voting for the awards.

“Eligibility Period: Opens when payments open (around January 3rd) and closes at 11:59pm Eastern Time on February 24th.

“Professional Development Grants: There are two periods when we will be accepting grant questions. The first starts on January 3rd and ends March 31st. The second begins June 1st and ends August 31st. For full details about these grants go to: <https://www.csffa.ca/csffa-professional-developmental-grant/>

“Nomination Period: Open on March 2nd and will close on April 6th.

“Voters Package should be available by May 4th (earlier if we get everything on time). Downloads of the voters’ package will close on July 6th (one week prior to the close of voting)

“CSFFA AGM voting period: Online voting for our AGM will be on May 18th and close on May 30th.

“CSFFA Online AGM will take place on June 1st

“Voting Period for the Aurora Awards: Opens June 8th and close on July 13th

“Awards Ceremony (Online): August 10th.”

Cliff Samuels, Dec. 14, 2023

[\(2\) Facebook](#) / www.csffa.ca

BCSFA

The BC Science Fiction Association is not dead, it’s just resting. Most members are north of 50 years old, which makes this unsurprising. Still, there is a Facebook group, there are biweekly Monday afternoon Zoom meetings, and a biweekly Zoom writers’ critiquing workshop on Thursdays, with a Discord presence.

Canadian Unity Fan Fund

The Canadian Unity Fan Fund is being replenished, as the latest delegate is obligated to do. The December 2023 newsletter (*Shooting My CUFFs* #9) outlined plans for selecting a 2024 Canadian convention, and the process for nominating and voting a CUFF delegate to attend it.

As always, should you or any member of your fan community have fanzines or SF memorabilia to donate for fundraising and auction purposes, CONTACT ME!

Links:

[\(3\) Canadian Unity Fan Fund \(CUFF\) | I am updating my files on the CUFF Facebook group, and have uploaded Shooting My CUFFs #9 from December 2023 | Facebook](#)

[\(3\) Canadian Unity Fan Fund \(CUFF\) | Achtung! The newly-updated August fan publications catalog and order form are now posted here | Facebook](#)

Also on Discord!

VCON/WCSFA

The WCSFA convention oversight committee is still meeting regularly. No news as yet whether a revived VCON will ever be held.

Link:

[\(2\) Facebook](#) Page

Also on Discord!

Zines from the Black Lagoon

The N3F Review of Books,

November 2023, published by the National Fantasy Fan Federation, PO Box 143, Tonopah NV 89049 and is distributed for free to N3F Members and archival sites. Editor: George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609, phillies@4liberty.net.

George, I never know how to do justice to a comprehensive book review such as you edit.



Fan History Project, December 7, 2023, Edie Stern and Joe Siclari, 663 Hanover Street, Yorktown Heights, **[State? Zip?]** <https://www.fanac.org>

Dear Edie and Joe, I really must notify you when I get a draft Canadian fanhistory posted online. Right now, one of my activities is to revamp my website – which means getting the fanhistory chapters into HTML format, as well as a set of articles listing Northwest, Canadian, and more general fan activities, ranging from clubs and fanzines to APAs and podcasts.

Ionisphere #44, December 2023, bi-monthly Journal of the National Fantasy Fan Federation Fan-Pro Coordination Bureau, Edited by John Thiel (Bureau Chief), 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904, USA, email for editor and magazine kinethiel@mymetronet.net.

I was interested by Jean-Paul Garnier's interview of author Elaine Boey; I hadn't been aware of this Chinese-Singaporean cyberpunk author. I was especially interested by John Thiel's short opinion piece on the relation between cyberpunk and Dadaism, as well as Noir. Not an idea that immediately came to my mind.

FanActivity Gazette #3:7, December 2023, "News of Fen of Interest to All Fen," Mindy Hunt ed., mindyhunt@scifi4me.com, George Phillies pub., 48 Hancock Hill Dr., Worcester MA 10609, USA.

I appreciated Bob Jennings' well-researched article on *The Time Machine*, its original publication and its impact. He did not, I noticed, mention that the original meaning of the novel has been consistently missed in its adaptations and variations. That probably says something about Victorian versus contemporary class structure, or what preoccupies contemporary attention.

The detailed Saturn Awards report, and the N3F tape and video bureau report, came as a surprise to me. Is there any way to promote these efforts and raise their public profile?

I greatly appreciate the updated and extended list of conventions, especially with respect to Pacific Northwest conventions.

My Back Pages #29, December 2023, Rich Lynch, P.O. Box 3120, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20885, USA; [rw_lynch \(at\) yahoo \(dot\) com](mailto:rw_lynch@yahoo.com), Previous issues are archived at efanzines.com and fanac.org

Interesting that you start this issue with a meditation on Christmas music, particularly an appreciate of "Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home)." I am impressed by your knowledge of the many artists who have done covers of the song. (For my part I missed hearing "Christmas at Ground Zero" by Weird Al, this season; but my enthusiasms are strange.)

It is impressive how much you know where to go and what to see in New York. Now I ask myself, why am I not taking in live theatre here in Vancouver? How very much I am missing!

Origin (unnumbered), December 2023, Monthly Journal of the National Fantasy Fan Federation's History and Research Bureau. Editor is John Thiel,

residing at 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904, USA,
kinethiel@mymetronet.net.

Appreciated the remembrance of C.L. Moore, Heath Row's letter, and the opinion/editorial articles. I am not sure what to make of Jeff Redmond's story – the whole thing is in third person! Very polished art in this issue.

This Here #71, December 2023, Nic Farey ed., 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, USA; Email fareynic@gmail.com

What you write about American medical care, including Medicare, sounds exactly like the bureaucratic paper chases in Britain and in Canada. I have to conclude that modern industrialized countries reach a climax state where many services are offered, but with degrees of red tape and bureaucracy that not everyone can penetrate.

Maybe the thickness of GovSpeak and hoops to jump through will be why the Great Wars of the 21st Century Have to Be.



Canadian Unity Fan Fund Order Form

c/o Garth Spencer, 6960 Doman St., Vancouver, BC V5S 3H7
garth.van.spencer@gmail.com

CATALOG: [\(3\) Canadian Unity Fan Fund \(CUFF\) | Achtung! The newly-updated August fan publications catalog and order form are now posted here | Facebook](#)

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE CANADIAN UNITY FAN FUND.

To (Name): _____

Address/Email: _____

Item & price	Quantity	Total
Total:		

Do you have any suggestions for items you think should be available to promote CUFF?

eAPA Membership Application Form

Instructions:

- a) *Before you begin, read through **everything**.*
- b) *Follow the instructions and fill in your answers truthfully, so help you Roscoe!*
- c) *And cross your fingers that you'll be accepted into this exclusive group of elite BNFs!*

1. What's your name? _____
2. Come on! Your REAL name! _____
3. Your address: _____
4. Zip code: _____
5. Your E-mail address: _____
6. Your preferred age: _____
7. Your age when you flew to Alpha Centauri at 0.99c? _____
8. Do you have a Facebook account? _____
9. Why, for heaven's sake! _____
10. Titles of some fanzines you have read? _____
11. Did you understand anything in them? _____
12. Are you now, or have you ever been a member of a columnist organization? _____
13. Do you know the way to San Jose? _____
14. But if you don't like crottled greeps, what did you order them for? _____
15. Are you still there? _____
16. Hello? _____
17. Fine! Let's finish this! _____
18. Considering that we are all made of tiny atoms, which combine into molecular structures, which in even more complex combinations make up our fragile bodies, that give us only a fraction of time on this Earth, which swirls around the Sun, in its turn making an orbit around the Galactic Centre every 230 million years, everything under the contradictory natural laws which we may never fully grasp, all of it seemingly gobsmackingly incomprehensible, what is the meaning of life?

19. **Ignore all points 1 to 19!** You were told to read *everything* first, right! Just write something interesting, click on "Save as PDF" in your word processor and E-mail it to EAPA OE garth.van.spencer@gmail.com and you're in.
