

The Obdurate Eye #65

August 2026

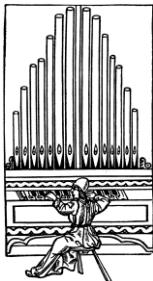
A Garth Spencer fanzine



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THE OBDURATE EYE #65, August 2026, a personal zine from Garth Spencer, 6960 Damon 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 (Musqueam), səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), and skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) peoples.



The organ of no clique or party

Art Credits

“Gulf of Belgium” (clipart)	cover
“Get Odd” (Brad Foster)	p. 1
“Used Spaceships!” (Steven Fox)	p. 2
“Robot from <i>The Black Hole</i> ” (Jose Sanchez)	p. 7
Manlike shape (Hugh Spencer)	p. 12
Time travel (clipart)	p. 13
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On Aliens



There seems to be a rise recently in the amount of public agitation about alien beings from outer space, or from other dimensions, or at least violating air traffic regulations with Unidentified Aerial Phenomena, and incidentally damaging crops. Presumably this is orchestrated to promote Spielberg's latest movie, *Disclosure Day*.

People have been developing a sort of modern mythology about disconcerting experiences and even recorded sights in the sky for the best part of some time. Even before the age of powered aircraft, there were "airship sightings" reported in various scattered areas, with as fragmentary evidence as we now have for UAPs (formerly UFOs).

I say "mythology" because, even today, when we have accumulated many eyewitness statements, and even allegedly physical evidence of visitors from outside our world. The mythology and conjecture has run ahead of

any evidence as swiftly as conspiracy theories have run ahead of any evidence. Just as nature abhors a vacuum, it seems that our imaginations abhor any mystery without an explanation.

Perhaps human imagination is enough to explain why many people have imagined that funny-looking people from outer space are invaders, or alternatively saviours: they projected onto alien peoples the same motives we have displayed in our history, either claiming foreign lands for our empires, or sending out missionaries to save foreign souls, or both. After all, if you developed the technology, why would you and your people invest the resources for these voyages?

Further, I have observed that the stories published about aliens and UFO sightings have elaborated over time. We can now read several sources, in hardcopy and online, about aliens in regular communication with human governments; aliens who took over installations such as Groom Lake/Area 51; different races of aliens, including dwarf greys and giants and reptoids, and humanoid Nordic aliens living among us undercover; recent technological advances being reverse-engineered from alien appliances; and more.

Not very many people have claimed that such visitors are basically practical-minded, self-interested travelers with limited, material purposes for crossing interstellar space (or traveling across dimensional frameworks, or in some versions, traveling back in time).

Robert Anton Wilson, among other writers, pointed out a somewhat different story.

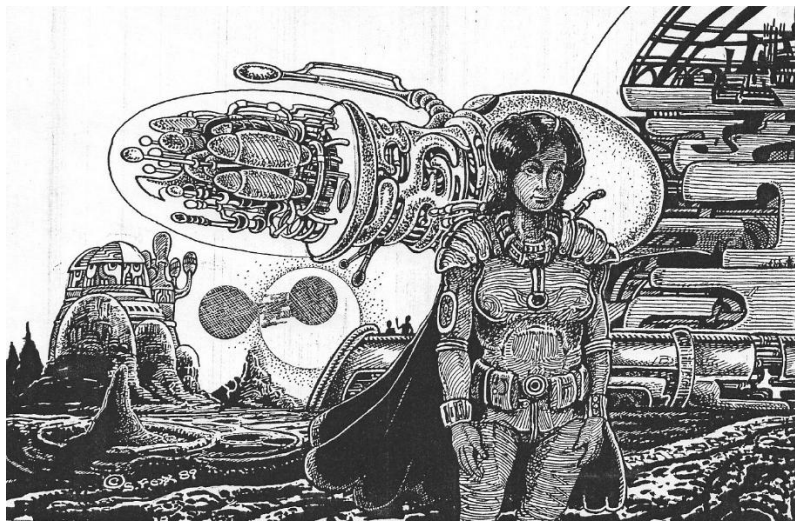
It appears that strange things seem to happen, from time to time and from place to place. What the witnesses see, and experience, and relate can be very different from one sighting to another – and, equally, very different from the standard UFO sighting / abduction / religious vision / Bigfoot or Loch Ness reports we have come to expect.

Wilson went on to point out that the richness of the stories told seemed to depend on how close the witnesses were to some epicentre of the phenomena, and that over time they conformed more and more to the expectations that other people brought to the phenomena.

Different writers have come to different conclusions about the phenomena. Jacques Vallee, among others, concluded that the reported sightings described, not interstellar visitors, but visitors from other dimensions. Also, some stories report the visitors are descendants, come from our deep future to bear warnings to us.

Personally I suspect that, among other phenomena, *reality just breaks down sometimes*. And, at least some of the time, the result is that observers come away with dreamlike experiences and memories, some of which feed the UFO sighting / abduction / religious vision / Bigfoot and Loch Ness reports.

I still think that farmers and air traffic controllers have grounds for filing class action lawsuits. If their lawyers can only find the address on which to serve a legal summons.



Locs

Richard Lynch rw_lynch@yahoo.com, July 13, 2026

...You won't get any argument from me about describing Mad King Donald as a supervillain. He's a bit low on intelligence for that, probably, but there must be several supervillains who aren't the brightest bulb on the Christmas tree. I like the layout of the issue and it's always good to see art from Steve Fox. He was a contributor to *Chat*, back when Nicki and I were living in Chattanooga in the 1970s and 1980s. And as for the sex life of Godzilla, the less I know about that the better, I think.

Thanks for sending me the issue and I'll try to be a more frequent correspondent.

((As the Hare Krishna boys might have chanted: *'Life happens. Life happens. Life life happens happens.'*))

Mark Nelson nelsonmark07@gmail.com, July 15, 2026

I enjoyed Robert [Runté]'s loc. I've never studied sociology and found his brief history of American sociology interesting. I agreed with the thrust of his comments. Agreement does not lead to great locs.

A few areas where I think he over-egged his pudding:

"The current structures are highly functional for the 1%; it's just awful for everyone else"

It's going too far to claim that *"it's just awful for everyone else."*

It seems to be true in many developed economies that wealth is flowing into the upper tiers, not just the top 1% though their share is increasing at a much faster rate than people below them. I don't believe that this is always the result of *"actual conscious and deliberate policies of oppression and exploitation."* That may be a fair assessment of what's happening in the United States. A continuing thought in British political discussion is *"Never attribute to conspiracy what can adequately be explained by cock-up."*

In 1999 the average dwelling price in Australia was approximately nine times average household income. In March 2026 the ratio had increased to 17. One factor that has ramped up the cost of housing was the combination of negative gearing with the 50% Capital Gains Tax discount that the John Howard government introduced in 1999.

Let's ignore the gory details about negative gearing. Essentially, if you make a loss on your property, i.e. the difference between rental return and your mortgage repayment is negative, then you can claim this as a tax deduction. What this means in practice is that, typically, investors can afford to bid more on a property than first-time house hunters: they can afford to pay more than the market value because of the combination of negative gearing (reducing their taxable income) and the reduced capital gain when they eventually sell.

I don't remember the exact figure, but something like 80% (?) of the benefits of negative gearing goes to households in the top 20% by income with the rewards increasing the further up you go towards the top.

Housing affordability is now becoming a major political issue. (I don't understand why it didn't become a political issue earlier). Although Howard said that no politician ever lost a vote because the value of housing increased, I don't think any mainstream Australian economist contends that distorting the housing market was a deliberate policy aim. It's just that the effects of the policy were not through.

(The combination of negative gearing with the 50% CGT discount is not the only factor contributing to the increased cost of housing, but it is a significant factor.)

((Strange: I think I've heard a story like this before, somewhere, sometime ... meaning that the cost of housing in Canada, especially in Toronto and Vancouver, is notoriously out of proportion with median wage-earners' incomes.))

Robert writes that

"Nothing happens by accident. Nothing is the result of flaws or mistakes."

I beg to differ. Before reaching for a conspiracy theory, it's usually worth considering the cock-up theory first.

[Transitioning from Robert's opinions to mine – GS]:

My knowledge of the French Revolution is on a level of my knowledge of sociology. Still, I believe that one of the factors behind the revolution was indeed that

"the court at Versailles was completely cut off from the reality of people trying to live in France."

Regarding your comment that

"Now, it is hard to understand what has happened to the current administration in Washington, D.C., unless we take it as given that the court, I mean the administration, is completely cut off from the reality of people trying to live in the U.S.A."

I don't think it's that hard to understand, and reasons for this have already been given in this issue. I think it's a given that people like Trump are indeed *"completely cut off from the reality of people trying to live in the U.S.A."* However, the applicability of this statement is not limited to Trump, his inner circle, or indeed much of the Republican Party. The mainstream of the Democrat Party appears to be in denial.

I will return to an opinion that I've expressed before: How lucky Australians are that voting in Federal Elections is compulsory.

June 24:

Recently I've been thinking about indexing all the postal diplomacy fanzines I published in the 1980s and early 1990s. It would be nice to have. But is it worth the effort involved? Probably not. OTOH, I've thought about reviewing them issue-by-issue in my ANZAPA zine. At the rate of one-fanzine per issue it would only take me sixteen plus years to construct an index. (Not sure how many fanzines I published, so not sure exactly how long it would take).

Interesting collection of reprints from Den Valdron. (He should run his own zine!) The *[American]* situation is too fluid for it to be worthwhile writing anything in a loc. The only constant is, don't believe anything that Trump says. But it didn't take a war against Iran to learn that.

There wasn't enough Garth Spencer in issue 63!

((I trust you will find this issue rather different.))

You were very diligent in compiling both a Table of Contents (something I usually didn't bother with) and an Art Credits Index. Provided content is identified by page numbers. However, I could not spot any page numbers on any pages in your fanzine! Doesn't that reduce the utility of having an index/arts credit? I might have not bothered with an Index, but by Ghod I put page numbers on my pages.

((That's strange, I thought I put page numbers in every issue. At the bottom of the page. Is that cut off on your screen? I use standard 8 ½" x 11" letter size pages, and I gather that A4 letter size – the metric standard, which is almost but not quite entirely unlike my standard letter size – can make North American zines wonky.))

**Lloyd & Yvonne Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2,
penneys@bell.net, July 18, 2026**

Hello! First of all, my apologies in not responding when I said I would, more than a week ago. Printer problems, new printer, getting to work with my computer, Yvonne having a bad fall, getting her to a hospital which ignored us for 5 hours, and scrambling with responsibilities to *Amazing Stories*, all of which are just a few ingredients to mix into this past hellish week. Now that things have calmed down, here are some comments on what I saw in *The Obdurate Eye* 64.

((Events will be overwhelming sometimes. I guess that is one reason why plans for organizing our lives exist – even though we know that plans do not survive contact with crises.))

If we're living in a set of linked SF shows, the ratings must be poor, there is no set story line, and everyone, including us, roll our eyes and wonder, couldn't they have thought of something more imaginative? Too many AI stories are full of clickbait, and there seems to now be an art to writing a story to intrigue you, yet never bring the story to a logical end.

((There's a twist that I hadn't thought of: that the badly-written virtual reality we're trapped in is scripted by badly-programmed AIs.))

My loc ... the dysfunctional society idea continues with one particular president who is outraged that our forest fire smoke dared to cross the border. In the meantime, when the US has that problem, we help them out. Our fires are a little out of control, and we are threatened with higher tariffs. And they wonder why we really don't want to deal with them ...

Trump has been the inspiration for various villains, including some years ago, a multi-episode plotline in *CSI:NY*. Craig Thomas played the Trumpish character, which was a high-rolling executive whose narcissism was extraordinary. A true running gag.

((There are times when the current president reminds of a character in my family who, similarly, concocted unforeseeable grievances and simply would not be placated.))

SF Market report ... I should formally say that while we are still accepting poetry, we've had to put fiction submissions on hiatus. Honestly, we get lots of good writing, and have accepted much of it. We have to turn off the tap every so often so that we can catch up.

((Talk about scheduling your reading time.))

Yes, we did eventually vote on the Auroras, and we look forward to seeing who the winners are. Right now, as I type, the Pretty Heroes convention is on. It is an anime convention, with emphasis on the format of magical girls and female leaders. We continue to save our bucks for going to next year's Worldcon in Montreal.

((Darn, once again I missed my chance to read the candidates and vote on them. I have got to schedule my reading time better.))

((I was invited to set up the fanzine lounge at the Montreal Worldcon, and now I have been asking previous organizers how to organize this. And I am wondering how to get control of my finances enough to attend the 2027 Worldcon.))

Dinner is close at hand, so off I go to make it. Thank you for this issue, and I will try to be more timely the next time.

We Also Heard From: Nic Farey, Bruce Gillespie, Hugh A.D. Spencer



**ACROSS THE FANDOMENSION WITH
GARTH SPENCER**

See: <https://www.vcn.bc.ca/~garth2>

If you're a fan in Canada or the Pacific Northwest, looking for information about SF clubs, conventions, or fanzines, take a look at "Across the Fandomension."

If you're a writer, looking for basic information about SF/Fantasy/Horror markets, story formats, or copyright, take a look at "Across the Fandomension."

The Continuing Adventures of Garth's Website

See: <https://www.vcn.bc.ca/~garth2>

Back in January 2026 I started something I called "Across the Fandomension with Garth Spencer," an all-text website listing all the SFnal and fannish material I could accumulate. Granted that there are scores of such sites on the Web, still I thought there were niches for documenting either Pacific Northwest, or pan-Canadian, clubs and conventions and fanzines and awards and writers' markets. So I combined these missions.

Nobody has said much about the presentation. More people approved of the information resource I was building than criticized it. Most people haven't responded, which tells me the word hasn't gotten out.

I started learning how to encode and post amateur websites in the mid-1990s, which meant hand-typing HTML code in basic text editor programs, and it shows. I have only minimal ideas of how to use graphics, and in any case my focus is on finding information for fans and writers, and presenting it in an accessible form.

The scope of the website has grown somewhat, of course. While I make updates and corrections to expository and opinion articles as information comes in, I make monthly updates and additions to convention calendars, and have started featuring other SFnal news as I acquire it each month.

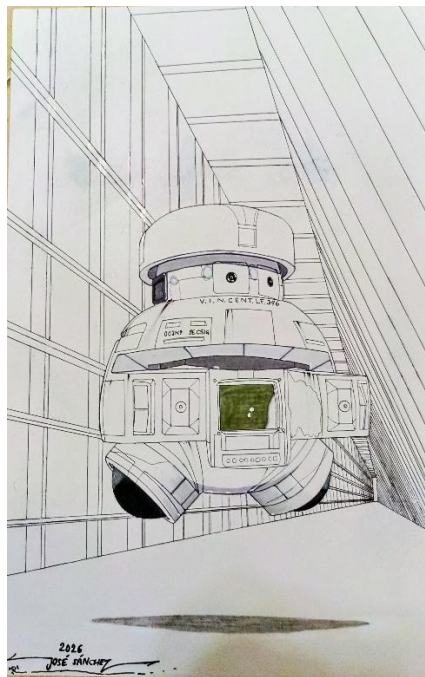
It is a curious thing, but the great majority of SF-adjacent conventions listed online are devoted to anime, comics, gaming, or media franchises, in all their diversity. General-interest conventions seem to be very much in the minority. Many of the

conventions I attended and enjoyed are gone: NonCon, Moscon, Orycon, Rustycon, for instance. And there seem to be far fewer in the American Northwestern states this year than in Canada (which has about a tenth of the population of the USA).

My lists of current fanzines, of mundane zines, and especially of local clubs have remained fairly static. Probably I will have a shock when I launch a comprehensive update, this coming fall. SFnal and SF-adjacent clubs have not responded very much to queries, and a lot of my listings date back as far as 2019.

The most challenging project is going to be completing the list of current writers' markets. I have divided the lists into four: periodicals, vs. book markets; and Canadian, vs. US and overseas markets. Immediately that I started defining which kinds of information to obtain on each (frequency, pay rates, response times, etc.), I found that many markets – small presses and periodicals, predictably – didn't provide all the details I was looking for, but provided a great deal of text about what kinds of submissions they were looking for, and what kinds they rejected.

What the hell, it keeps me occupied and out of trouble.



What's Been Going On

Andrew Nisbet III (Feb 2, 1949 — Jul 4, 2026)

(from online obituary and Garth's recollection)

Andrew Nisbet III, an active member of Portland, Oregon fandom, has passed on. He was 77.

Andrew led the Empire (game) Association for well over 50 years. He also enjoyed role-playing games with essentially the same core group of friends for decades and was one of their valued game masters right up until his passing. He also volunteered to help on

the organizing committees of local and regional science fiction conventions such as Con, OryCon, and Westercon and served on the board of Oregon Science Fiction Conventions, Inc. (OSFCI).

He is survived by his wife, musician Cecilia Eng, as well as his sister Gwyneth Nisbet Hawk, brother Kevin W. Nisbet, and his nephews, nieces, and grandnieces and grandnephews. A Celebration of Life is planned for Tuesday February 2, 2027.

(Garth writes: “My own knowledge of Andrew Nisbet is limited to his chairmanship of Orycon. In one program book he wrote a reasoned argument for congoers to be participating members of conventions, to volunteer and support the operations, rather than merely buying tickets. I greatly appreciated his hitting the nail on the head.”)

Announcing VCON 44!



WCSFA is pleased to announce that our fall 2026 event will officially be:

VCON 44: Pick Your Punk — Living Through the 21st Century

VCON 44 will take place on **Saturday, November 14, 2026**, from **10 AM to 6 PM** at **BCIT Burnaby (British Columbia Institute of Technology – Burnaby campus)**.

NOTE: This will be a focused one-day VCON rather than a full three-day hotel convention, but it marks the official return of the VCON name and the next step in rebuilding WCSFA’s historic speculative fiction convention.

This year’s theme, **Pick Your Punk**, invites us to explore cyberpunk, solarpunk, steampunk, dieselpunk, hopepunk, biopunk, and other speculative visions of the future, the past, and the worlds we build along the way.

We will have much more information to share over the coming weeks about programming, guests, tickets, volunteers, vendors, and how you can help shape VCON’s return.

For now, watch for updates at: vcon.ca. You can also follow WCSFA on [Discord](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Bluesky](#).

(WCSFA newsletter, July 10, 2026)

2026 CSFFA Hall of Fame Inductees

The Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Association Board is proud to announce the 2026 CSFFA Hall of Fame inductees, Kelley Armstrong, James Alan Gardner, and Mike Glicksohn.

(CSFFA Newsletter, "May 2026")

World Fantasy Convention Unable to Find Host for 2027

"The World Fantasy Convention has chosen to remain outside the United States for 2027 and 2028, but no viable bid has emerged for 2027. Instead, a deal has been struck with Fantasycon (first spotted by Locus), the annual convention of the British Fantasy Society and host of the 2025 WFC, for its 2027 event to include 'some aspects of World Fantasy Convention including the World Fantasy Awards.'

"To clear up some of the confusion that has ensued from this news, Fantasycon 2027 co-chair Karen Fishwick sent a long statement to *File 770* clarifying the difference between Fantasycon and the World Fantasy Convention, and explaining the unfortunate circumstances which led to Fantasycon 2027 being scheduled against Eurocon ..."

(SMOFNews, July 1, 2026)

Subterranean Press will close down permanently in late 2027 or early 2028. [L]

Profile Books is taking over Rebellion Publishing's genre imprint Solaris: ebooks from 1 July, physical books from 1 September, with some Solaris staff also transferring. [L]

(Ansible, July 2026)

(Note: the English-language genre imprint Solaris must not be confused with the French-language SF revue Solaris, or its SF, fantasy and horror Prix Solaris. -GS)

Fraudulent Emails re Surrey International Writers' Conference (SiWC)

"We've been made aware that someone is impersonating SiWC staff by using a fraudulent email address to contact authors and invite them to present at SiWC. We are not currently sending out any presenter invitations, and we never ask authors to pay money to present at SiWC. If you receive such communication, please report it as spam/fraud and do not respond. If you're not sure about the legitimacy of an email that purports to be from a member of the SiWC team, you can reach out to us at info [at] SiWC [dot] ca to verify."

(Donna Farley, Surrey International Writers' Conference (SiWC))

Just A Little Intermission, Important Message Follows:

Avoid Alzheimer's - Join EAPA!

Are you an old fan and tired? Science says that if you keep mentally active, the *risk of being afflicted by Alzheimer's is halved!* And there's no better way than to join EAPA, Worldfandom's oldest active Amateur Press Association. Just do a little PDF-fanzine - easy in most word processors - every other month. Contact garth.van.spencer@gmail.com and find out more at <https://efanzines.com/eapa/> (Oct mailings are open). Enjoy real social media that isn't *staccato snippets of 240 chrs.* Discuss skiffy, culture, history, world affairs or just have fun. It's electrifying!



Even More SF Market News

Garth Spencer

In this instalment I continue to find out: which SFFH periodical markets are now open, or will be in the foreseeable future?

GigaNotoSaurus - <https://giganotosaurus.org/> - currently CLOSED to submissions. Follow us on [Bluesky](#) for open submissions announcements.

Grimdark Magazine - <https://www.grimdarkmagazine.com/> - currently closed to submissions.

Kaleidotrope - <https://kaleidotrope.net/> - currently closed to fiction and poetry submissions.

khoreo - <https://www.khoreomag.com/> - next submission cycle to be announced.

Lackington's - <https://lackingtons.com/> - on hiatus, no plans to reopen for submissions at this time

Luna Station Quarterly - <https://www.lunastationquarterly.com/magazines> - currently open for submissions. Our submission period closes on August 15th.

New Edge Sword & Sorcery - <https://newedgeswordandsorcery.com/> - opened August 1st to story submissions.

Nightmare Magazine - <https://www.nightmare-magazine.com/> - currently closed to submissions, probably until the end of 2026

Nights Shades Magazine - <https://www.nightshadesmag.com/> - closed to submissions until further notice

Nygel Magazine - <https://www.nygelmag.com/> - currently closed to submissions

Old Moon Quarterly - <https://www.oldmoonpublishing.com/> - currently closed to submissions

Orion's Belt - <https://www.orions-belt.net/> - currently closed to submissions until September 1, 2026

Penumbra - <https://www.penumbra.com/> - open for fiction and poetry submissions from 15 June to 15 September and from 15 December to 15 March each year

Planet Scumm - <https://www.planetscumm.space/> - opens to submissions on August 13, 2026

PseudoPod - <https://pseudopod.org/> - next open to submissions August 1-11, 2026, and in spring 2027

Radon Journal - <https://www.radonjournal.com/> - submissions are accepted year-round

Reckoning - <https://reckoning.press/> - currently reading for *Reckoning 11*, which will close to submissions August 31st, 2026

Samovar - samovar.strangehorizons.com - currently open to submissions

SciPhi Journal - <https://www.sciphijournal.org/> - currently closed to short fiction

Seize the Press - <https://www.seizethepress.com/> - currently open to submissions

Small Wonders - <https://smallwondersmag.com/> - Small Wonders publishes flash fiction (original and reprint), original poetry, and reprint art - currently open for reprint flash fiction and reprint art.

Solarpunk - <https://solarpunkmagazine.com/> - not open to submissions until January 2027

Space and Time Magazine - <https://spaceandtime.net/> - temporarily closed to submissions

Specpoverse (poetry) - <https://specpoverse.org/> - Submission periods in 2027 may be February 1 to March 31, May 1 to June 30, and September 1 to October 31.

*Star*Line* (poetry) - <https://sfpoetry.org/wp/starline/> - always open to submissions

StarshipSofa - <http://www.starshipsofa.com/> - currently open for submissions

Strange Horizons - <https://strangehorizons.com/> - currently closed to fiction submissions

Swords & Sorcery - <https://swordsandsorcerymagazine.com/> - now seeking original short stories of 1,500 to 8,500 words length that feature fantasy elements and pre-industrial settings

Tasavvur Magazine - <https://tasavvurnama.com/> - submission period is in February each year

The Deadlands - <https://psychopomp.com/deadlands/> - currently closed to fiction submissions

The Future Fire - <https://futurefire.net/>

The Tentaculum - <https://www.drabblecast.org/the-tentaculum/> - currently closed to fiction submissions

Three-Lobed Burning Eye - <https://www.3lobedmag.com/> - currently closed to fiction submissions

Translunar Travelers Lounge - <https://translunartravelerslounge.com/> - open annually for submissions from March 15th through April 15th for our August issue, and from September 15th through October 15th for our February issue.

Trollbreath - <https://magazine.trollbreath.com/> - currently **open** for all submission types until October 31st, 2026

Uncanny Magazine - <https://www.uncannymagazine.com/> - currently closed to fiction submissions – subscribe to newsletter for reading period announcements

Uncharted Magazine - <https://www.unchartedmag.com/> - Currently accepting submissions for: Sci-fi + Fantasy, Thriller + Mystery, Dystopian fiction

Unfit Magazine - <https://unfitmag.com/> - many articles on SF subgenres and the craft of writing in them; no discoverable submission guidelines or reading periods

Utopia Science Fiction - <https://www.utopiasciencefiction.com/> - quarterly; submit by Sept. 1, 2026 for December 2026 issue, by Dec. 1, 2026 for March 2027 issue, etc.

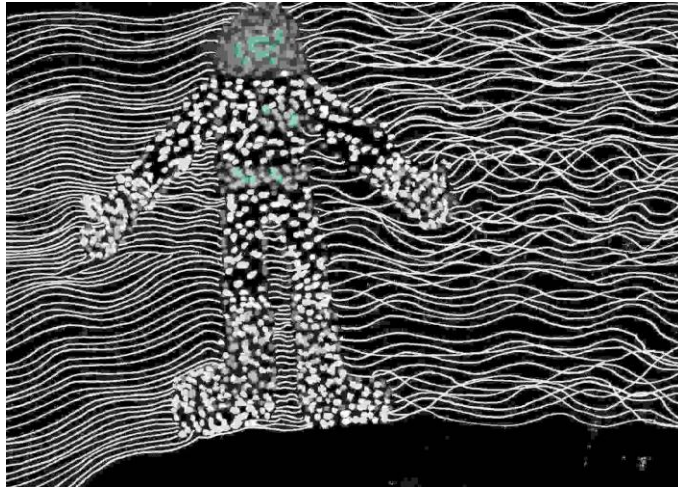
Weird Fiction Quarterly - <https://weirdfictionquarterly.com/> - *Weird Fiction Quarterly* is not generally an open-call publication, but if you have an idea or

example of work that would fit within our pages, feel free to reach out to us at inquiries@weirdfictionquarterly.com.

Zooscape - <https://zooscape-zine.com/> - currently closed to fiction submissions; next reading period will be February 1st-28th, 2027.

The Continuing Adventures of Robert Runté

On Facebook, July 17, 2026:



So, I'm amused to see my papers from over 30 years ago are still being cited. I'd like to think it's because my insights were so profound that they remain noteworthy three decades later, but, um ... not so much. When I looked at the citation from this morning, it's to an essentially random line from the introductory chapter to a book of readings I co-edited. I mean, it's a fine intro and a perfectly sensible line: "As an industry gets more complex, so too does the work and the training of the professional practitioner (Runté,

1995, p. 2)" but, um ... (a) it's not exactly profound or unique, (b) it's something I said in passing, not the actual focus of the chapter or the book, (c) there are probably thousands of others making the same point where the point was actually the point of their research, and (d) – and kind of important – my later publications refuted this position, arguing that knowledge professions were undergoing Taylorization, and that increased training was leading to deskilled workers. So ... I'm probably NOT the guy they should be citing in their multinational research.

I figure this is yet another example of AI-assisted lit reviews. It's not that the AI hallucinated the citation – my textbook intro exists and the line is an accurate summation of that paragraph – it's just a completely random and irrelevant choice. Any of a thousand other articles would have been more appropriate because actually about the topic, not mentioned in passing, and by someone who still believed that was true, not someone who has researched and published why that was no longer true.

Sigh

In my day, researchers spent thousands of hours poring through journals, reading what people had to say on a topic, following the trail of citations forward and backward in time across dozens of dusty journals to make sure one caught everything everyone had ever said on the topic. You made notes, you cited the most relevant authors' most relevant statements that you read in context. You actually understood what you were reading and were able to follow the back and forth of the argument on the topic right up to where the gap or question was that you were addressing.

That no longer happens. Now people just ask AI, "find me an article that says X" and it gives you one, even if it has to find one from 30-plus years ago, out of context and out of date. What I'd argue on that topic today is that the more complex a task, the higher the priority for capitalists to deskill and automate it by adopting an AI agent to do (or direct) that task. The exact opposite of what this current publication is arguing/citing me for.

This is not the first time I've been miscited. Already 25 years ago, I had people citing lines from my most popular article – but citing the argument I was REFUTING, not the one I was making ... so, you know, obviously hadn't read or understood what I was saying, just googled the phrase in their own paper they needed a citation to support, and my article popped up with a helpful sentence, even though the sentences before and after that one were arguing how WRONG that particular idea was. AI has now made that even worse than Googling.

Here's the thing: referees checking the references in that article (if they bother to do so) are checking to see if the reference is an AI hallucination. But that's not the problem here. The article exists, and the person checking can easily identify it as real. But, um ... it's equally definitely not relevant. I mean, the article title sounds like it might be, but it's not actually about that topic, it's 30 years old, and in hindsight, kind of wrong.

I don't know how we fix this. It's no longer possible to review the literature by hunting down journals in library stacks following the trail of citations to identify every relevant article, because there are now many more journals but fewer physical libraries subscribing to fewer and fewer journals, thanks to higher subscription costs (journals now being controlled by multinational corporations, not scientific societies). You can't physically get your hands on half the relevant journals without waiting for interlibrary loans etc. Given the automation of finding citations, articles are now expected to have five to ten times the number of citations as were required for an article when I was doing research. Doing the lit review by hand in a library meant I could realistically only do one article a year – the expectation for three and four articles a year these days means one has to use google, and increasingly, AI summations to meet that level of productivity. AI might be a useful tool, IF people knew how to use it properly, and put in the work to, you know, actually read the articles it found for them – but that's clearly not happening. I mean, if the citation it gives you is 30+ years old, maybe that's a hint that things have possibly changed since? If it's from a textbook, not primary research, that's maybe another flag? That the paragraph the line cited is in is on another topic – well, you get the idea. And superficial checks by thesis supervisors and journal editors/referees aren't going to check this problem, but which of them has time to read the articles the authors haven't?

Instead of self-correcting, science / research has become self-corrupting.



"Look, the Borg—very powerful, very misunderstood by a lot of people, they came to us and they wanted everything. They said, 'Resistance is futile.' I said, 'No, it's not futile, we make the best deals.' So we brought in the Ferengi. Very sharp, very smart businesspeople, nobody handles latinum like them".



"The Ferengi got their 300 billion bars—massive wealth, beautiful bars, the likes of which nobody has ever seen. And the Borg? They get 10%. Just 10% for the next 15 years, okay? The fake news media said we'd all be assimilated. Total disaster. Instead, we have a tremendous MOU. It's huge. It's going to be absolutely fantastic for the Alpha Quadrant, believe me."

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Dispatches from Bizarro World

US Army and Recognized Religions

Posted by [Gary Farber](#), Facebook, June 6, 2026

"Pentagon Cuts 180 Religious Identities From Military Personnel Records" [New York Times]

The new policy, which the Pentagon framed as a largely administrative action, leaves just 31 religious categories to choose from, 22 of which are Christian.

[Meanwhile, in the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, the National Cemetery Administration continues to make available 98 different emblems of faith for headstones, including pentacles for Wicca and the Hammer of Thor for Asatruar.]

By John Ismay, Alexandra E. Petri and Aimee Ortiz, June 5, 2026

"The Defense Department will no longer allow military service members to claim roughly 180 different religious traditions in their personnel records, leaving just 31 to choose from — 22 of which are Christian denominations.

"The change, which was reported earlier by Military. com, was announced on Friday afternoon in a statement posted to social media by Sean Parnell, a Pentagon spokesman, who called it 'a long overdue move.'

“Mr. Parnell framed the change as a largely administrative exercise, intended to simplify data collection for military leaders and chaplains.

“According to the memo, the new system will 'provide chaplains with clear, readily available information that will better enable them to anticipate the religious support needs of service members and to provide religious support activities that align with service members' personal faith and practices.'

“Service members would not, however, be limited to the new policy's 31 'religious affiliation codes' when choosing to include their religious preference on the stamped metal identification tags that are worn around the neck, commonly known as dog tags, the memo said.

“The change is 'not designed to make any claims on the legitimacy of any faith or religious belief, nor is it intended to provide a list of "officially approved" religions,' Mr. Parnell said. 'Rather, it is designed to allow chaplains to quickly look at the religious composition of their units and determine how they structure resources to best provide for war-fighters of all faith groups.'

“Aside from the Christian faiths, the newly consolidated 'religious affiliation codes' will allow soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guard and Space Force personnel to identify in their records as agnostic, Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish or Sikh. Wicca, paganism, humanism and atheism are among those that were removed from the list.

“Those who had identified with one of the 180 eliminated faith groups will have just two options under the new policy: 'no religion' or 'other religions.'

“Mr. Parnell's statement included a link to a video posted to social media by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on March 24, in which Mr. Hegseth said that the military's chaplain corps had been 'infected by political correctness and secular humanism' under previous administrations.

“In response to the policy change, Rachel Laser of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, a nonprofit religious freedom advocacy organization, said in a statement that Mr. Hegseth 'can't erase the religion of service members whose belief systems he finds less worthy without failing to honor his oath to support and defend the Constitution.'

“Our brave service members deserve better,' she added.

“John Ismay is a reporter covering the Pentagon for *The Times*. He served as an explosive ordnance disposal officer in the U.S. Navy.

“Aimee Ortiz covers breaking news and other topics for *The Times*."

The Gernsback Future Is Here. “The US Waymo LLC withdrew over 3,800 driverless 'robotaxis' owing to their AI-powered habit of whizzing past 'ramp closed' signs into roadworks sites and between the rows of cones marking closed-off lanes.” (*The Register*, 19 June 2026)

(*Ansible*, July 2026)

Meanwhile, in Canada

Amrit Birring, leader of BC's Freedom Party, has proudly posted a video of himself and two friends defacing the Pride crosswalk at Holland Park with black spray paint.

Sadly, this will not bother any of the people who voted for him, but it should. Birring said that he does not consider what he did to be vandalism and pointed out that he has not been charged. He is, however, being investigated, and I hope that charges will be forthcoming.

(via [Vicki Oates](#), Facebook, June 3, 2026)



LEXX Unauthorized

Backstage at the Dark Zone

Den Valdron

The story is simple, the story is complicated.

The simple side? During the process of putting together *Dawn of Cthulhu*, I decided to collect and organize all my writing. Fiction, nonfiction, finished stories, lost novels, the whole of it. Twenty-five or thirty hears of work.

It wasn't entirely easy. Across thirty years? Hard drive crashes. Laptop crashes. Working at home and writing at work. Recovery CDs, email files, literally hundreds of floppy disks.

I found my LEXX book, and so I put it up. Voila.

The complicated story? Maybe it's not that complicated.

I don't know that I'd call myself a fan. But I'd literally been following Salter Street films since the night I'd watched their first movie, *Siege*, at the Prospect Street Multiplex in Fredericton, back in University days. I recognized it was local right away, and credits proved out that it had been shot in Halifax. It was a cheap no-budget B-movie whose big twist was ruined by the poster. But it was clever and fun and moved quickly. After that, I followed Salter Street, and the Donovan Brother's progress.

Winnipeg, I ended up seeing a Newfoundland film - *The Adventures of Faustus Bidgood*, and was blown away by its cleverness, and the performances of people like

Brian Downey, Andy Jones, Mary Walsh and others. That, together with Denys Arcand's *Decline of the American Empire*, completed my revelation - Canadians could make films, we could cheap and efficient, we could be inventive and low budget, funny, thrilling, intelligent and insightful. A world opened up for me.

The Salter Street boys must have felt the same way, because they went up there and recruited them. The next year Salter was producing *Codco* with the *Faustus Bidgood* gang. Then eventually *The Industry*, *This Hour Has Twenty-Two Minutes*, and more.

And meantime, Salter kept producing movies, mostly under Paul Donovan, quirky indy products, *Buried on Sunday*, *George's Island*, *Defcon 4*, *Norman's Awesome Adventure*, *Paint Cans*, *the Squamish Five* - I'm naming them out of order. Some were art house, some were B-movies, some were TV movies.

You know, if I had it all to do over again, I think I would have called up Paul or Michael Donovan and begged to go and work for them summers while I went to University.

So I knew about *LEXX* before it ever aired, although truthfully, I didn't know much about it.

In a nutshell: *LEXX* is a space opera, running four seasons, about a ten mile long living spaceship shaped like a dragonfly that was grown by an evil empire to blow up planets. Before it could do that, it was stolen by a rando group consisting of a security guard, a renegade assassin, a runaway bride with lizard DNA, and a lovestruck robot head ... oh, and a cannibal woman, although she only appeared a few times.

The series was created and mostly shot and produced in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with a trio of Canadian writers, including the creator Paul Donovan, and a cast and crew that were mostly local or Canadian. Mostly Canadian, and mostly Maritime.

It was a German co-production for the first three seasons, and a British co-production in the last season, so there was some influence there. And first season, it was funded by Showtime, last season by the Sci Fi Channel. So there were influences there.

I fell in love from the first movie, "I Worship His Shadow." It was fucking brilliant. It was a vicious, cynical "take that!" to *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*. It was inventive and surreal, funny in a very dark way, vivid in its visuals, fatalistic, optimistic, you name it. It owed as much to Bunuel and Jodorowsky as it did to Bunuel and Lucas, and was as much *Barbarella* as *Battlestar Galactica*.

And it was uniquely Maritime, it had a sensibility - Potatoes and Lobsters, small town, a marginalized awareness that you'd never reproduce in New York or L.A., or for that matter, in Toronto or Montreal.

I absolutely loved it. So as it went on, I was definitely a fan. I even pitched Salter Street a book. Never heard back. But I was very active, and very insightful on *LEXX* forums and message boards, and I guess someone noticed....

So one day, Paul Donovan's assistant contacted me and asked if I was interested in doing a book?

Holy cow!

YES!!!

This was my dream! This was going to be my book. The start of my career, a gateway and maybe an in to connections in the industry, both publishing, and film & television. It was going to be my breakthrough..

I intended that this was going to be the best book of its kind ever written. Better than the *Outer Limits Companion*, better than *The Making of Blade Runner* or *The Devil's Candy*. This was going to be landmark stuff, the standard by which everything else gets measured.

This was going to be it. By this time, I had a couple of novels already sitting in the can waiting for a publisher. I had dozens of published short stories, some credits with high end genre markets, reviews, honourable mentions in the *Years Best Anthologies*. I'd received grants. I was getting noticed. I was right on the edge, maybe.

This was going to be it. The breakthrough. The dream. The project that would kick open doors and get people to sit up and take notice. That would make me a name and get me off slush piles. That might open all kinds of doors. The sky was the limit.

And the subject matter - a film company that I'd been tracking since they'd started, artists I'd been following for years. A production that was intensely Canadian, even Maritime, a unique brilliant sensibility, the little company that could. The subject matter was ... amazing, and it felt like I'd literally been born to write this book, that I'd been preparing for it since the beginning of Salter Street.

It turned into a three year odyssey of travel and interviews, phone calls, set visits, conventions, a whole chunk of my life, a marketing manager that didn't do his job, one publisher, TV Books, and then another, ECW, and another, Titan Books in England (fucking assholes), and another, and in the end, I just burned out and walked away with nothing to show for it but a mouth full of ashes.

Fuck it. In the end, it was Titan Books, they wanted garbage, they demanded all of my years of work, and they offered to pay me shit - the last straw was them mentioning how they'd rewrite it in the house style.

I wrote back I had their book, I'd written it the way they wanted. But they'd never see it. There was no contract, they had no rights to any of my work and I'd sue if they used it.

I told them to go to hell. That was one of the greatest feelgood moments of my writing career. Maybe the greatest. Ironic.

It took me a while to get to that point with them, and there was a lot of anger and angst along the way. After all, this might be my one and only chance to have a book.

But I learned a couple of valuable lessons - Never take a shitty contract, never allow yourself to be forced into writing a shitty book. Never.

Rob Sawyer helped a lot. He talked to me, and he basically pointed out that it wouldn't help me in any way. There was no reason to sign. I'll give him credit. He was right. It hurt, but it helped make the decision.

So... Titan Books? Fuck'em. I am not kindly disposed to them. Not that they care, lol.

Then I sat down in The Pas, and wrote the book I actually wanted to write, exactly the way I wanted to write it. No compromises. Just every bit of research and thought and insight and talent that I had.

I just poured it all in, writing in a white heat of passion. It was a beautiful monster!

I had it printed off into a single copy. I went to Winnipeg, and had that one copy bound in two volumes. Then I flew out to Atlanta, and gave it to Brian Downey, the star of the series. This was at Dragoncon, a convention, at a *LEXX* gathering, I just went up, and gave it to him. I remember him holding the two volumes like Moses and his tablets.

That was it.

I was done.

Brian promptly lost the second volume.

I was working under insane time constraints trying to just get it done, so he only got a rough draft, with literally thousands of typos, misspelled names, etc. I'm truly sorry about that. If I'd had even an extra week to go over it, it would have made a much better book.

But literally, I was printing off the last pages the morning I drove 700 kilometers to Winnipeg, and I only retrieved the bound copies as a rush job two hours before I flew to Atlanta. The window to finish the book and to get it to him was incredibly constrained.

But I'd like to think that the gesture counted for something. That whole gesture - the printing, the binding, the travel The Pas to Winnipeg and Atlanta and back probably cost me a few thousand dollars that I didn't have.

I would have printed off and had bound more volumes (and likely edited and cleaned it up, given that I would have had time to work on it) for Donovan the creator, or Gigeroff or Hirschfield, the other writers, or McManus, Haberman, Seeberg or even Dubin, Bennett, if any of them had asked. I would have.

I have no idea how much extra work and time and how much more money it would have taken, particularly given I had to travel to Winnipeg to get them bound. Potentially another few thousand dollars I didn't actually have. But I would have done it. But they never asked, so I never did.

I suppose all that tells you something about me. About pride and stubbornness, about relentlessness, and this peculiar sense of honour, this need for some kind of formal resolution, for finality.

Qualities that have done me absolutely no good in my life.

Anyway, after that, I flew back to Winnipeg, drove the 700 km back to The Pas, put all my *LEXX* materials in a box, carried it into the basement, and just tried to forget about. I'd had my shot, it hadn't worked. Three years of heartbreaking work, all that time, all those interviews and notes, the travel, all of it, down the drain. Time to move on.

The writing career was dead - I'd been out of the rest of the market for years. All the dreams were dead, and the experience with publishers was bitter enough it put me off writing. It was dead before it had even started.

I didn't write anything for a few years after that, I was that burned. I was fucking charred. I quit. I just quit. Fuck it.

Fifteen years later, I find a manuscript on an unmarked floppy disk. And a year after the book. The first of a four book series, ultimately.

So I guess....

I won?

An Adventure in Bookshopland

from George Phillies



... I took the widowed friend of mine who no longer drives a car out to lunch at a nice Chinese restaurant. We then advanced to the large local bookstore, to which neither of us had ever been. I remember the bookstore in question from its old location, when it had extremely large book collections of all sorts. On the bright side, the new bookstore was truly large. Inspection revealed that much of its floor area was covered with tables of one sort of gew-gaw or another. The cafe was not open on a Sunday. The books were hiding in back. The science fiction collection was reduced to two standards, the standards not being very tall. The fantasy collection was three times as large. There was also a young adult collection, which was as large as the first two of these put together.

Several things were apparent even from a distance. Modern book covers look very odd. They were mostly done in pale pastels. In general the covers were not quite as strange as the abstract art covers of a half-century ago, but they were not very attractive. In my opinion, decently done AI art

could have been a considerable improvement, assuming that the novel inside had any merit. As is well known, distribution of traditional paperbacks has collapsed. In fact, there were no traditional paperbacks anywhere in sight, only trade paperbacks and hardbacks. Neither of these are exactly going to encourage reading by young people, given their prices. Perhaps e-books are the future, given that the competition appears to have decided to blow its brains out, assuming that there is anything in the target zone.

I did, especially for the young adult section, spend considerable time looking not at titles but at author names. A good eighty or ninety percent of the authors were women. Now I have nothing against women writing science fiction, since a good number of my favorite authors are of the female persuasion. However, the distribution seemed to be out of balance a bit.

The second notable feature was that there was an absence of military science fiction. I saw nothing by Correia, Ringo, Finn, Weber ... I did spot one book by Brandon Sanderson. It was the third volume of a four volume set, so I wasn't tempted to buy it. I have since mail ordered book 1 of the series. I also looked for Baen books. That

search was unavailing. I didn't look quite as hard, so I might've missed one, but I didn't see any.

My guest and her husband had both been serious science fiction fans. Their collection of books and SF magazines started solidly in the early 1950s, extended in a significant way to well before that, and was more or less complete for books since then. For technical reasons too complex to go into, I did my guest the favor of counting, rough estimate, how many titles there were in her collection. Around twenty-two thousand. My guest said she had read more or less all of them twice, and was always grateful when I showed up with a new book, most recently the Dan Willis Arcane Detective series. However, she looked at what was on display, has a standard for evaluation, and at the end we really didn't see anything that looked worth buying.

I did make a modest survey of the young adult books, at least to the back cover. Several sounded to be on the edge of erotica. Perhaps I took a statistically weak sample. On the bright side, I did see that two books by Tamara Pierce had recently been reprinted. However, I can certainly see why science fiction book sales may not be doing too well.

Reflections on AI

Den Valdron, Facebook, July 25, 2026

This is fundamentally the challenge of AI. It's a production/economics one, and its one that we have seen over and over and over in economic history.

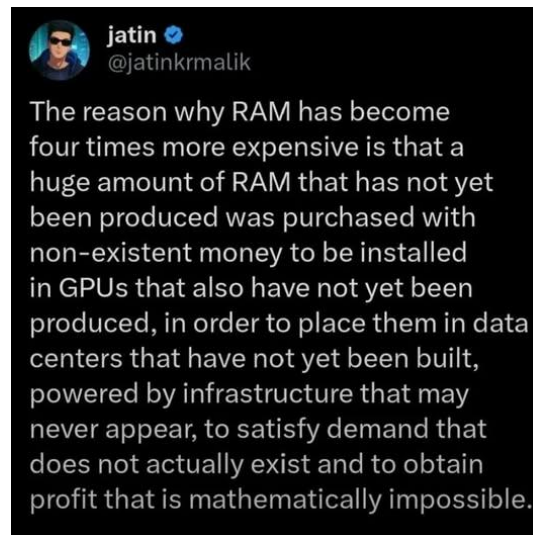
When you introduce a technology that produces inferior goods, slop, but can produce at far higher rates and far cheaper than the prior craftsmanship, then that's the end of craftsmanship. Slop overwhelms and floods the marketplace, the artists or craftsmen are driven out of business.

We're already seeing it happen. YouTube is flooded with AI written and narrated videos. You can tell by the speaking one. Online non-fiction, those clickbait 'news' or 'feature' articles, are literally overwhelmed. I'm on something called 'Medium' and its literally taken over by AI. Other forums are similar. Again, you can tell easily by the writing style, and by the fact that often the information is wrong 'hallucinated.'

Unfortunately, this is where fiction writing is going. The rising tide of slop is going to flood us all. So far there have been two responses:

One has been denial, where we all pretend we and our work are special unique snowflakes that can never be matched, and that we'll be loved and cherished by anonymous readers for our specialness.

That's not actually true now, and it's going to be less true in the future. The record for these things is that slop is just going to increase and increase to a flood. And the



record also, is that once slop floods the market, slop gets better and better and tastes get worse and worse. So you're done for.

The other has been hybridization or enlistment - AI is treated as a tool, embraced, adopted, used for writing. It's treated as just another tool. It's the equivalent of 'just putting the tip in.'

As a side note, I have to laugh when people tell me they use AI for research - given the propensity for AI to hallucinate, sometimes at rates of 30% to 90%, AI research is ridiculously dangerous. It's stuff that sounds plausible, rather than being exactly accurate.

Hybridising, or enlisting AI is not going to work, simply because the tide is inexorable. Hybrid writers will face the same rising tide of slop that the rest of us do and they'll either be swept along or swept away. If they're swept along, then they're just part of the slop.

I don't know what the answer is, or if we even have an answer. The consensus going to Indy Writers Conferences is that Writers need to build a personal following selling their authenticity - so newsletters, fanbases, superfans that will support a career, individual and personal marketing. The equivalent of people who make their own soap or candles and sell them at craft shows.

It's something at least, but I don't know if it will work, if it will work for now, or will lead anywhere, or if it will have a future in a changing world. In particular, I don't know if it will be safe from slop, or sketchy little entrepreneurs using slop and pretending to authenticity to compete for fanbases and 'superfans.'

I've been a writer all my life. It's the thing I have loved, that has always been more important and vital to me than my day jobs. My writing has endured and been with me beyond failed long term relationships, friendships have come and gone, family has died off, I've moved, changed careers.

Writing has been my constant, it's the place where I've felt alive, felt there was meaning. It's the thing that soothed my soul and kept me going. It's broken my heart a dozen times. I've quit a half dozen times. But I always came back to it.

I cannot say I've been a success. I've published with magazines, had credits, over and over on the verge of breaking through to something, somewhere. I've got several books out, mainly self-published, but a handful of published and almost published credits. But a lot of work has gone into each book - the gestation period for some of my books, from the moment I started writing to publication, has been years. Some of them I've worked on or had for five or ten or twenty years. They represent chunks of my life.

Ten years struggling with something, the ups and downs of the Lexx Book, or Starlost, the struggle for a novel like Bloodsucker or the Mermaid's Tale. Some asshole can pump out a shitty AI book in a week, with no effort.

I can't really compete with that.

I look at AI, and I think maybe I'm looking at the death of something I loved. Something vital and meaningful to me, my touchstone, rotting to some zombie parody before my eyes. I'll confess, it hurts.

It's not even the worst part of AI - the more you look at it, the worse the larger issues get.

I have concluded that democracy is not compatible with private AI. It's going to be one or the other. The capacity of AI for total surveillance and manipulation is such that if we let it get out of hand... democracy ends in any meaningful way. You can't have Palantir and a free society. We don't have a government of people, we have a government of AI owners.

The people who run and control AI are essentially greedy sociopaths. I'm absolutely serious, and absolutely accurate there. The only legal objective privately owned corporate AI is to maximize wealth. They're not there to save the world. They're there to loot it. And they can and will.

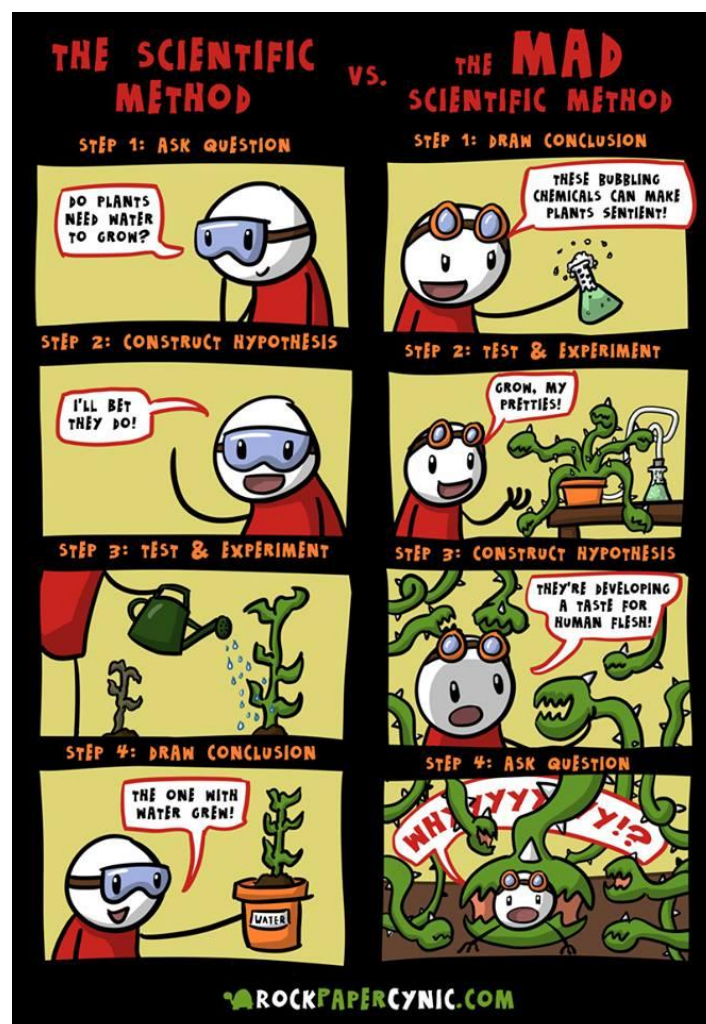
They're utterly indifferent to harm or risk or disruption, recklessly dragging us all off a cliff.

In that sense, considering the monstrous capacity and threat of political, economic, social and personal harm, my resentment and pain of what will happen, what is happening, to my avocation seems like a small thing.

It still hurts.

The paradox of humans is that we could build a utopia for each other.

Instead, we build the shittiest possible world.



Movie Reviews

Duncan Shields, July 3rd, 2026

Movies I've seen lately:

Dogman (2025)(animated)★★★½ - Good clean fun. Based on the VERY silly and entertaining kid's books by Dav Pilkey. After a very damaging accident, a hotshot police officer needs to get his head removed and replaced with the head of his faithful police dog. It's *Robocop* for kids! He fights an evil cat and an evil fish and there's a friendly kitten in the mix. Very creative, fun, ridiculous. As an animator, I was deeply impressed with the production of the movie. It has this faux-Claymation look to it that isn't easy to achieve with 3D animation but they nail it. It's wholeheartedly a kid's film, don't get me wrong, but it's well done and, like the book, utterly embraces the ridiculousness of its premise. - Streaming on Prime and AppleTV. Available for rent/purchase from Flixfling, and Cosmogo.

The Collector (1965)★★★★ - Directed by William Wyler. Creepy, creepy Terence Stamp stalks and kidnaps Samantha Eggar, holding her captive in a furnished dungeon in his farmhouse, hoping to spark love and a relationship. He's independently wealthy, collects butterflies, and is coo-coo bananas. It's an understated psychological thriller/suspense/horror film which makes Eggar's attempts to reason and Stamp's oddly calm insanity all the more gripping. Eggar even got an Oscar nomination for the role. Unfortunately, it apparently inspired some real-life serial killers which is pretty chilling. But I really enjoyed the film. - Rented on YouTube. Also available for purchase from Prime, GooglePlay, and AppleTV

The Eclipse (2009)★★★ - An interesting slow-burn Irish drama with a dash of ghost horror thrown in. The long-faced Ciarán Hinds plays a widow with two kids and a dying father-in-law who is living in an assisted living facility. As a driver for a local writing festival, Hinds drives Iben Hjeje, a ghost-story author, around town. They hit it off even though she's carrying on an affair with a married douchebag author played by Aidan Quinn. Meanwhile, Hinds occasionally has some truly terrifying sightings of the ghost of his father-in-law even though he's still alive. Very weird little film. The acting is fantastic and the scenes are gripping and the few scares are top notch. I just don't really understand how or why the movie exists. Like, for instance, there are zero eclipses. Not much happens plot-wise and it's not scary enough to be a horror. But I liked watching it, though, so there's that. Intriguing little film if you're curious. - Streaming on Kanopy (the public library streaming service) and Tubi. Available for rent/purchase from AppleTV and Flixfling

The Entity (1982)★★★½ - Barbara Hershey and Ron Silver star in this 1982 supernatural horror film about a single mom who gets repeatedly sexually assaulted and harassed by a brutal invisible assailant. Based on a real-life parapsychology case. Very unsettling with some properly scary scenes. Controversial at the time for its sexual assault depictions, even though they are ghost-based. It works on several levels because the men who listen to her either don't believe her, hit on her, want more proof, or try to experiment on her. Some *Ghostbusters* and *Poltergeist* vibes in parts. Very interesting film with a very courageous Hershey performance. I liked its uniqueness and enjoyed watching it. A bit long and maybe a bit uneven but a wild

ride. And SO many split-diopter shots! I love those! Hopefully you can track it down if that sounds interesting to you. - Watched on Russian YouTube. VERY hard to find.

Autumn Sonata (aka *Hostsonaten*)(1978)(Swedish)★★★★★ - I saw this as a recommendation as a pairing with *The Piano Teacher* (2001) and I get it. VERY emotionally intense. Written and directed by Ingmar Bergman and starring Ingrid Bergman in her final film role along with Liv Ullman and Lena Nyman. A cold, distant mother (Bergman) is a world-famous concert pianist who is invited to stay with her daughters. Once she's there, the eldest daughter and her have it out over the course of the mom's time there, everything coming to light in a series of really harsh and revealing conversations. Everyone acts their absolute pants off. VERY mature, deep, and engrossing. I loved it. - streaming on Criterion. Available for rent/purchase from AppleTV

Dr Jekyll & Mr. Hyde (1931)★★★★★ - Superstar Fredric March (who won an Oscar for this film) plays both the eponymous Dr Jekyll and, under a ton of makeup, the twitchy Mr. Hyde. Based on the 1886 Robert Louis Stevenson tale, this is one of the MANY versions of the story to be brought to life in film, but this one is thought by many (me included) to be the definitive version. It has WILD cinematography (POV shots, diagonal wipes, revolutionary camera tricks) and amazing special effects for the time. Deeply unsettling domestic abuse scenes with overtly sexual overtones happen when Hyde shacks up with destitute bar floozy Ivy (the radiant Miriam Hopkins who starred with March two years later in *Design for Living* (1933) about a throuple!!). All pre-Code so it still packs a heck of a punch. A timeless classic about our inner beasts. I mean, it's 1931 so it has certain broad trappings but I recommend it. - rented from YouTube. Also available for rent/purchase from AppleTV

Exit 8 (2025)(Japan)★★★★½ - Based on a 2023 video game, a man and some other people get trapped in a seemingly eternal maze of looping subway concourses that become nightmarish if they don't figure out how to find their way through them properly. More 'liminal space horror,' not unlike *Backrooms* or the deeply unsettling Spanish 2014 film *The Incident*. It's well-produced and has a lot of excellent WTF moments. It's perhaps a smidge underwhelming because it's merely very competent. It's hard to adapt a video game because games essentially have a premise, not a story. I quite enjoyed this film and I'm glad I saw it but it didn't get its hooks into me quite like I was hoping it would. But it's worth watching. - rented from AppleTV. Also available for rent/purchase from Prime.

Extreme Prejudice (1987)★★★★★ - Walter Hill (48 HRS., *Streets of Fire*, *Red Heat*) directs a RIDICULOUS cast in this action thriller neo-western. Nick Nolte, Powers Boothe, Rip Torn, Michael Ironside, Clancy Brown, and William Forsythe snarl and shoot their way through a drug kingpin's plans involving US Government black ops soldiers. Even the dearly departed Tommy "Tiny" Lister shows up! And Maria Conchita Alonso. The script wastes no time getting started. Well-shot and well-acted with intense action and a wild climax. Didn't do big at the box office which I can sort of get because it's needlessly complex, the *mano a mano* stuff gets a little silly, and the film slows down just a smidge too much at the end before the big finish. But I frickin' loved it. A testosterone tidal wave and stuff blows up real good. - rented on Prime. Also available for rent/purchase from AppleTV.

Frances Ha (2012)★★★★½ - Greta Gerwig stars in this interesting black and white tale-of-New-York movie about an aimless 27-year-old quasi-loser dancer played by Greta

Gerwig as she feels the walls of adulthood closing in. A bit of a cringe watch but we probably all were her at some point. Friends are getting married or pregnant, she's increasingly out of her depth at dinner party conversations, and her best friend is drifting away. Real life is coming up fast and hard. The acting is naturalistic and it's shot well. It's been compared to Jarmusch and Truffaut but I don't know if I'd go that far. When it was over and I saw it was directed by Noah Baumbach (*Marriage Story*, *The Squid and the Whale*) I was like "Ahhhh, okay." It's got that Baumbach feel and he married Greta Gerwig in 2013 and it's apparent that he loves her here. Would make a good double bill with 2021's *The Worst Person in the World* or 1978's *Girls Friends* by Claudia Weill. I wasn't digging it at first but it grew on me. A well made film. Not too many woman-based films like this kicking around so good on it. - streaming on Prime, Netflix, Crave, and Criterion.

Freebie and the Bean (1974)★★★★ - Wild, wild stuff. The first buddy cop movie, predating *48 Hrs.* by eight years. Police officers Alan Arkin, the uptight one, and James Caan, the loose cannon, wreak absolute HAVOC on San Francisco while trying to protect an organized crime boss until they have enough to take him to trial. Alex Rocco is their frustrated chief who'll have their badge and their gun if they don't shape up. It's sort of five movies thrown into a blender. Like, there's comedy, wacky antics bordering on cartoon logic, love stories, COPIOUS levels of property damage/car chases/violence, an adultery subplot, serious drama, and a nihilistic ending. It didn't quite know what it wanted to be but it hit on something. I figure twenty minutes could have been snipped from its 113m runtime and it's got a bunch more good-natured racist banter than I'm super comfortable with (Alan Arkin and his wife Valerie Harper are supposed to be Mexican, you see) but I LOVED it. You can totally see how this winning formula buddy-cop film spawned a whole genre in the '80s once screenwriters narrowed the scope and streamlined the formula. Essential viewing for the history of such films. - rented on Prime. Also available for rent/purchase from AppleTV.

for July 24th, 2026:

The Odyssey (2026)★★★★ - Half of Hollywood stars in this latest attempt to bring this epic to the screen. I saw it in 70mm at the [Park Theatre](#) on Cambie which was a fantastic way to see it and probably the best you'll get around these parts. Honestly, I quite liked Nolan's take on the moral of the story and I liked most of the sequences, especially the cyclops, Circe's island, and the ending. It's a little dissonant seeing American-accent-having A-listers in the before times, the palette was a bit murky and dimly-lit (for me), plus it's three and a bit hours which is a huge ask. BUT, BUT, BUT, even with those caveats, and it's obvious Oscar juggernaut vibe, I really enjoyed the film; what it says about war, humanity, trauma, intention, what it implies about the present, and what it says about blood AND chosen family. I liked everyone's performances, especially John Leguizamo and Robert Pattinson. Definitely one to see on the big screen. At the Park if you're in Vancouver. It's playing there constantly in beautiful 70mm for the rest of the month and it's the place to see it. I might go see it again. As one enthusiastic young man shrieked to the crowd at the end of our viewing when the credits rolled, "ABSOLUTE F*CKING CINEMA!" - Watched at the Park theatre.

The Invite (2026)★★★★ - Olivia Wilde directs herself, Seth Rogen, Penelope Cruz, and Edward Norton in a funny movie about a miserable, stuck, spark-gone-out New York

couple who invite the loudly sexual upstairs couple over for an awkward dinner. A screenplay co-written by Rashida Jones based on a 2020 Spanish comedy film *The People Upstairs*, which in turn was based on a play, which makes sense since it all take place in the one apartment. Great stuff. Especially in a theatre. It really benefits from a crowd watch. These four actors really combine well for tension and comedy. Well worth a watch. Lots of sex and relationship talks so I'm sure it'll spur many a conversation between many a couple. Great editing, too. I'm curious about the original film now. Anyway, fun for everyone. - Now playing in theaters

G.I. Blues (1960)★★ - Another Elvis movie. I had heard that *King Creole* and this one were his best. I believe it. I liked *King Creole* better than this one, though. Elvis is in the army here, fresh after his real-life discharge. Elvis plays a soldier who, naturally, is also a struggling musician. He and his fellow soldiers are womanizers and they put money on Elvis not being able to bed a local dancer who has turned everyone else down, played by the unique-looking actor/dancer Juliet Prowse (a guest star on season one of the *Muppet Show*!). Elvis and the girl fall in love for real, though, and it messes up the bet. Along the way, he sings a bunch of actually very catchy army-themed tunes. Elvis made a HUGE number of turkeys so I can believe that this one rated higher than the others. Watchable, fluffy, light, and colorful even though it's sexist and trite, as was the style at the time. Just okay. - Streaming on Tubi and FawesomeTV. For rent/purchase from AppleTV.

House of Whipcord (1974)(UK)★★½ - A dark little tale. An extremely conservative older couple buy an abandoned prison and start to run it themselves as a private, independent jail, exclusively for the purpose of reforming the wanton women they have kidnapped and brought to them. She was a girls' school matron and he was a high court judge. I'd say they've gone crazy if it wasn't for the fact that they'd fit right in with some of the powers that be these days. A naive and sexy 19-year-old French model visiting London is fined for indecent exposure after a nude outdoor photo shoot. She's kidnapped and brought to the prison and has a REALLY bad time. I thought this would be a lurid, cheesy, exploitation film but it's disturbingly relevant. Rated X at the time, but it's fairly tame in terms of gore and nudity or what have you. Intercut flashbacks give us the full story as it goes. It's not a GOOD movie, mind you. A bit dated and boring but the core story is solid and it gets dark. If you like an old British nasty with a smidge of edge, this might be your jam. Maybe. - Streaming on Kanopy, YouTube, and Plex.

Reflection in a Dead Diamond (2025)(France)★★½ - An aging superspy is losing his hold on reality. He has flashbacks that he thinks are happening right now. Are all his old enemies closing in? Is he dreaming? Is he in a movie? Is he just some old man losing his mind? Is any of this real? All of his flashbacks of jet set superspy life are reminiscent of the trippy, Technicolor, high-style 1960s European spy adventures like *Danger Diabolik*. I'm conflicted. I found it impossible to really connect with and it was that level of arthouse that I find deeply pretentious and abstract. HOWEVER, it had so many sequences that, taken on their own, were super cool. Like, as a music video with a vague plot, it would have been great. But as a feature film, I basically only endured it. But once in a while, I'd be like "Oh that's so cool!" But not enough times for me to recommend it. Depends on what you like. - Streaming on Shudder, for some reason. Also on AMC+. Available for rent/purchase from AppleTV.

Stepfather 2 (1989)★½ - Not nearly as good as the surprisingly-watchable 1987 original, which had layers and a tighter script. Terry O'Quinn reprises his role here, this time with the laser-eyed Meg Foster as the unsuspecting single mom and the tragically late Jonathan Brandis as the kid. That's some good talent right there but the movie falls flat. Like, in this movie, none of the copious news reports about an escaped killer happen to also show a picture, for one. Also, he straight-up got stabbed DEEPLY in the heart in the first one. To have him wake up in a mental hospital with a chest scar like "phew that was close" is ridiculous. It could be worse but it's just a forgettable attempt to squeeze a bit more cash out of the surprisingly-good first one's success. - Streaming on YouTube and FawesomeTV.

Stunt Rock (1978)★★ - A strange little movie. Real-life Aussie stunt man Grant Page travels to LA to help out his cousin's wizard-themed glam rock band Sorcery with their concert pyrotechnics. I mean, by saying that, I'm suggesting that there's a narrative here and that's on me. There isn't. Not really. It's simply a showcase for all the stunts Grant Page has done and bunch of footage of Sorcerer rocking out. Not so much a "movie" as much as a feature-length montage. It's 1970s from the firehose, so if that floats your boat, get in there. I personally needed a bit more in terms of an actual story, but there's fun to be had. This is a great candidate to just have on in the background at a party or something. - Streaming on Tubi, YouTube, and Plex. Available for rent/purchase from GooglePlay and AppleTV

Metro (1997)★★★ - Eddie Murphy stars in this surprisingly watchable cop movie. He plays a wisecracking hotshot loose-cannon hostage negotiator who gets partnered with uptight SWAT sniper Michael Rappaport. Together, they are hot on the tail of my favorite villain, Michael Wincott (*The Crow*, *Nope*) who REALLY brings it. A bit long at two hours and the clunky romance Murphy has with Carmen Ejogo could have been snipped a lot but the action is top notch! A lot of stuff blows up, a SHOCKINGLY high number of cars flip, and chaos reigns in downtown San Fran when these two take matters into their own hands. Pretty happy I saw this. It has its problems but the good stuff is great and it's a rock-solid couple of performances from Murphy and my man Wincott. Worth a watch if you like some cop drama. - Streaming on Disney+ and YouTube. Available for rent/purchase from YouTube, Prime, GooglePlay, and AppleTV

Some Came Running (1958)★★★★ - Vincente Minnelli directs Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and the radiant Shirley MacLaine in a drama about a short-fused, failed-writer veteran (Sinatra) who comes back to his tiny home town, much to the chagrin of his estranged, upwardly-mobile brother. A born-loser love-struck floozy (MacLaine) follow Sinatra around like a puppy. Dean Martin is a hard-drinking gambler who befriends them both. Love is denied, drama flows, fights break out, passions run free, and love makes fools of us all. Five Oscar nominations and it was the highest-grossing film of 1958. It's high-quality stuff. Very colorful, especially the climactic finish. It's an Oscar-grab movie and it's a bit long at 2hr 16m, but I enjoyed watching it. Boy, that Shirley MacLaine, amirite? Human fireworks. - Streaming on Criterion. Available for rent/purchase from YouTube, AppleTV, GooglePlay, and Prime.

Hell Comes to Frogtown (1988)★★½ - Fun utter trash. Sam Hell (wrestler "Rowdy" Roddy Piper) is one of the only fertile males in a post-apocalyptic wasteland. He's acquired by what's left of the mostly-female medical/military provisional government, put in a booby-trapped metal diaper contraption, and sent with strong, hot chaperones, one of whom is Sandahl Bergman from *Conan the Barbarian*, to rescue a

hot quintet of kidnapped fertile ladies from amphibious humanoid frog-people mutants. I mean, if that sentence doesn't get you excited, then we are not similar. Sure, this is enjoyable garbage juice but it's a little sad because it could have been MORE enjoyable. This is the kind of movie that would have been legendary with a tighter script, snappier editing, and some better performances. Plus Roddy Piper's character is arrested for serial sexual assault in the beginning of the film so, like, I never really warmed to him. But the mutant amphibian effects aren't the worst and it definitely has its moments. I've for sure seen worse. It knows what it is and it mostly delivers on the premise. I had a pretty good time, except for the sexism, sexual assault vibes, and wildly uneven script. - Streaming on Tubi, Prime, Plex, and Dailymotion

Check out all my reviews on

<https://letterboxd.com/duncanshields/films/reviews/>

Fanzines Received

SMOF News, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 2026, Petréa Mitchell ed., 548 Market Street PMB 72296, San Francisco, CA 94104, U.S.A. email smofnews@substack.com.

CSFFA Newsletter, July 1, 2026, from the Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Association
newsletter@csffa.ca.

The Visionary, July 1, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 29, 2026, Universal Life Church, 2720 1st Ave S, Seattle, WA 98134, newsletter@themonastery.org

WCSFA Newsletter, July 1, 10, 2026, c/o info@wcsfa.org.

Ansible, July 2026, David Langford ed., drl@ansible.uk

SF Commentary #124, Bruce Gillespie ed., 5 Howard Street, Greensborough, VIC 3088, Australia, Email: gandc001@bigpond.com.

MT Void July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 2026, Evelyn Leeper, evelynchimelisleeper@gmail.com

Opuntia #631, July 1, 2026, dale Speirs ed., opuntia57@hotmail.com

The Chatter Box #20, #21, 22, July 2026, "The Fresh Fanac Fanzine, A genzine by Leigh Edmonds, leighedmonds01@gmail.com or by pactsarcd at 60 Park Street, Wendouree, Vict. 3355, Australia

MIP Newsletter July 7, 2026, Murderous Ink Press, Please contact sales@murderousinkpress.co.uk

Ray X X-Rayer #190, Ray Palm ed., raypalmx@gmail.com

Tightbeam 381, 382, July 2026, the N3F literary fanzine, editors George Phillies, phillies@4liberty.net, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609 (U.S.A.) and Jon Swartz, judgeswartz@gmail.com .

Vanamonde, John Hertz ed., 236 S. Coronado St., No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057



The N3F Fan Gazette, July 2026, Mindy and Jason P. Hunt eds., e-mail to mindyhunt@scifi4me.com or jphunt@scifi4me.com

The National Fantasy Fan, July 2026, George Phillies, phillies@4liberty.net, and Jon Swartz, judgeswartz@gmail.com, editors

Captain Flashback #92, July 2026, Andy Hooper, fanmailaph@aol.com, and Carrie Root, carrieroot49@yahoo.com, editors

This Here... #92, July 2026, Nic Farey, 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, Email fareynic@gmail.com



New Book Releases

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Abbreviations: hc = hardcover, tp = trade (oversized) paperback, [UK ed] = British publication, [CDN ed] = Canadian publication. Default is US publication.

Other Titles: Please note that this listing is not exhaustive; we have many more (several hundred more) titles coming during this period.

July 2026 New Fantasy and Science Fiction Releases

Aaronovitch, Ben. *STONE AND SKY*. [RIVERS OF LONDON #10]. DAW, 27.99 tp.

Abeysekara, Shalini. *THIS BLADE OF OURS*. [THIS MONSTER OF MINE]. Union Square, 25.99 tp.

Agajanian, Isa. *MODERN DIVINATION*. [SPELLS FOR LIFE AND DEATH #1]. Tor UK, 21.99 tp.

Anderson, E. M. *THE LORD OF THE WOOD*. Hanover Square, 24.99 tp.

Asher, Neal. *DARK AGENT*. [TIME'S SHADOW #2]. Tor UK, 33.99 tp.

Bianco, Julia. *WITCH SEASON*. [BROKEN COVEN #1]. St. Martin's, 42.00 hc.

Bontrager, Megan. THE SEA HIDES ITS DEAD. Run For It, 25.99 tp.

Broadbent, Carissa. THE FALLEN & THE KISS OF DUSK. [CROWNS OF NYAXIA #4]. Bramble, 27.99 tp.

Broadbudd, Maurice. A CITY DREAMING. [ASTRA BLACK #3]. Tor, 45.99 hc.

Brooks, Mike. THIS IS WHERE THE FUTURE BLEEDS. Titan, 24.99 tp.

Bullen, Chiara. THE INN AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT VENGEANCE. Del Rey, 40.99 hc.

Campbell, Rick. THE SEED OF DESTRUCTION: A COLONIAL FLEET NOVEL. [NEXUS HOUSE #6]. Severn River, 26.99 tp.

Carrick, M. A. THE EYE OF LEVIATHAN. [THE SEA BEYOND #1]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Christopher, Adam. MASTER OF EVIL. [STAR WARS]. Worlds, 27.00 tp.

Cleeton, Chanel. AN INFINITE LOVE STORY. Berkley, 28.99 tp.

Connolly, Amanda. THE LURE OF WOLVES AND WHISPERS. [THE MARTYRED ISLE SERIES #1]. HarperCollins, 42.00 hc.

Craig, Erin A. A LAND SO WIDE. Vintage, 28.99 tp.

Cross, Charlotte. THE BRIDES. Hanover Square, 39.00 hc.

Dawson, J. R. THE LIGHTHOUSE AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD. Tor, 25.99 tp.

De Feo, Giovanni. THE SECRET MARKET OF THE DEAD. Saga, 26.00 tp.

Dedroog, Lauren. DANCE OF SERPENTS. [CURSE OF CROWS #2]. Gollancz, 24.99 tp.

Durst, Sarah Beth. THE ENCHANTED GREENHOUSE. Bramble, 27.99 tp.

Eaton, Abbie. SHADOWHART. [DRAGONHART #2]. One More Chapter, 24.99 tp.

Flint, Eric & Ryk E. Spoor. FENRIR. Baen, 12.99 pb.

Gadziala, Jessica. MERMAID IN MANHATTAN. Avon, 24.99 tp.

Goff, Ellen Pauley. THE FAREWITCH OF FOXE HOLLER. Saga, 28.00 tp.

Golden, Christopher. CARRY ME TO MY GRAVE. St. Martins, 41.00 hc.

Greene, Jayson. UNWORLD: A NOVEL. Vintage, 26.00 tp.

Grist, Rhiannon. HOME SICK. Solaris, 22.99 tp.

Haddon, Seth. VOLATILE MEMORY. Tor.com, 24.99 tp.

Haddon, Seth. NULL ENTITY. [VOLATILE MEMORY DUOLOGY #2]. Tor.com, 34.99 hc.

Hinkley, Sara. THE RED SACRAMENT. Titan, 25.99 tp.

Hunter, Faith. UNPREDICTABLE MAGIC. Ace, 27.00 tp.

Hur, Angela Mi Young. THE LOOM TREE. Erewhon, 37.99 hc.

Johnson, Joshua Phillip. THE BLOODLESS QUEEN. DAW, 29.99 tp.

Julian, Jen. THE WINTER FOLK. Run For It, 25.99 tp.

Keisling, Todd. THE SUNDOWNER'S DANCE. Shortwave, 24.99 tp.

Kemmerer, Brigid. WARRIOR PRINCESS ASSASSIN. [BRAIDED FATE #1]. Avon, 25.99 tp.

Lackey, Mercedes. VANYEL AND VIXEN. [VALDEMAR] DAW, 39.00 hc.

Lauter, Chloe. THE FLAYED MAN. Soft Skull, 23.00 tp.

Martin, George R. R. A SONG OF ICE AND FIRE 2027 CALENDAR. Worlds, 26.00 cal.

Martineau, Maxym M. MANOR OF DECAY. [THE THREADMENDER CHRONICLES #2]. Voyager, 39.00 hc.

McCarthy, Wil. THIEVES' SKY. [RICH MAN'S SKY #4]. Baen, 37.00 hc.

McEwan, Stacey. A FORSAKEN PROPHECY. [THE ARTISAN TRILOGY #2]. Saga, 42.00 hc.

Modesitt, L. E. LAST OF THE FIRST. [SAGA OF RECLUCE #26]. Tor, 42.99 hc.

Morris, Susana M. POSITIVE OBSESSION: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF OCTAVIA BUTLER. Amistad, 24.99.

O'Malley, Daniel. ROYAL GAMBIT. [CHECQUY #4] Back Bay, 25.99 tp.

Oh, Temi. NOT WITH A BANG. Saga, 26.00 tp.

Olthoff, Melissa. TEMPERED BY FIRE. [THE GRIFFIN CORPS #2]. Baen, 25.00 tp.

Parry, H. G. THE WITCH BELOW THE DREAMING WOOD. Redhook, 25.99 tp.

Paxman, Emily. ALL WE HAVE LEFT. Titan, 24.99 tp. [BC author].

Pinborough, Sarah. WE LIVE HERE NOW. Flatiron, 25.99 tp.

Polk, C. L. THE FEYWILD JOB. [DUNGEONS & DRAGONS]. Worlds, 41.99 hc. Canadian author.

Pote, Ryan. THE GHOST CITY. [BLOOD AND TREASURE #2]. Berkley, 41.99 hc.

Pritzker, Robyn J. THE MOONSINGERS. Poisoned Pen, 26.99 tp.

Raeta, Rachelle. THESE IMMORTAL TRUTHS. [PEACHES AND HONEY #1]. Tor, 41.99 hc.

Robson, Eddie. THE HEIST OF HOLLOW LONDON. Tor, 25.99 tp.

Roy, Lucinda. THE BIRD TRIBE. [THE DREAMBIRD CHRONICLES #3]. Tor, 45.99 hc.

Ryan, Morgan. A RESISTANCE OF WITCHES. Penguin, 28.99 tp.

Salvatore, R. A. THE FINEST EDGE OF TWILIGHT: FORGOTTEN REALMS. [BREEZY DO'URDEN]. Worlds, 27.00 tp.

Sanches, Julia. THE MULAI MUNIR HACHEMI. Coach House, 24.95 tp.

Shunmugam, Megan. THE MORTAL TRIALS. Angry Robot, 26.99 tp.

Szal, Jeremy. WOLFSKIN. Gollancz, 39.00 tp.

Tchaikovsky, Adrian. STARSEER'S RUIN. [WARHAMMER: AGE OF SIGMAR]. Black Library, 21.99 tp.

Tingle, Chuck. FABULOUS BODIES. Nightfire, 38.99 hc.

Tremblay, Paul. DEAD BUT DREAMING OF ELECTRIC SHEEP. William Morrow, 39.00 hc.

Walton, Jo. EVERYBODY'S PERFECT. Tor, 40.99 hc.

Weber, David, Timothy Zahn & Thomas Pope. A CALL TO DECEPTION. [MANTICORE ASCENDANT #5]. Baen, 37.00 hc.

Wellington, David. EREBUS-13. [RED SPACE #3]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

White, Andrew Joseph. YOU WEREN'T MEANT TO BE HUMAN. Saga, 26.00 tp.

Wiswell, John. THE DRAGON HAS SOME COMPLAINTS. DAW, 39.00 hc.

Wong, Tao. THE FIRST STOP. [A THOUSAND LI #2]. Ace, 41.99 hc. [Canadian author].

August 2026 New Fantasy and Science Fiction Releases

Ahlborn, Ania. THE UNSEEN. Gallery, 26.00 tp.

Anders, Charlie Jane. LESSONS IN MAGIC AND DISASTER. Tor, 27.99 tp.

Anson, Marvellous Michael. FIRSTBORN OF THE SUN. Penguin UK, 21.99 tp.

Aragon, Jesse. THE DEMON STAR. DAW, 39.00 hc.

Araki, Akane. MURDER AT THE END OF THE WORLD. Pushkin Vertigo, 23.95 tp.

Arena, Brittney. TO DANCE WITH DEATH. [THE EDGE OF GLASS #2]. Random House Canada, 38.00 hc.

Ayinde, M. H. A DANCE OF BURNING BLADES. [INVOKER TRILOGY #2]. Saga, 31.00 tp.

Barber, Griffin. 1637: PILGRIM'S PASSAGE. [RING OF FIRE #40]. Baen, 37.00 hc.

Bennett, Robert Jackson. A TRADE OF BLOOD: AN ANA AND DIN MYSTERY. [SHADOW OF THE LEVIATHAN #3]. Del Rey, 39.99 hc.

Blake, Olivie. DREAMLAND. Tor, 41.99 hc.

Bo-Young, Kim. A PLAGUED SEA. Nightfire, 34.99 hc.

Broadbent, Carissa. THE BLOODBORN DUET, BOOK ONE: LION & THE DEATHLESS DARK. [CROWNS OF NYAXIA #5]. Bramble, 41.99 hc.

Buckley, Charlotte. THE WITCH IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT. Magpie, 24.99 tp.

Cadogan, Catrin. RED DRAGON SONG. HarperNorth, 25.99 tp.

Cameron, Miles. WHALESONG. [ARCANA IMPERII #3]. S&S/Saga, 30.00 tp. Canadian author.

Carmody, Louisa. THE SHADOWS THAT LISTEN. [ANGEL RUIN]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Cast, P. C.. QUEEN OF SHADOW. Morrow, 39.00 hc.

Chan, Eliza. HARBOUR OF HUNGRY GHOSTS. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Chizmar, W. H. THEM. Gallery, 39.00 hc.

clarke, august. THE FELICITY COMPLEX. Erewhon, 37.00 hc.

Dinniman, Matt. CARL'S DOOMSDAY SCENARIO. [DUNGEON CRAWLER CARL #2]. Ace, 29.00 tp.

Eames, Andrea. A TANGLED MAGIC. Erewhon, 24.95 tp.

El-Arifi, Saara. EARTHBOUND. [THE FAEBOUND #3]. Del Rey, 40.99 hc.

Fletcher, C. A. THE TWO OF US AT THE END OF THE WORLD. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Gailey, Sarah. SPREAD ME. Nightfire, 24.99 tp.

Gong, Chloe. EYES OF KINGS. [FLESH & FALSE GODS #3]. Saga, 41.00 hc.

Gonzalez, Alex. REKT. Erewhon, 24.95 tp.

Hampson, Robert E. THE SANDS OF MARS. [BIONIC FRONTIER #2]. Baen, 25.00 tp.

Hanrahan, Gareth. THE DUNGEON BOOK. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Hart, Callie. BRIMSTONE. [FAE & ALCHEMY #2]. Forever, 28.99 tp.

Heartfield, Kate. MERCUTIO. Voyager, 26.99 tp.

Herrera, Jennifer. SIREN SAYS. Putnam, 41.99 hc.

Jackson, Kosoko. THE MACABRE. Voyager, 25.99 tp.

Katsu, Alma. FIEND. Putnam, 27.00 tp.

Kingfisher, T. SWORDHEART. [SWORDHEART #1]. Bramble, 27.99 tp.

LaRue, Taylor J. STEELBORN. [THE STEELBORN SAGA #1]. Requited, 40.00 hc.

Lee, Fonda. UNTETHERED SKY. Tor.com, 24.99 tp.

Lee, Geneva. HARBINGER. Entangled, 48.99 hc.

Lemming, Kimberly. I PUNCHED AN ALIEN AND NOW WE'RE IN COUPLES THERAPY. Berkley, 28.99 tp.

Lim, Elizabeth. FISHBONE CINDERELLA. Del Rey, 41.99 hc.

Lloyd, Ellery. TIME TO BURN. Harper, 39.00 hc.

Mack, David. RING OF FIRE. [STAR TREK: STRANGE NEW WORLDS]. Pocket, 26.00 tp.

Maclean, S. A. SUNSPLITTER. [BEASTS OF THE VOID #2]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

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