

N'APA 284

September 2026



The Official Organ

#284

Next deadline: November 15, 2026

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Procedure: Please Read:

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

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

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

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

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INTERMISSION #169

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA & N'APA and others queuing for gas. I hope have time for @SFJournalen on Tw/X...RSN. If you have a fanzine, lets swap ads! Typos? No, it's just we don't discriminate. Any spelling will do! Late July '26.

Editorially: Ukraine Is Winning with New top Brass

This has to start with very sad news: Lars "LON" Olsson has passed away. Obit below. A dear friend who also was a sort of staff artist for *Intermission*. LON has been doing art pieces for this zine for many years. As I remember it began with that he spontaneously sent me a jpg. I liked it and asked for more. We'll see if I'll continue with LON art – if so, from the net, eg Froggy Gordon strips.

BTW, your editor has now passed *50 years in fandom!* I found the address to the Scandinavian SF Association (abr SFSF) tucked into a book in a bookshop on Göt Street in the spring of 1976 and wrote for info. I soon had their newszine, #78 of *Fanac*, in the mailbox. It had info about Scancon '76, which I couldn't resist. I was a green, innocent teenager and now I'm an old dinosaur. Time passes fast...

Genre history has been my interest almost from the start. It was Harry Warner who got me hooked. I ordered (from the SF-Bokhandeln) and read his *All Our Yesterdays*, it must have been already in 1978, the same year as my first fanzine. I read sf history in all the books available. Since then I've done quite a lot of history digging. I'm by now one of the Swefans who knows most of genre and fandom history. (But I'm rotten on recent history. Older history is much more interesting. And I don't dig in media-sf: TV, movies, comics, games etc.)

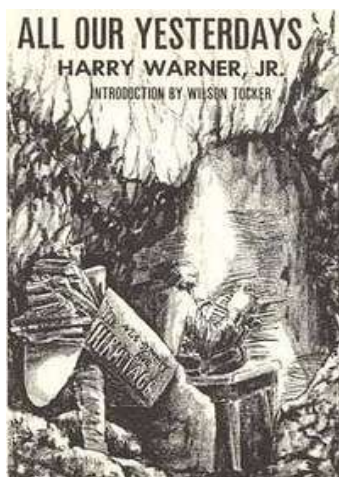
Intermission has become a bit known for its history coverage. I had quite a lot of history also before the History Corner column was formally named. (One thing I thought fun was that Viking Society that in most details worked exactly like Tolkien societies!) If you have interesting sf or fandom history, contact me.

I'm rather satisfied with having unearthed some unique history, like the 1682 magazine *Relationes Curiosae*, the 1945 club *Atomic Noah*, the 1952 fanzine *Vår Rymd* (and interviewing one of the editors!), early works by Polhem and Celsius, numerous things from the Royal Library...

So I'm proud to present *yet another unique find*: an adventure magazine convention from 1890, guested by a major writer (who was also into science fiction). One could argue that the *Golden Hour National Convention* tastes a *little* like an sf convention. AFAIK I'm first with this - beside Smithsonian, of course, my main source - as I haven't seen anyone else mention it. More below.

Another thing I'm deep into is Putin's stupid war against Ukraine. I follow the biggest war in Europe since WWII as close as I can. And a lot has happened lately. Ukraine has major successes while having a domestic political crisis. The Ukrainian defence minister Fedorov and commander-in-chief Syrsky, couldn't get along. The young minister has during his half a year in office promoted Ukraine's successful drone warfare, made Musk close Starlink for Russia, improved recruitment with new types of contracts, improved supply chains, fought corruption. Syrsky is an "old fart" thinking of war Soviet style, having less than optimal respect for his soldiers. Some say Fedorov's fight against corruption has angered the older military establishment that likes to take a little on the side... Syrsky issued an ultimatum: choose him or the defence minister. So Zelensky showed his minister the door, whereupon Ukrainians began huge protests in the streets. They saw how effective Fedorov had been. So Syrsky has now been removed instead, and a new defence minister has been named, a general Drapaty who seems competent and also of a younger generation (Fedorov is said to get another "important position").

Meanwhile, Ukraine has virtually cut off Crimea, including hitting over 200 [!] Russian supply ships in the Azov and Black Seas. Long-range drones are taking out Russian refineries and other energy assets, causing acute gasoline shortages with mile-long queues at gas stations. Lately, Ukraine has



My inspiration half a century ago.



begun targeting Wildberries warehouses (Russia's Amazon), which has huge economic consequences. These warehouses also distribute body armour, optical cables, camou clothing, etc. Lots of small businesses are going bust, as Wildberries refuses to pay damages. And Putin receives less tax revenue to waste on his war. Russian economy slows down. More than 1% of Russians are dead or maimed in the war, ie 1 in 50 males. And more will be mobilised into the meat grinder in autumn, after the fake Duma elections. Putin is desperately selling off his gold reserves, as no one trusts his war bonds, which have been dumped onto Russian banks - most of which now stand on the brink. Russians lack Internet access (instead forced to an FSB-monitored app), have limited access to bank accounts, no gasoline, recurring blackouts, and collapsing medical and social services as Putin diverts funds to his war. Huge black clouds from oil fires hang over Moscow and elsewhere...

Brave Ukraine turns Putin's fascistoid dreams into his nightmare.

--Ahrvid Engholm, ed

Ps. If you do your own fanzine, join the ad swap! (Info at the end.)

LON - Artistic Genius Gone

We have received the shocking news that a giant within Swedish sf circles has clocked out. Lars "LON" Olsson (b. 1938) passed away on Monday the 29th of June. He was 87. (Not wanting to be

pushy I never asked him about his disease, but cancer or heart perhaps?)

Besides being a good friend, LON is of course known for his artistic genius. I first saw Froggy Gordon ("Blixt-Grodon" in Swedish - in the English name I've tried to keep the pun relating to frogs) in the Swedish edition of Sam J Lundwall's *SF - What's It All About*. Later I could follow this great, absurd space hero in the Stockholm University student paper *Gaudeamus*.

Froggy Gordon represents a completely unique kind of humour! LON's creative brilliance can hardly be overstated.

I had quite a lot to do with LON in other contexts. He made the cover for my anthology *Swede Ishes #1*. He often did illos for fanzines. I've made it a habit to run LON in the last roughly 75 issues of *Intermission* where he developed a new style that I hadn't seen from him before. (I wonder whether I should continue, as it's no longer possible to get original illos. This spring when he couldn't contribute as he was hospitalised, I took and colourised Froggy Gordon, with good results.)

LON previously worked at the Royal Library and helped me researching *Relationes Curiosae*, the SFish magazine from 1682 that I've written about. Later, when I in *Intermission* reviewed a book about the history of Swedish porn, LON told me that he in the 1960s worked for the porn publisher Curt H:son. He gave me photos from their office and some inside info. I covered that in *Intermission* too. Interestingly LON assured us that Curt H:son was a real gentleman!. LON was always kind, almost to the point of being self-effacing, but he was a GIANT! He must have had thousands of illos in fanzines, being a bit like a Swedish Bill Rotsler - but LON was better than WR! Sam J Lundwall wrote (cosigned by wife and daughter) in paper *Dagens Nyheter* July 15:

Our dear Lars Olsson, "Lon," of Stockholm, has passed away peacefully. He was 87 years old and is survived by his daughter Elin, son Erik, and their families. His wife Ulla passed away in 2016.

Many of us remember Lars's comic strip *Blixt-Grodon*, which was published in the student magazine *Gaudeamus* from 1964 to 1987. Even then, he displayed his remarkable talents as an illustrator, humorist and satirist. His wonderful phrasing and boundless imagination entertained us immensely, and we always looked forward to the next issue of the magazine. The strip tells the story of Hilmer Grannas who, often behind the woodshed, transformed himself into Blixt-Grodon, the terror of evildoers. This parody naturally brings to mind both Clark Kent, who became Superman in a telephone booth, and, of course, Flash Gordon. Lars drew



LON illoed fanzines, books, did Froggy Gordon strips, etc. "Blixt-Grodon" refers to Flash Gordon. As "Grodon" points to frogs ("grodor") I translate the name of this resourceful, dadaist philosophy hero to Froggy Gordon.



LON



inspiration from everyday events as well as happenings in the wider world. There was so much that readers could recognize from their own lives that we found ourselves smiling inwardly as we read the strip.

He also contributed to other newspapers and magazines, but eventually gave this up to work for many years as a librarian at the Royal Library, where, among other positions, he served as head of the Newspaper Department. Yet he continued drawing throughout his life. After returning home from work and rising from the dinner table, he would often say, "Now I'm going to draw a little fellow."

Lars also enjoyed taking long walks, at first accompanied by his dog, and during these excursions he took many photographs. He had a keen eye for detail, capturing little things that caught his attention and sending the pictures to his friends, accompanied by cheerful comments.

During his final years, heart problems prevented him from taking the walks he missed so much. Instead, at his desk, he created an annual calendar featuring one of his drawings for each month. For several years, this became a much-appreciated Christmas gift. Perhaps unexpectedly, Lars was also a good jitterbug dancer.

HISTORY CORNER

Another early convention

Intermission has earlier written about what may be called the world's first sf convention, the *Vril-Ya Bazaar and Fete*, centered around Edward Bulwer-Lytton's sf novel *The Coming Race*, held in London's Royal Albert Hall in 1891. There's a lot of material about it on the Electronic Interwebnet. eg <https://www.royalalberthall.com/about-the-hall/building-and-history/our-history/the-first-ever-sci-fi-convention>, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vril-Ya_Bazaar_and_Fete or <https://www.mentalfloss.com/history/first-sci-fi-convention-vril-ya-bazaar>

But I just stumbled upon an earlier event, the *Golden Hours National Convention*, held in Brooklyn, New York, March 30, 1889. *Golden Hours* was an adventure magazine. *Smithsonian* writes, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/19th-century-golden-hours-convention-brought-young-readers-together-meet-their-literary-heroes-180968437/> :

...a thick crowd of eager children – estimates say as many as 2 000 – converged on the Palace

Rink in Brooklyn for the inaugural Convention of the *Golden Hours Club*. *Golden Hours*, a popular "story paper" full of adventure stories for young readers, had prepared a jam-packed evening of entertainment for its fans: peppy, patriotic songs descended from an orchestra couched in the music loft. The children were treated to hours of performance from musicians, Civil War veterans, ventriloquists and caricaturists, with the itinerary running until nearly midnight. There were celebrities, too: the author Edward Ellis talked at length to a rapt crowd about "the Indians, of whom the boys have read so much." The kids, noted the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, "were noisy and hearty and were afforded full rein."

The entertainment included musicians, Civil War veterans, ventriloquists, caricaturists, and the program ran until midnight, which may indicate that many attendees were young adults rather than children (who wouldn't be allowed to stay up that late). Edward S Ellis spoke at length about Indians and the Wild West which was a frequent topic in the *Golden Hours* stories.



Two covers of *Golden Hours*. Note "To Mars with Tesla" and there might be an electric discharge on that cover. I find issues at the Internet Archive but they are from many years earlier and I can't download them. Very little other material online about this magazine. (Could US fans close to a well-stocked library help?)



This seems to be the Brooklyn Palace Rink. Prob'ly de-iced for the event. Plenty of room for 2000.

Beside this the magazine had contests, puzzles, Q&A columns and stories submitted by the young readers.

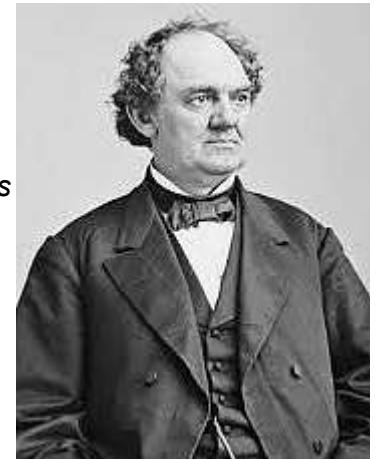
It's more than likely that Golden Hours had some science fiction stories. We read "To Mars with Tesla" on the cover of one issue. Some digging gives us more names: *H Irving Hancock*, "specialized in near-future" eg *The Conquest of the United States Series*, "*Li Shoon*" Serials "evil mastermind who wielded futuristic chemical compounds and advanced machinery", *Edward Stratemeyer* of young inventor Tom Swift fame. The publication was based in NYC. One Norman Munro was the publisher and a WC Dunn editor the first ten years. Stories about futuristic adventures and inventions were very popular, even if the term "science fiction" didn't exist yet. It was after all the era of Jules Verne, and HG Wells, Edgar Rice Burroughs and others were just around the corner. That could make it a little bit of an sf convention...if you stretch it a little bit! They even had guests of honour of sorts:

The keynote speaker was no less than circus mogul PT Barnum, who at 79 years old could still leave a crowd hanging on his every word. "When the rotund form and curly gray locks of the venerable showman appeared inside of the door," wrote the Eagle's correspondent, "the youngsters arose to their feet and cheered and stamped and whistled." The New York Times corroborated, claiming that the roaring and cheers of the assembled children were louder than any circus calliope, and that "Barnum never got a more honest ovation." Giving the children high-fives and handshakes, Barnum waited five minutes for the applause to subside, at which point he did a few magic tricks for the crowd, pulling a half-dollar from one volunteer's nose. When he spoke, it was to advocate for moral living and the importance of good habits, and he warned the children against tobacco and alcohol

Edward Ellis was also there as they were

*...putting PT Barnum alongside Edward Ellis onstage [it] was the 19th-century equivalent of saying you'd have Stan Lee and George R R Martin appearing together at Comic-Con... Ellis was a titan of Gilded Age youth literature, and his 1868 mechanical man novel *The Steam Man of the Prairies* is often considered to be the first American work of "edisonade," a modern term that refers to stories about clever, young, steampunky inventors. In Ellis' story, characters described only as an "Irishman" and a "Yankee" stumble upon a teenager who has ingeniously built a steam-powered robot of sorts to pull a carriage for him. (Adventure!) The robot, cutting-edge and thoroughly alien, is ten feet tall, stout, and vaguely menacing with a tin stovepipe hat and a glowing coal furnace in its stomach.*

The author of a sort of robot connects the event to science fiction! Ellis wrote more sf, like *Land of Mystery* (1889), *Monarch of the Air* (1907), *Flying Boys in the Sky* (1911), *the Dragon of the Skies* (1915). The



PT Barnum. Did magic tricks on this event.

Golden Hours Club had 10 000 members - as a sort of early SF League... - and their convention was repeated in 1891 in Philadelphia, but then stopped, as far as we can find out. Here's Smithsonian again:

*The late 19th century was a fertile period in America for popular literature, in large measure due to the rise of pocket-sized dime novels and weekly illustrated "story papers" of serialized popcorn fodder that plainly and spryly catered to the public taste, asserting the newly prominent role of the audience as a driver of mainstream American culture... These periodicals were printed cheaply and often, and thanks to their low price and a rising literacy rate they were wildly popular, creating the space for a direct line – from both a writer's and an audience perspective – into modern popular fiction, particularly in the fan-friendly comic, fantasy and sf genres. Hundreds of titles appeared from the Civil War period onward, among them Frank Leslie's *Boys of America*, *Pleasant Hours for Boys and Girls*, and *Beadle's Dime Novels*. *Golden Hours* was one of the most popular story papers, printed weekly from 1888 to 1904 in more than 800 usually weekly issues (it turned monthly the last few years)... The papers featured letter columns by which readers could get in touch with each other just as the LoCols in later pulps. It provided a venue in which children could, for a time, feel independent: grown-up enough to purchase and read their own paper, kids could interact with editors by submitting letters or stories of their own, share a common experience with other readers and even suggest where the story might go next. Children could not only write letters or take part in contests, but submit their own writing for a shot at seeing their name in print.*



Sf story by Edward S Ellis.

The Golden Hours Club was a real, structured organization with numbered chapters. They organized athletic clubs, military clubs, correspondence clubs, and had initiation fees.

The Golden Hours Magazine covered the club activities in its pages, which would be worth checking out (your trusted sf fandom historian has combed the net but found no issues from the period, only a few front covers and at Internet Archive issues from several decades prior). All in all it reminded quite a bit of the later Science Fiction League. It may be worth investigating if anyone establishing SFL had prior knowledge about the Golden Hours organisation.

The story papers (more than just Golden Hours are implied!) were a direct precursor to modern popular fiction, including comics, fantasy, and science fiction. And they had participatory fan culture decades before Hugo Gernsback and SFL.

Yet Another Finncon

It was with the huge Silja Princess ferry I went to Turku for Finncon 2026 (10-12 of July). The Finland ferries of both Silja Line and Viking Line are all monstrous, taking up to 3000 passengers and are full of restaurants and shops - of which the most important is the Taxfree shop! Alcohol taxes are rather stiff in the Nordic area, but the ferries can sell it without taxes, taking the tax cut themselves (which makes the boats quite profitable). An EU rule says that as long as the ferries dock at the island of Åland on the way you can bring in as much booze as you can carry!

I decided I could carry 0.5 l of Koskenkorva, 0.5 l of gin and a 24x33cl carton of beer. (Åland is a Swedish-speaking self-governed island between Sweden and Finland, but belonging to Finland. I skip details. Google info if you want.)

Finncon was housed at Turku university. I've been there before and knew the general direction, but coming closer to where it should be I made some bad navigation decisions and rambled around for 45 extra minutes with a backpack full of beer before I found the place.



Main entrance.



Finncon poster found on town.

(The majority of the beer would during the weekend be consumed under that blazing sun – away from the con. I took a pause now and then and went out to follow Roscoe's advice. After all, even the ongoing football World Cup had hydration breaks!)

People had begun to gather and tables



One of several huckster areas.

were being set up as I arrived. It was mainly books, jewellery (glass of course) and misc trinkets. Most books were in Finnish and the hucksters were at four or five different places. I found a place with a fair collection of used English paperbacks, but it was a rather long way from the main entrance, probably 100-150 metres to walk. I came to buy 13 books there, all second hand, most of them the last day when there was sale of € 1 per book. 12 of the 13 were by old classic writers: Anderson, Sheckley, Budrys, Lafferty, Herbert, Dickson, Ballard even...none later than the 70s.

I don't like skiffy of later decades. When the word processor invaded the desks, prose became, babbling, bloated, authors forgot how to write economical and keep to the plot. Word processors makes words overflow and instead of 200 pages a typical novel is today 4-600 pages. Books are padded with babbling dialogue, meaningless internal monologues, irrelevant subplots... (One of the 13 books was a alternate history from the late 1980s. I now have had time to read it, and wasn't any good. QED!) Another problem with today's sf, the more recent it is, the wokier it gets, probably under influence from our postmodern universities. You write according to populist trends to earn a gold star. The heck with it, I say! In the genre's core is individualism, optimism, hard science, not fuzziness, everything goes and no one is better than anyone else. Read the old, classic writers - they are superior!



The little corner I found for setting up the computer. Hair's a mess. As usual.

I noted that in Finland, just as in Sweden, there are a lot of small publishers who have turned up in droves because Internet and print on demand. It makes it possible to run a publishing business from a drawer in your bedroom or a shelf in your garage. Most aren't very profitable (and don't have to be). And all the books from the young hopeful have very colourful covers. I guess they need that to be visible in the competition, and use AI to do the cover. AIs make good illustrations, if you accept that your hero has six fingers...

Anyway, this was a detour. Before investigating the hucksters I found a place for my baggage, and a table to set up the computer, in a semi-isolated room or alcove behind some of the huckster tables. No one or few wandered into there. Perfect! But wouldn't tweet from the con, unlike earlier, as my SFJ news account is hiatus since last year. It began with being attacked by Microsoft's stupid "account verification" that freezes E-mail. And the unfreezing doesn't work! I had to work hard for three months (sending E-mails by the hundreds, nagging, even faxing to Microsoft's HQ) to get the mail unfrozen. And after while Microsoft's "account verification" *attacked again* and mail was frozen for another three months! While twitter wasn't frozen the general work flow was heavily disrupted (I have other things needing E-mail, it was all a mess). I hope to get back to @SFJournalen Real Soon Now...



GoH panel discussing con theme "Beginnings".



BNF Toni Jerrman by the table for his Tähtivaeltaja. He hasn't lost that much in print media's general collapse, he said, maybe 100 copies. (Out of I guess around 1000).

Over to the program. It had ca 120 items in two houses 50 metres apart, probably 90% of them in Finnish, presented in a nice, but unreadable (for me) program book. In English we had only a short story by GoH *Adrian Tchaikowsky* (can someone explain the twist of his story for me?) and a short essay by guest *Hanna-Rikka Roine*. Guests *Reetta Vuokko-Syrjänen* and *Saija Kyllönen* wrote their progbook contris in Finnish. The remaining program was in English and there were four items in Swedish (which is one of Finland's two official languages; I leave history details but google for more info if you're interested).

I missed the first program, Adrian T talking about writing on Friday. A note on the lecture hall said it was full. It didn't

matter too much. I've probably heard every author writing tip there is already.

I estimate Finncon 2025 had 750-1000 attendees, and I count it this way: the main lecture hall seated 300, it was full once and nearly full a couple of times. Beside these 300 I assume that just as many were outside, following parallel program or glancing the huckster tables, That would make 600, but because some were one-day visitors totals should be a little higher. There were a handful US/UK fans here (at least expat students), at least one German, ca 10 Swedes, some Norwegians and perhaps Danes. If anyone has more exact figures, please let me know!



The masqueraders lining up, about 20 in all. Below right: masquerader in huge hat should have stepped back a little, as he blocked the line of sight through the whole event!

A bit surprising was the presence of Chinese (at least two, could be more) who manned an info table with info flyers in Chinese with parallel English text. That the Chinese turn up on a regional cons like Finncon seems like an attempt by the Communist regime to make an advance into the sf world. But it should be difficult considering the train wreck they caused with the Chengdu con: tampering with the Hugos, moving the con on short notice, fans having difficulties getting visas...



The Chinese don't understand the individuality of fandom that cares deeply about free speech. The fanzine tradition bear witness to this. And they don't understand the sf genre, which relies on freedom of thought. What the Chinese commies want is what sf and its fandom are against. (Except a few who hails the Politically Correct.)

The con closed around 1800 hours each day, so also on the Friday. There wasn't more program so spent the night watching the football World Cup (I think it was Spain-Belgium), something I actually did every con night.

Was rather early there also on Saturday. I listened to the Academic GoH speech by Hanna-Riika Roine, who spoke about science fiction and democracy. She for instance stressed that reading a lot was good for democracy, and I agree. When reading you train your ability to place yourself in the situation of others, and democracy benefits from that. I had to run back and forth between this and another item. I often do this kind of program "multitasking".

It was followed by a Guest of Honour panel about secondary worlds. I thought it was rather boring. Generally I think cons have - I have said this before - far too many panels. All these panels on cons tend to fuse into a grey goo. The panelists tend to say things you've heard before and they speak far too slowly, in fear that someone else will grab the word if they stop. And the audience get



From the talk on history of Finlandswedish fandom. First club in Turku in 1976 was bilingual. In the slide (right) BNF Tom Ölander, Finlandswede and very active.

far too little time to ask questions. Panels should be cut down! One person who speaks, an expert lecturing on his favourite subject, gives much more real content.

I also went to the Swedish program item about Åland's magical beings. Ålanders have basically the same mytological creatures as Sweden: trolls, the house gnome, the "forest rå" (Uncle G suggests calling it "wood nymphs" but I'm not sure), but they also have the sea lady and the "ship rå" (ship nymph?) which I haven't heard of in Sweden. But we instead have "Näcken", who plays the fiddle and lures people to dangerous waters.

Another Swedish program item the same day was a lecture about Terry Pratchett and Discworld. I have unfortunately read very little Pratchett, There is something about a flat world on the back of turtles that collides with my suspension of disbelief. But as I have a deficit in pratchettology it was interesting to fill up the knowledge base.

Saturday I also attended a GoH interview with Adrian Tschaikovsky, of which i don't remember much since I thought he mumbled too much.

It was hard to hear what he said. People on stage should speak up and speak clearly. Or maybe its me getting deaf as I'm an old

dinosaur (I've An event worth further study

been to all

Finncons plus the 1982 King-Con).

About the con, I noted a room dedicated to Finnish fandom history with info on all Finncons, and a too short note about Kong-Con 1982. (I think it deserved more. The persistent Tom Ölander thanks to contacts in *Hufvudstadsbladet*, managed to get a

news telegram out to all

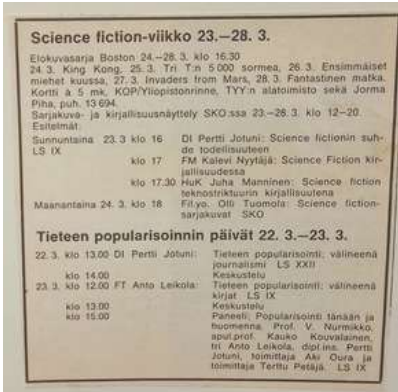
Finnish media! From fanhistory exhibit, 959 (March 23-28) sf festival - in Finnish.

It resulted in headlines in 60 newspapers and two TV news programs reporting! It has never happened again and is worth some attention. Unfortunately the fanhistory texts were all in Finnish. It would have been easy to make translations to English. These days Als will do translationsvvery fast.

BTW, there was a Finnish sf event in 1969. Some will compare it to a con but I see the week long event, with a movie every evening, as an sf and popular science festival. Anyway I met someone on Finncon who knew one involved with it and is still alive (I'll try contacting him) Maybe I can get the long article about the sf week (see above) OCR'd and translated? I hope to have more on the event in nextish! Saturday ended with the fancy dress parade. About 20 entries took part. But for me, dressing up in textiles isn't at all what skiffy



The fanhistory exhibit. English translations would have been nice.



Program of the 1969 SF Week. dinosaur (I've An event worth further study

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Finncons plus the 1982 King-Con). About the con, I noted a room dedicated to Finnish fandom history with info on all Finncons, and a too short note about Kong-Con 1982. (I think it deserved more. The persistent Tom Ölander thanks to contacts in *Hufvudstadsbladet*, managed to get a



He said he knew one of the 1959 organisers. Get in touch!

see the week long event, with a movie every evening, as an sf and popular science festival. Anyway I met someone on Finncon who knew one involved with it and is still alive (I'll try contacting him) Maybe I can get the long article about the sf week (see above) OCR'd and translated? I hope to have more on the event in nextish! Saturday ended with the fancy dress parade. About 20 entries took part. But for me, dressing up in textiles isn't at all what skiffy

fandom is about. Those masqueraders are attention seekers who deep inside lack self-confidence and want to address it by trying to become someone else. OK, some dresses were fine but I think you can do more sensible things than spending weeks sewing. And I wish the guy with the humongous hat had taken 1-2 steps to the right. He blocked the view for some of us.

Saturday night Finncon usually has a party, with loud music, blinking lights and lots of strange people. I don't know if there was one this year but I usually skip such gatherings. Watched the night's battle Norway-England. Unfortunately Norway lost, but on the other hand I like English football. The Norwegians have this summer decided they are Vikings and sit down on the ground to row.

I was there the reasonably early Sunday. I did a little of prog jumping, listening to a thing for 10-15 minutes, then going somewhere else, then going back or to a third program.

Some prog fragments: GoH reading, Hugo panel, "The Future is Already here". The last was a lecture in Swedish by a futurologist. And I agree: many things



Auditorium, seating 300, full for a GoH event. we just a few years ago would have seen as sf arrived early... A big pandemic, a new big war in Europe, plans for the Moon and Mars with re-usable rockets, Artificial Intelligence, Sweden and Finland in NATO. The alliance is said to look into sf a bit to figure out different weapons and scenarios, the futurologist said. I raised my hand and noted that Flying

Cars are here. There are several working machines, usually having small rotors in four corners or in ring around. Eg we have the Swedish firm's Jetson One: <https://www.youtube.com/@Jetsonaero> It's more like a sky-MC and you can buy it now for 98 grand apiece.

The guest of honour panel talked a bit on how active Europe had become in sf and how many contacts have been made back and forth over the continent. Many have observed how misters Trump and Putin have pushed the Europeans together much more than before, but in fandom I believe this started much earlier. We won't get "European culture" (European are often too diverse) but we can come closer. And AI has lowered the language barriers.

One of the last things I attended was the history of Finland-Swedish fandom. The Finland-Swedes were in from the start. The first sf club, Åbo SF-Sällskap i Turku, was founded in 1976 as a bilingual society. And in the late 1970s I'd say that the most active sf-fan in Finland was the Finland-Swede Tom Ölander. I met him already on Sam J Lundwall's con in Stockholm in 1979 (probably also in 1977 but I have more memories from 1979). Tom always went to the Swedish cons and brought back ideas to insert into in Finnish fandom. Tom helped with the important first semiprozine *Aikakone*.



Signing queue (outdoors) fo Adrian Tchaikovsky.



Photo spread from the fanhistory exhibit. Arrow to Intermission ed.

And I remember getting over to Helsinki in 1980 together with Wolf von Witting just to meet Tom for a weekend. We enjoyed saunas, talk and a tour of *Hufvudstadsbladet* (where Tom worked as a janitor and general handyman). Tom could make free phone calls through the newspaper and used it to call up authors and interesting people all over the world. From the authors he could secure rights to stories for *Aikakone*. And his important role in minding the shop for the Finnish side of King-Con is undeniable.

After a final panel with the GoHs the convention winded down. A couple of award ceremonies I missed: Tähtifantasia Award went to Noidanlanka by J S Merewmaa and the Atorox Award to Hanna-Riikka Roije for the short story "Koneiden Laulku"

Was it a good con, I asked myself as I was getting to the Silja Line terminal. (Actually I didn't but its rhetorically logical to claim you did as you are ending a conrep.) I'd say Finncon 2026 was probably smack in the middle of all the Finncons. I'm glad it was slightly smaller than they used to be. (There

was one in Helsinki with 15000 attendees, 95% of them young girls dressed up as Manga figures... It was unbearable!) I just wish they'd have more in English. The Finns speak about as good English as we do, so it could easily be done. And one could wish for a proper bheer place with cheap bheer. This fannish fuel has become much too dear in recent years - you have to take out a mortgage to order it on town.

The sun was shining on the way back. I watched it until it set in the Baltic. I counted two bheers left of the 24 and deducting a few on the way to Turku, I probably consumed 6 bheers/day during but outside Finncon. But it was unnecessary to come back empty handed. So I got myself another



Closing ceremony. Concom lined up t/o/ b/e/ s/h/o/t.

24x33cl in the Taxfree shop.

As I carried the carton out from the shop, a kid nearby in Swedish exclaimed:

- Dad, don't they like dogs here?*

Oh, Canada - What Have You Done?

We're reached by the news that Canada will join their Commonwealth partner Australia for the Eurovision circus! This move was announced by the Canadian PM Mark Carney himself while presenting a new budget allocating funds to join the European Broadcasting Union and its music extravaganza. Carney has - as many of us - been a bit sceptical of Trump and thus in many ways boosted connections with Europe. Canada is the most European of the North American side, he says. Europe created Canada. (We created the USA too, but not without some skirmishes). And may I point out that the first Europeans in North America were the Vikings, though it didn't last. If it had you'd speak Old Norse now, it would be close to Icelandic...which is incomprehensible.

But I wonder has Canada realised what getting into the Eurovision means? It'll be several weeks every spring of genuine madness! Trust me, I as a Swede I know: we've got that Eurovision bug badly from winning this skit many times. It starts here in February with the first of six selection shows called Melodifestivalen, or Mello for short. Late March or early April we have finally selected the (wrong,



From Swe language prog, about Åland myth'l creatures. Here Trolls.



* Tax means dachshound in Swedish.

usually) song and now the media hype begins. It's a month to the Eurovision week, with twin semis and one final. Social Media explodes! The hypemeter reaches 11.

You can ask your Australian cousins how it is to live through it. They love it, apparently, and it was this fanaticism that originally got the Aussies invited to the show (and once they had a foot in it was hard to get rid of them). Millions of Australians wake up in the middle of the night and turn on their TV. It will be easier for Canadians. Eurovision will be on sometime in the afternoon Canadian time. (I heard that if Canada does a Celine Dion 2.0 and wins, you'll be offered to host the show *in* Canada. Time difference will make it your afternoon, but that should work. Australia would have to do a show in Europe together with a selected local network, due to the unforgiving time difference.)

Canada has just entered a new era. It could be for good. Or worse.

RIP: Sam Neill – The New Year's Knight

A little note honouring actor Sam Neill who passed away July 13, aged 78. It's not because he played in "Jurassic Park", "Event Horizon", "The Bicentennial Man", in some horror and fantasy movies, etc. We honour him because he was a knight clad in iron in *IVANHOE*, from 1982.

Sweden's SVT network showed the film on New Year's Eve already in the year of its production, and showing it around the new year (it's now on New Year's Day) has since become a tradition, as natural as watching Donald Duck on Xmas Eve. About the film "Ivanhoe"? I have probably seen it, but except knights and swords can't remember anything from it. Neither could Sam Neill, he once confessed.

Sam Neill came to hear that those odd people on the other side of Earth (he was born in N Ireland but grew up in New Zealand) every New Year watched this forgotten masterpiece, so around Showtime he began sending greetings to the Swedes, example:

"Every year on New Year's Day, Swedish TV shows "Ivanhoe". Since 1982. No one knows why. Tradition. And they eat pizza.. I am the very, very evil guy, Brian de Bois-Guillbert. Well. So Happy New Year, Sweden. And to all non-Swedes too. And here comes 2024..."

I don't think he was "very, very evil". No, he was our New Year's Knight.



Sam Neill as a knight in "Ivanhoe".



First LoCs from readers, then Ed's comments to latest N'APA and EAPA.

Mark Nelson: Dear Ahrvid, I don't usually report back to you on articles I've read in a newspaper, as Intermission moves more slowly than the news. But reading Intermission 167 caused me to remember two news stories. One, from only a few days ago, from the perspective of this loc, was that NATO is increasingly concerned that Putin will try something against one of the Baltic states. Not a conventional attack, but perhaps a drone attack. As you highlighted, NATO is ill-equipped to deal with drones.

Mentioning drones leads me to the second article. This was a piece, that I didn't read, about how the Taiwanese Government is thinking about training its citizens in how to use drones. Perhaps with the idea of using civilian-controlled drones to help defend Taiwan from attack or perhaps to set up cells to fight an occupying force. (If I'd read the article, I would know for sure).

The use of the word "bug" to mean a flaw or problem in a technical system pre-dates the invention of electronic computers. According to an article I found on the IEEE web-page one of the earliest well-known uses comes from Thomas Edison, who wrote in an 1878 letter:

"You were partly correct. I did find a 'bug' in my apparatus..."

The term "bug" first appeared in his notebooks in July 1876.

Author and engineer Thomas Sloane standardized Edison's terms in his 1892 Standard Electrical Dictionary. He defined a bug as "[a]ny fault or trouble in the connections or working of electric apparatus," ChatGPT tells me: "On 9 September 1947, engineers working on the Harvard Mark II found that one of its relays had stopped working. The cause was literally a moth trapped in the relay."

The operators removed the moth, taped it into the logbook, and wrote:

'First actual case of bug being found.'

The logbook page still exists and is now in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution."

(I read something similar to this approximately thirty-five years ago, so I'll take it as correct). Incidentally, one of the engineers working on the Mark II team was Grace Hopper (1906-1992) who became a pioneer of computer programming. According to Wikipedia she wrote the first computer manual, "A Manual of Operation for the Automatic Sequence Controlled Calculator."

Wikipedia adds that the logbook page still contains "the remains of the moth".

"Investigating it, I learn that this design will give the vessel more stability and speed in really rough seas as it cuts through waves instead of going up and down with them."

Many years ago I heard a seminar. One of the problems mentioned during the presentation was designing a naval ship so that the gun platforms remained "stable" during a storm. This has stuck in my mind because the speaker mentioned that the design of the ship looked very strange. Too strange for the Royal Navy to be interested.

Christopher Booker wrote a book called "The Seven Basic Plots" (2004). You claim that Fantasy has eight plots. This is one more than Booker lists. Does this mean that the field of fantasy is actually more creative than mainstream fiction? Well, no. But it would be amusing if it were true.

The "problem" with magic is not Arthur C. Clarke's well-known Third Law: "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." No, the problem with magic in fantasy novels is that any novel in which magic is "sufficiently powerful" requires a form of authorial intervention to prevent the plot collapsing within the first couple of pages.

Cheers,

Ed: Number of "possible plots" varies. Here's 37: <https://www.openculture.com/2020/08/37-possible-stories.html> Heinlein believed there were only three: *Boy Meets Girl*, *The Little Tailor*, *The Man Who Learned Better*. Ada Lovelace is said to have written something that can be interpreted as a "manual" for Babbage's Analytical Engine.

Jim Meadows: Dear Ahrvid, Thanks for Intermission 168 and the quick survey of post-WW2 atomic and spaceship kitsch. It certainly provided a quick injection of pop culture nostalgia. While we had lots of science fiction around my house when I was growing up, I don't remember many items like these, except for the GI Joe figure with spacesuit and space capsule, plus a 45 RPM record with audio of John Glenn's 1962 Mercury orbital flight. That was the thing that actually interested me. Apparently, if I had saved my GI Joe, and better yet, kept it in its original packaging, I might have found someone to pay me a lot of money for it, as postings on eBay suggest.

As for the atomic stuff, my main knowledge of it as a child was my late father's work testing building materials for nuclear reactors at Argonne National Laboratory near Chicago. During the 1960s, he regularly wore a device on his belt meant to detect unsafe levels of radiation that he might be exposed to during testing (I think it was a type of photographic film or paper). While I don't think I gave that much thought, fears of radioactivity still filled my head to the degree that I panicked as a small boy during a visit to his lab. I had suddenly felt a pain in my leg, and was certain it was some kind of deadly radioactive burn. But I had merely sustained a small cut from a piece of metal. Take Care.

Nick Farley: Interesting stuff as always – thanks!

Paul I Skelton: OK, I haven't responded before as I should have done. Nor am I doing so properly this time. I find reading fanzines on a laptop to be a pain in the arse. I bought a Samsung tablet purely for this purpose, but suddenly both my old Windows 10 and my new Windows 11 machines no longer fully recognise my notepad. I have never used this notepad for direct internet access. I am an old curmudgeon and set in my ways. So I want to make one quick point in case my sluggardliness makes me yet again not respond. My point is this - according to you Putin is history, yesterday's man. But according to Defence Ministers who are resigning in a huff, we have to spend billions more on defence to protect ourselves from Putin's threat. They imply we need increased taxation to spend on defence, whilst you imply we can decrease taxation so that we can all buy large, high definition TVs to gloat over Putin's demise. I'd love to think you are correct, but I'm concerned that most of these alternative views are held by people with a major background in international politics. Anyway, I'll carry on reading and enjoying this latest issue and hopefully respond further. This has been a place-holder.

Ed: *Putin's war in Ukraine is at a dead end, but he still has a lot of military and may become so desperate that he's tempted to try attacking, say, a Baltic state (to test NATO's clause 5). And even if he has lost much in Ukraine, given a few years he may rearm. But I'm also a bit sceptical to spending too much on defence. NATO and EU is so much stronger than Russia. What's needed isn't more stuff (except for drone warfare, but drones are cheap) but better training, coordination and intelligence.*

Now MCs to first N'APA, then EAPA. I had some mixups editing N'APA MCs, which I had trouble to backtrack. I hope I got the names for comments right, if not I beg forgiveness. The comments aren't Earth-shaking anyway...

Jefferson Swycaffer: I should look out for Sladek's crime novels. ■■ The thing with volcanoes is that they can suddenly get an outbreak and begin sewing out huge amounts of lava, CO2 etc.

Samel Lubell: Donny Trump isn't only the worst US president ever he is also the most self-centered! He made a big military parade to celebrate the US 250 years but also his own birthday. He has commissioned a new set of passports that will have his portrait as well as a 250 dollar bill that will also show his dementia face.

He tried to rename New York's Kennedy Center after himself and so on and so on. Next he'll order the US Engineering Corps to put him on Mount Rushmore, I guess. ■■ Your con-program ideas seems to land on just a lot of panels. I think hey are too many panels. Get someone who knows he subject to prepare a lecture instead. And where is the fun, fannish program?

Kevin Trainor: Yes, I know that a computer originally was someone sitting and adding by hand. ■■ AI should in the long run get better in turning out fiction, but for the moment and in the short term AI fiction isn't good enough (I've done some somewhat extensive testing). AI is best helping you doing research and is also good for roof-reading.

Joseph Gill: Your right about the propeller beanie. I've also researched the origin. It actually began in sf fandom before it became a toy you could buy! My AI Explains: 1947 – Fandom invention: Ray Faraday Nelson improvised the first propeller beanie at a small Michigan SF fan gathering, using plastic strips, coat-hanger wire, beads, and a model airplane propeller. It was worn at conventions and quickly became a humorous badge of SF fandom identity. 1947 1948 – Commercialization begins: Only after it had become a fandom symbol did commercial versions appear. By 1948, "beanie 'copters" were advertised in comic books as premiums (25¢ plus a Tootsie Roll wrapper). Late 1940s–1950s – Mass-market popularity: The TV show Time for Beany (created by Bob Clampett) popularized the propeller beanie with children nationwide, turning it into a mainstream novelty item. ■■ I've written a sort of Swefandom fancyclopedia. I named it "The Fandbook" (Or Fandboken, trailing "-en" is the definite article.)

Mark Nelson: I don't rememeber writing "Jet, a midget sized Negro exploitation mag" or if it appeared in my zine it was a quote from somewhere.

Robert Jennings: Funny inflation jokes... Even funnier comics covers! ■■ Putin's position has become even more unstable now, when Ukraine has destroyed so many refineries that the ordinary Russian can't get any gasoline (or have to queue for days to get just 20 litres) and dark clouds of smoke covers. A Palace coup is the most likely, motivated by the hardships of the general population. ■■ Didn't know Fritz Lang read *Astounding*.

Heath Row: Hm, maybe I should try to run this through an auto-translator, but I don't have time for it right now. (And I should perhaps reply in Swedish!)

William McCabe: Well, I would have like to see the mailing comments you had to *Intermission!* Good to see you back. Since you've complained a bit about health issue, I was a bit worried. Most of us are of the age where health issues may be serious.

Henry Grynsten: When it comes to rock groups, it's like a human body: after a few years all the original cells have died and been replaced by new ones (except the brain cells responsible for your intellect that don't die until you die). So rock groups may go through members and still be "the same". BTW, you don't mention ABBA. It wasn't a group of four. They had studio musicians who also performed with them on stage. In the classic pictures from Brighton in 1974, you see Mike Watson (one of their regulars) playing bass behind Björn Ulvaeus and behind Benny Andersson we had Ola Brunckert on drums. The rules allows for six on stage, and they used that. To this they had the regular orchestra (the rule still banned backing tracks on tape) which got their Napoleon-dressed director in Sven-Olof Walldoff. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XJBNJ2wq0Y> Among other ABBA regulars we had Janne Schaffer, Lasse Welander and Rutger Gunnarsson. ABBA was really a group of up to a dozen (here I count also the usually three background singers, among them Tomas Ledin, who had a great career on his own and married manager Stikkan's daughter. ■■ "You must agree that natural resources can be overused!" No, I mustn't. "Natural resources are not endless, and some are not renewed" As long as a huge amount of atoms aren't destroyed resources can be endlessly re-constituted! You just need energy and ingenuity. ■■ "We killed off the dodo" Or perhaps *cats* did! But sometime in the future we may take DNA from a stuffed museum-bird and re-dodonise the world. ■■ "So why is there still plastic in the oceans? It has been years" It may be that plastic is added a little faster than it breaks down. ■■ "how can you prevent them from eating the plastics we need?" And how can we prevent rust from eating the metals we need? Simple, you make the surroundings for things you want to keep such that rust, bacteria or whatever don't like it. ■■ "[Wilson] was a scientist and biologist and considered the matter carefully" but was stuck in his since early childhood deeply emotional attachment to nature, as we learn from biographical material. ■■ "No, Sweden went from 4 to 11, and hit 11 in the early nineties" No, that's just counting OECD. With several successful non-OECD countries in eg Asia stats are worse. ■■ "You see what happens when you abandon Socialism!" Here's an interesting video on Sweden's economic history: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wKW4SUjFP8>. The often forgotten part is that the really fast growth came from the mid 19th Century extensive deregulation but later the more socialism policies that came, the slower the growth. ■■ "Thinking...in your view, apparently means not listening to experts" And in your view it means to 100% trust others whatever they claim, not assessing if it looks reasonable...Experts carry biases and agendas and are often wrong - you must make your own plausibility assessment! Even if you're not an expert, you have your own varied, wide database, you have intellect experience and a gut feeling. Don't downplay your ability to think for yourself! ■■ "But you only need small doses over long periods of time to cause lung cancer." No, small doses aren't enough, you need the genetics for getting cancer. Cancer is to large degree a genetic disease (that's why 2/3rds of all lung cancers are in non-smokers). ■■ "Living for decades with a smoker leads to high total exposure." The effects don't accumulate except for very long exposure. Small exposures are wiped out, unless your genetics points to an increased risk. ■■ "Children of smokers show significantly higher levels of smoke-related disease." They don't. I checked those claims and they result from lowering the confidence levels from the standard 95% to as low as 60% (and 50% means the results are random). ■■ "so it's just rhetoric? What are you so upset about then?" That's right, socialism is a lot of cheap rhetoric. Unfortunately, many buy into it and that's upsetting. ■■ "It may be difficult to separate equality from ethics." Not at all. For ethical reasons we support those worse off. The equality dogma instead want that for ALL who are just below average. It's easy to

separate those worst off from anyone below the average. ■■ "They do." No, sir! ■■ "I see AI:s are getting more advanced; however, I don't think that has anything to do with consciousness in itself." I think we'll have the answer within a few years. And we'd better prepare ourselves for conscious AIs and hope they'll be on humanity's side. ■■ "IPCC doesn't claim that. What other people say is those people's opinions." The people I mentioned are IPCC. ■■ "the IPCC has no hypothesis." They do and they push it hard. Even before their official reports they issue their presumptuous "Summary for policy makers" because they think it's important to indoctrinate decision makers as early as possible. ■■ "It made up over 4 % of the federal budget one time" I know, but for one year - but spread out over the whole Apollo program, it was half that. Claiming that one year represents the whole is a clear case of cherry picking. ■■ "erosion is faster than creation of new soil, it doesn't automatically mean that Scania will become a desert." But it does! Erosion takes soil away, by definition, and you get a desert of nothing else adds new soil. ■■ "We've already suppressed smoking in Sweden to under 5 %, perhaps the same could be done with alcohol"...or with fat food or driving MCs or mountaineering or climbing ladders or boating without life jackets or... The urge to nanny people is dangerous! We must stop it. Once and for all, we must accept the personal freedoms including the right to take risks and consume things that may not be healthy in the long run. Bans should be rare exceptions, under the standard: 1. The risk to fight must be substantial (and things we've discussed do not qualify in my rule book), 2. it must be acute (ie follow after a short time), 3. it is casualitally connected. ■■ "We have only intentionally been making alcohol for around 13 000 years" But before that we found berries and fruit that had fermented naturally and intentionally consumed it. That we have enzymes dedicated to breaking down alcohol, points to that we've had a relation to it for probably 100 000s of years. Two enzymes do almost all the work: ADH and ALDH. They evolved long before humans ever brewed beer, so we did come in contact before. ■■ "you think that drugs should be banned and support bans" As most of what we call narcotics means higher risks under 1. (se above) in my rule book. But I'm against bans on "having used" it. Authorities must be banned from invading your body and taking tests. It's a matter of personal integrity.

Garth Spencer: I grew tired of UFOs a long time ago. They haven't been here (BTW von Däniken passed away in April, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erich_von_D%C3%A4niken) and they are not likely to come here.

Distances are too huge ("you may think it's a long way down the road to the chemist's, but that's just peanuts to space") and Einstein rules. However it is quite likely that there are other civilisations and we may find signals from them. That may happen any moment! We constantly get new radio telescope, that are more sensitive, and I believe AI will help us to sift through the signals. In fact, we have already burned into a number of signals that need further investigation. This is exciting, we may hear from ET any moment! But it's also mysterious that we haven't yet - Fermi's paradox, "Where are they?" ■■ BTW, how do you feel about Canada getting into the Eurovision?

Peter Danielsson: Thanks for latest issue. I don't know which program you make *Intermission* in, but if there is a function for several columns (2 or 3 instead of 1) it'd be great. For now it's difficult to read on screen and difficult to print out.

Ed: Comment in Swedish, but I translated it so I can explain why I won't use multiple columns (which my prog OpOff Writer can do, BTW). Most screens have portrait format and typically you see half the page at a time. With one column you only need to scroll once to see the whole page. With 2 columns you must scroll THREE TIMES MORE! (You first view Left column upper, SCROLL, Left column lower, SCROLL, right column upper, SCROLL, right column lower SCROLL to next page.) Avoiding multiple columns significantly reduces scrolling. I use relatively big type for most text, 12p (newspapers often use 9p) to make I easy to read. '

Before we finish, first to my Swedish readers: **Glöm inte Fantastiknovelltävlingen! Bidrag rek max 40K senast 31 aug till ahrvid@hotmail.com samt fantastiknovell@proton.me. Bland priserna SF-Bokhandelsaktier! Det är den äldsta pågående, ädlaste novelltävlingen, nu i 27:e upplagan. (Förresten:**

sponsorer sökes!) And then: **EAPA** could use new **blood!** OE Garth came up with the idea of ad swaps to achieve this (see ad right). *Intermission* of course joins this noble effort. Remember how Robert Heinlein always advocated **blood** drives... If you publish an ad for us, we'll return the favour. (And we're speaking of rather small ads, a little square where you have empty space anyway.) The fanzine sphere has been left behind a bit by other "social media" which often is just short, stuttering nonsense. Longer publications, for people who can read without moving their lips, could use your support! Get into fanzines. It's fun! That's all for now. See ya' in nextish with more exciting sf history!

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(<https://www.efanzines.com/eapa>), and eAPA produces a password-free public edition every October. If you would like to see other back issues (requiring unzip passwords), obtain eAPA's guidelines, or just ask to join us, email Garth Spencer at garth.van.spencer@gmail.com!

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Слава Україні!

THE SWAMP SPOT SENTINEL



THE SWAMP SPOT SENTINEL Issue #2.3 is a fanzine for distribution within the sacred auspices of N'APA, and is produced by:

Robert Jennings; 29 Whiting Rd.; Oxford, MA 01540-2035 email: fabficbks@aol.com

AFTER A REALLY BRUTAL WINTER

I was only too glad when warm weather came again (finally) to this part of the world. Despite the deeply hated chore of mowing the lawn, this has been a pretty pleasant season, and boy has it zipped by! Why do the dreary months of deep winter seem to drag on forever, but the bright sunny days of spring and summer fly by like a rocket? There is probably some psychological explanation for this phenom, but I don't know what it is.

One of the joys of the season has been watching the local animal and bird life frolic on my lawn. There are fewer rabbits around this year, for whatever reason. Mostly I see a fairly large, obviously older bunny and a very small, obviously baby rabbit in the mornings and evenings.

The larger rabbit has pretty much accepted me as a harmless part of the natural environment. He still doesn't like me to get really close, but generally he tolerates me whenever I come across him while doing my lawn chores or walking to and from the mail box. The baby rabbit, on the other hand, was really skittish, bouncing away whenever I got within fifteen or twenty feet of him. On the other hand, the baby rabbit was also extremely curious. Even after he bounded away, he would often turn back to take a closer glance at me, and sometimes he took a few cautious hops back for an even closer look. After several weeks he has grown in size and in confidence. He's not as courageous as the older bunny, but we seem to co-exist pretty well these days.

Sometimes odd things happen. One evening I was gazing out the front door at the lawn panorama, when a kind of bird I had never seen before circled around and landed on the lawn near the front steps. He had a red spot on his head and his tail feathers were depressed, not upright or extended straight out from his body the way robins and other local birds tail feathers were. He was an unusual sight, as he pecked round, looking for insects, or seeds or whatever.

I am in no way a bird watcher, but I was curious enuf to look him up on the web, and I have since learned that this was a Northern Flicker, a medium sized bird of the woodpecker family, common in North and central America and one of the very few members of the woodpecker family that migrate.

These birds may be common, but this was the first time I can recall ever seeing one, but I had good reason to remember this encounter, because as the Flicker was busy inspecting and pecking the ground, suddenly a pretty good sized chipmunk came running across the lawn from the left side, directly at the Flicker. At the very last possible second before the chipmunk was about to reach the Flicker, the bird took a sudden, panicky hop out of the way and then managed to fly up onto the branch of a tree near the front property line.

Then, just as suddenly, the big rabbit came rushing over from the right side of the lawn, directly at the big chipmunk. The chipmunk, in panic ran right toward the foundation of the house along the side of the cement steps, with the

rabbit right behind him. The pair raced off along the right side of the house and disappeared into the overgrowth near the old colonial era stone wall. What was that all about, I wonder? Since this strange encounter I have not seen another Northern Flicker, or a chipmunk on the lawn again.



WHY YES, WE DID HAVE SOME PRETTY WARM WEATHER IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST!



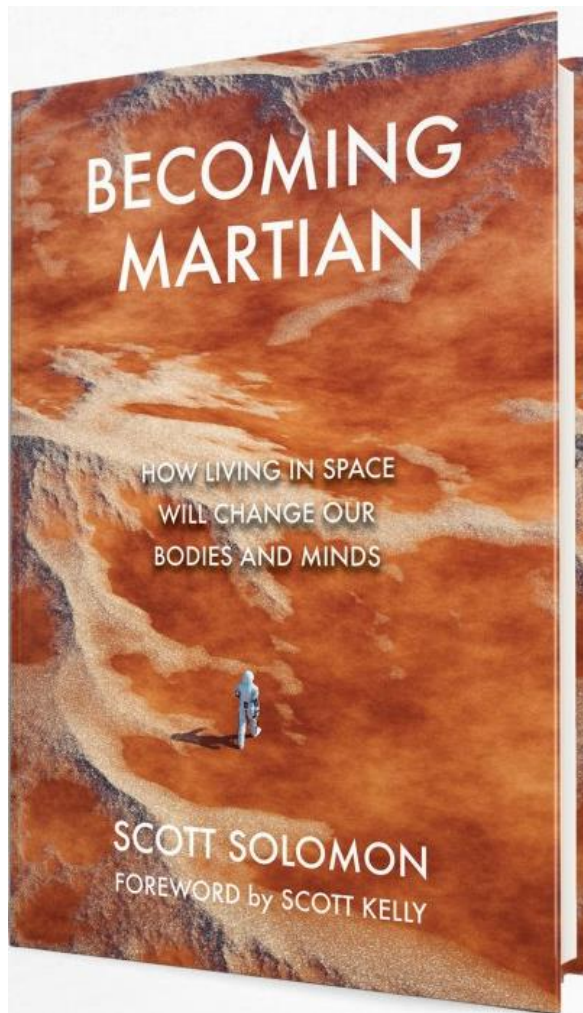
THE JOYS OF ADULTHOOD (very different from the Joys of Childhood)

The vast feeling of relief when you realize that the weird noises you have been hearing in your home are actually ghosts, and not some expensive house problem that you can't afford to fix.

I WAS GOING TO DO A BOOK REVIEW

about the recent volume written by Scott Solomon concerning the human race's fascination with planet Mars, including all the plans, past, present, and projected for the near future for traveling to, exploring, and ultimately colonizing Mars.

It turns out that Dam Kean wrote a much better, more in-depth article about the book which was published in the *Wall Street Journal* a few months back. As a *WS Journal* user, I am reprinting the review here-



‘Becoming Martian’ Review: A Species in Space

Becoming Martian: How Living in Space Will Change Our Bodies and Minds; by Scott Solomon; The MIT Press

How would colonizing Mars alter us physically and mentally? Would permanent residence on the red planet make us somehow less human?

Review By
Sam Kean

In March 1995 Valeri Polyakov, a Russian cosmonaut, returned to Earth after a record 14 consecutive months in space. Extended weightlessness generally wreaks havoc on the human body, often disrupting the space traveler’s heartbeat, balance and hormone levels. Ailments like anemia, kidney stones and osteoporosis can arise as well, and most returning astronauts can barely walk under the sudden chains of gravity. Yet Polyakov determinedly strutted around for reporters and masked any

discomfort with a grin. Then he made a triumphant announcement. His trip, he said, proved that human beings can reach Mars.

Colonizing Mars is an obsession among certain space geeks. Elon Musk has made several grandstanding predictions about when he believes humankind will reach the red planet. But as Scott Solomon shows in “Becoming Martian: How Living in Space Will Change Our Bodies and Minds,” bureaucrats and policy wonks are drawing up plans, too. “I was astonished,” Mr. Solomon writes, “to see how extensive and serious the plans for human space exploration had become.” These include everything from rocket blueprints to detailed nutrient-recycling programs involving flies, chickens and human waste.

Motivations for wanting to colonize Mars vary. Some crave adventure while others see the planet as a backup home in the event that Earth is rendered uninhabitable by an asteroid strike or runaway climate change. Still, Mr. Solomon, a biologist at Rice University, noticed important gaps in such conversations. “There wasn’t much discussion,” he writes, “about the long-term consequences” for human beings. How would colonizing Mars alter us psychologically and physiologically? “Becoming Martian” grapples with such questions.

It takes a while for Mr. Solomon to get to the answers. Early chapters include some well-worn tales (e.g., Darwin visiting the Galápagos) as well as saucy sections on sex in space (and why the National Aeronautics and Space Administration refuses to fund studies on it). And he spends a lot of time, possibly because it’s the only aspect of the project for which data are available, on the stresses and consequences of weightlessness—which astronauts would experience only on the way *to and from* Mars.

Once the book delves into Mars itself, it really starts to hum. In brief, Mars is hostile to life in numerous ways. The soil is packed with poisons, and massive dust storms obscure the sun for months. The atmosphere provides almost no oxygen, and while temperatures can reach 70°F, that’s only at the equator, at noon, in summer. (Temperatures of minus-100°F are more common.) The weak atmosphere and magnetic field also allow carcinogenic cosmic radiation to pelt Mars’s surface: One day spent outdoors there equals about two years of radiation exposure on Earth.

Perhaps most importantly, Mars has only around one-third of Earth’s gravity, which would alter the development of almost every organ and tissue. Anyone born and raised on Mars would likely have lower bone density and weaker hearts. Their spines would curve less and their feet have less of an arch. The limited air and food would likely stunt their growth compared to earthlings, and their lungs and circulatory systems might struggle to deliver oxygen. Over generations, their skin might darken to block radiation damage as well.

And that’s just the start. Those traveling to Mars from Earth would almost certainly be screened to limit the pathogens they carry along. Measles, malaria, influenza and dozens of other illnesses wouldn’t exist there—which sounds great. Except there’s good evidence that a lack of exposure to microbes early in life can leave the immune system on a hair-trigger, meaning the first generations born on Mars would likely suffer from far more autoimmune diseases. Would that trade-off be worth it?

Psychological complications could arise as well. The harsh environment would confine people to domes or underground shelters, where boredom and isolation would be real dangers. The need for protective spacesuits outside such habitats would also cut off Mars inhabitants from nature. Natives of

the red planet would never know the feel of the breeze lifting their hair or the sun warming their skin, and the lack of water would deprive them of the joy of splashing around in a pond or the surf. (When Scott Kelly returned home after 340 days on the International Space Station, the first thing he did was jump into his backyard pool. “I’ll never take water for granted again,” he later said.)

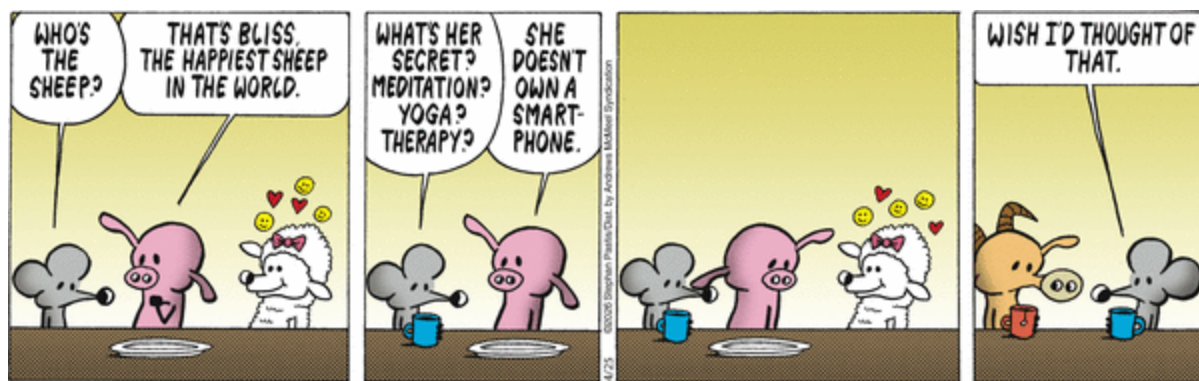
As Mr. Solomon notes, these issues raise serious ethical questions. Would it be fair to raise children in a place where they can never play outside? Equally troubling, some Mars enthusiasts insist that we should try to genetically engineer the first generation of visitors to make them less vulnerable to bone loss, heart weakness and other health problems—permanently altering the human race.

There’s also the question of whether humans on Mars will evolve into another species. Geographic isolation often drives speciation on Earth. Radiation on Mars, and the planet’s different disease burden, would speed up mutations there. Mr. Solomon estimates that significant steps toward speciation could arise within five to 10 generations. The irony would be acute: While many enthusiasts view Mars as a refuge to save humankind from disaster, its inhabitants could quickly become nonhuman.

Partly as a result of the moral quandaries, Mr. Solomon finishes his book far more ambivalent about colonizing Mars than he was at the outset. “Whether we choose to let evolution play out or guide the process ourselves,” he concludes, “each generation born on Mars will be one step further on a path toward becoming something different—toward becoming Martian.”

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AND RETURNING TO AN ONGOING SUBJECT

The very rapid development of Artificial Intelligence as a creative force able to turn out

words and music equal to, or even better than human beings, we have this startling info, which ran a few weeks back as part of an NBC feature, reprinted in case you missed it---

AI is writing, acting and producing China’s minidramas. It’s shaking a \$14 billion industry.

Story by Janis Mackey Frayer



An online minidrama shown on video-sharing platform Douyin, on a phone in Shanghai, China. (VCG via Getty Images file)© VCG via Getty Images file

ZHENGZHOU, China — [Chinese microdramas](#) — known for hyperemotional stories about torrid love affairs, time-traveling revenge and explosive family secrets — are facing drama of their own as [AI transforms](#) an industry that is also [rapidly expanding](#) in the United States.

Shot vertically for [China's](#) mobile-first audience, microdramas — also called minidramas or short dramas — have captivated hundreds of millions of Chinese for years with fast-paced, addictive stories told in episodes that usually last between 60 and 90 seconds. But technology has upended the way they are written, produced and performed.

“AI is changing everything,” Gao Qingge, a microdrama director based in Beijing, told NBC News in an interview. “Because AI can save a lot of money.”

Out of about 100,000 microdramas released in the first three months of this year, about 95% were entirely produced by AI, according to the state-run People's Daily newspaper, leaving many actors and crew members in the \$14 billion industry in limbo.

Though Chinese viewers are watching artificial intelligence microdramas in huge numbers, the shift has also created anxieties [similar to those in Hollywood](#), where a full-length feature film starring [controversial AI “actor” Tilly Norwood](#) was criticized by a major actors union as “devaluing human artistry.”

Just as microdramas blossomed in China before jumping to the U.S., where they are also produced and widely viewed, the way the industry embraces and restricts AI could have implications for American TV and film productions down the road.

The changing mood is hard to miss in Zhengzhou, China's microdrama capital, where many housing projects left unfinished amid a yearslong [national property crisis](#) have been transformed into filming bases.

At Dazhi filming base outside the city of more than 12 million people, only four crews were filming late last month when NBC News visited the 200,000-square-foot production complex.

There are more than 50 sets at the one-stop production venue, where it's a short walk from a ballroom with grand chandeliers to a modern subway, a hospital, a karaoke room, a jail cell or the office of a wealthy CEO, allowing crews to shoot scores of episodes in a matter of days.

Only a few months ago, as many as 15 crews could be shooting there at the same time, and sets were booked out weeks in advance, Wu Hongbin, the base's manager, said.

“Compared to last year, the current volume has basically been slashed by about 60% to 70%,” he said, in part because of the impact of AI.

The shift has left those who depend on microdramas for employment at loose ends.

Liu Yuan, 45, a microdrama actor who often plays the father of rich men, said he almost never used to have openings in his schedule. But many crews “ground to a halt” early this year, he said, when the popular microdrama platform Hongguo reportedly made policy changes that discouraged external production partners from making live-action series.

“Most of them shifted to AI, so live-action minidramas became relatively scarce,” Liu said while filming at the complex, though he said work had picked up again more recently.

Staff members produce microdramas with the assistance of AI at the Dazhi film and television base in Zhengzhou, China, in April. (Ren Zhuoru / Xinhua via Getty Images)© Ren Zhuoru Production companies are motivated by the idea of slashing what they spend on human actors, Gao said. “It saves five to eight times the amount of money if we use AI, compared to the live-action ones,” she said.

AI also provides more flexibility than traditional TV productions, said Huang Dingxuan, a Beijing-based cinematographer who works with Gao on microdramas such as last year’s “Scapegoat Maid.”



“If it’s raining outside but we have a sunny day [scripted], we have to wait, but with AI, if you want a sunny day, it’s going to be a sunny day,” he said.

An AI system used to create minidramas. (Fred Dufour / NBC News)© Fred Dufour

Anina Net, an American who has spent years acting in Chinese-directed microdramas for English-speaking audiences, said AI has been an “incredible tool” for series such as one she appeared in last year, “Daddy’s Got Girls and Guns.”

“This particular director, Paddy Ma, he loves helicopters,” she said. “I’ve shot with him so many times and there’s always, you know, the girl getting out of the helicopter.”

“Well, he wanted seven helicopters, but there’s no budget for seven helicopters,” said Net, who is based in Los Angeles.

AI came to the rescue, she said, but it’s also a “double-edged sword.”

“So many of the incredibly professional people that I know that were working every day are back home doing

nothing because there’s no more live-action shootings,” Net said.

Net says she has a “no AI” clause in her contracts for her own image, as “I cannot risk that someone would make me say something that I absolutely never said or do things that I never did.”

Some companies are trying to get ahead of those concerns, with mixed results. The Chinese streaming giant iQIYI faced backlash in April after unveiling an AI performer database that it said would allow actors to authorize the creation of digital doubles for future films and TV shows.

Though iQIYI said the actors in its database would have control over how their images were used, Chinese actors in other cases have complained about their faces and voices being cloned and used in ways they didn’t agree to. In April, Hongguo removed a popular AI-generated series, “Peach

Blossom Hairpin,” and penalized its production company after accusations that it had used online users’ likenesses without their consent.

Chinese authorities have begun cracking down on such abuses, and since last year China has required that all AI-generated content be clearly labeled. Though some U.S. states have transparency laws that require AI-generated content to be labeled, lawmakers in Congress are still [debating federal legislation](#).

Despite the growing influence of AI, some people in the industry remain optimistic. Wu said he still believes that human productions will bounce back because viewers like to watch real people. “When I watch the AI characters, I have the ‘uncanny valley’ feeling,” one user on Chinese social media platform RedNote commented last month, referring to the unsettled feeling that people can experience when looking at humanoid objects.

Ma Shuchang, a college student in Zhengzhou who acts in microdramas in her free time, has noticed the slowdown in work but says she still enjoys AI-generated series.

“Watching AI dramas is great because they have a lot of special effects that real-life dramas just can’t achieve,” she said, adding that the two can “complement each other.”

“Moving forward, high-quality productions with meaningful content will definitely be the ones that win people over,” Ma said.

Janis Mackey Frayer, Dawn Liu and Erin Tan reported from Zhengzhou, and Larissa Gao from London.

This article was originally published on [NBCNews.com](#)



A DISTURBING ADDENDUM

I recently discovered that the images and voices of actors Angela Lansbury, William Wisdom, and Tom Bosley, all associated with the long running TV series “Murder She Wrote”, have been optioned for use in future, unnamed projects. But, since they were all a part of “Murder” it is clear that the holders have plans to recreate “Murder She Wrote” using A-1 capabilities, even tho the actors are dead and gone. I suspect that the producers of this new series will not be using A-1 to write the story plots—yet. But who knows what the future holds?

LETTER(S)...

Ken Bausert passcribe@aol.com

Thanks for the latest Swamp Spot Sentinel; very entertaining issue.

I just turned 83 myself (last week) and, fortunately, still kicking without too much whining & complaining. Finding doctors in our new area has been my biggest problem, and getting appointments in a timely matter even more difficult. Even the walk-in clinics are packed and require an appointment now unless you want to wait 2 hours or more to be seen.

Sorry to hear of all the problems with your vehicle. Having been in the business my whole life, however, I've learned that sometimes it's better to trade in an older vehicle when major issues plague it because the more you sink into it, the more likely you are to continue sinking money into it (because you're now further invested into it). Of course, there comes a point when you've spent much more on it than it's worth. The only advantage to all that is, "at least you know what you've got!" I'm glad to see you had a good friend to help you get around while your wheels were in the shop.

As for your bathroom/shower makeover: our new house in NC has a large shower in the primary bathroom and it includes a seat/bench. And, yes! that does make it so much easier to wash one's feet. I don't know how we managed without one for so many years.

I had a large comic book collection for many years, mostly inherited from my older brothers, and have seen a few issues of Sgt. Preston over the years, but they never did much for me.

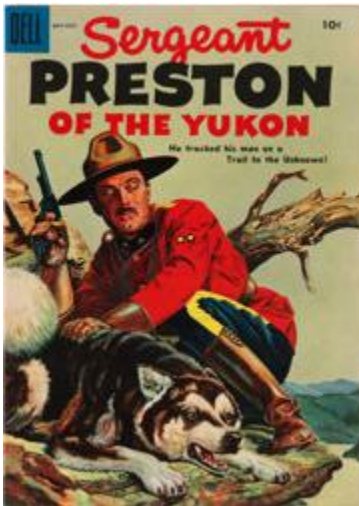
That guest article on glass was quite fascinating.

Were those Marvel & DC comics that you showed covers of actual issues? Very strange crossovers if they are.

I once had to have a line inserted into my vein (so they could administer anesthesia) before a shot to ease my sciatica pain and, after several unsuccessful attempts, the phlebotomist had to call another nurse over to do the job (I was really annoyed with that episode).

I hope you continue to feel better thanks to the marvels of modern medicine (including Eliquis) and are able to maintain your home and vehicle without too much hassle or financial heartache.

///Thanks for your comments on Swamp Spot 2.1. I was not happy about sinking five and a half grand to repair my ailing ten year old vehicle, but, as I noted, the sky-hi prices and very limited availability of decent used cars was the determining factor. Unlike many people, I have no particular affection for autos. A car is a piece of machinery that will get you from here to there and back again. Despite being a 2016 model, it only has 82,800 miles on it, so I hope and believe that paying the repair bill at this point in time will buy me two or three more years on the road before I have to purchase a newer car. Altho at 83 years old, maybe the vehicle will outlast me.



I have an almost complete collection of the Sgt Preston comic book. I always enjoyed the radio and the TV show, and since the comic was more of the same, it was a natural for me to collect it. As an interesting aside, I always felt that Richard Simmons who played the role on TV was far better as the character than Paul Sutton, who played the part on radio from 1951 to about 1954. Sutton never sounded like any kind of police officer; his voice was more suited to romantic crooning or soap opera style story lines. Brace Beemer, star of the Lone Ranger series, took over as Preston on radio in 1954, a much better voice for the character.

The Marvel and DC covers were all satirical fakes. I would be willing to pay a premium to actually read a few of those hybrid issues, if they were ever actually produced and published.///

REPUBLICAN AGENDA TO DO LIST



Keep'em Poor

• No to Minimum Wage • Break the Unions • Cut Welfare Programs •
Cut Social Security • Deregulation • Gut the Dodd-Frank Act

Keep'em Sick

• Cut Food Aid • Repeal Obamacare • Cut Disability Benefits • Privatize
Veterans Health Care • Cut HIV Prevention Funding

Keep'em Stupid

• Deny Science • Revise History • Categorize, Demonize, Terrify •
Cut Pre-school Programs • Cuts to Higher Education • Cut Sex
Education • NO to Net Neutrality

Control the Women

• Implement all of the above PLUS> Vote NO to Equal Pay • Cut Wages
for Tipped Workers • NO to Affordable Childcare • Pro-Life=NO Choice
NO Exceptions • Close down Planned Parenthood • Anti-Contraception •
Redefine Rape • Personhood Amendments • Feticide Laws • Criminalize
Miscarriages • Doctor Mandated Reporting of Miscarriages and Abortions
to the State • Mandatory Transvaginal Ultrasounds • Rollback Maternity
Coverage • Omit protections in the Violence Against Women Act • Blame
Single Moms for Poverty, Welfare Fraud, Breeding Criminals and
Destroying the Fabric of America

MAILING COMMENTS



ARCHIVE MIDWINTER

I think it is clear to everyone, including his ardent supporters, that Trump is suffering from senile dementia. The problem is that his loyal supporters will never admit this, or make any effort to get him the medical treatment he clearly needs, because that would require him to relinquish the powers of the Presidential office. They may (or may not) trust Vance to follow their Beloved Leader's agenda of inflicting pain and misery on the people they despise but they can't be sure that Vance will do so with the same ruthless efficiency that Trump has managed. I have said this before, only half jokingly, that it appears to a lot of people that Donald Trump has made a pact with Satan, and that's why he has been so successful despite all the dangerous, illegal and just plain looney-tunes things he does and says. If you or anybody else reading this has a different theory as to why he is still President, I'd love to hear it.

The original idea of Bitcoin was to have an effective way to effortlessly transfer money anywhere in the world without having to go thru all the red tape and delays traditional banking transfers often involve. The fact that this system made it easy to transfer illegal funds and to launder illegal funds efficiently was one of the reasons it became so popular so fast.

There is also a definite limit to the amount of Bitcoin that will ever be created and allowed to be in circulation, and we are rapidly approaching that limit. The fact that some people regard Bitcon as a sort of unregulated stock market that they can "invest" in was probably not really anticipated, but here it is, like it or

not. The other main problem with Bitcoin is that clever hackers can (and often have) broken thru their so-called safe system and stolen lots of the crypto currency units and have been able to get away with it. That alone makes it such a risk that I would never ever consider buying any of those things for any reason.

Like you, my interest in following current moves has declined with my advancing age, however I find I can still watch movies on DVD, and I can get any movie I happen to be interested in thru inter-library loan. But there are precious few new movies I have much interest in seeing now. I'm completely burned out on comic book super hero movies after a number of bad experiences, and the last five year's crop of romantic comedies does not appeal to me either. There are some old movies, including silents, that I continue to seek out. On that same note, I still haven't watched Avatar. I've got to check that one out...real soon now.

You say about genetically recreating the extinct Dire Wolf: *"That violates your suggestion not to bring back anything that might eat people, but, hey, we keep Tigers in zoos, so a small population of Dire Wolves could hardly be worse."* Uh, wasn't that exactly the same premise that the creators of Jurassic Park used when they genetically cloned and recreated those dinosaurs?

THE MURDER MASTER MAGE #283

As I said
before, I don't

see the big thrill of doing military reenactments, especially WWII reenactments, but hey, people engage in all sorts of odd hobbies. I wonder if the WWII reenactors actually roll out old military equipment as part of the play? Cranking up and running a WWII era tank would be pretty expensive. The cost of fuel alone would be staggering in today's economy.

Ah, so you tracked down the Schmitz heirs/rights holder thru the SFWA data base. Interesting, and worthwhile that they maintain an active file of who owns the rights to all those thousands of stories and characters science fiction authors created over the years.

Do you have to pay the Schmitz estate a fee to write new stories about the Telzey Amberdon character? What about paying royalties if the new Telzey stories you write get published and are commercially released?

I completely disagree with you on the subject of MAXAC. Fan writers should be allowed to write as much or as little as they feel like about any subject so long as it is not illegal, libelous, or pornographic. If someone rambles on too long about a subject that doesn't interest you, then just stop reading. In an apa, including this one, nobody forces anyone to comment on anything that does not interest them. But applying any kind of MAXAC rule is censorship, and I completely oppose that concept.

I have to assume that sites like Amazon, and Barnes & Noble, and Books-A-Million have been taking over the primary distribution of paperback books for at least the past five to ten years or so, considering that so few brick and mortar retail stores carry any kind of paperback books any more (see my last issue and the issue before that for long discussions on the situation). However I think the main problem is that the



paperbacks themselves now cost more than most people want to pay. If there is a significant difference in cost between the e-book version and the print version I would suspect that many people go for the e-book version. However (and yet again), many of the people I know, including myself, are not interested in buying any more physical books; we get our fiction fix thru the local library and inter-library loan services.



BROWNIAN MOVEMENT #20

UFO sighting and supposed physical encounters with alien beings have increased exponentially during this new century. I think it was Gary Trudeau in his Doonesbury Sunday comic strip who pointed out that the overwhelming majority of these UFO sightings/alien contact encounters happen within the United States, with numbers that absolutely dwarf all the reports from the rest of the planet combined.

To me this just shows that the people of this country happen to be more gullible, more imaginative, and perhaps more desperately in need of some kind of reassurance that some greater, more powerful intelligence with super science at their fingertips, is out there, interacting with us, and perhaps (hopefully), willing to help us out in this age of increasing desperation and chaos. I think most of these sightings are imaginary, either deliberate lies or self inflicted delusions.

There probably is something unknown that flies around in the atmosphere from time to time, but I think it is far more likely that what we have is either some radical and unknown native life form, or some kind of natural phenomena that we do not understand yet (only a few short years ago science was completely dumbfounded to discover that ball lightning actually existed, despite many decades of people observing the phenomena). But aliens from another world? Inter-dimensional travelers? Naw, not even remotely likely.

I echo George's comment; you should consider tightening up your "Across the Fandomension" and making it a regular column in the *N3F Fan Gazette*. You provide the kind of info that fans would find interesting to read, and usable for planning fan activities and convention trips. Give it some serious shot.

The IRS waited a couple of months for me to fill out their electronic ID forms, which I was unable to do. When it was obvious to them that I wasn't going to create an on-line IRS account they finally mailed out my refund as a regular government check. I suspect that quite a few people had the same experience I did, namely, trying to do all the stuff they wanted to create the account was so complicated that lots of other taxpayers besides myself just gave up in frustration.

I was very curious myself as to how Hachette and other book publishers were/are able to determine if some work of fiction was created, or augmented by artificial intelligence software. Unfortunately none of the news stories and articles about the recent flurry of A-I fiction scams have mentioned any pertinent details. The reality is that AI gets more sophisticated and more developed every week, so I personally continue to believe that in the near future that A-I will be able to turn out interesting, well constructed fiction that will sell to the human marketplace. It seems inevitable. I am not sure if this will ever displace human writers, but considering the cut-throat economic realities of the publishing biz, I can see a lot of publishers using AI to generate steady sellers and not having to pay real human writers any fees at all.

Biological science is already creating unique organisms that can affect the environment in useful ways. In the past year I read articles about a process that can turn plastic into bio-fuel and organisms that can

eat plastic and petroleum products and release raw materials and hydrogen gas. That one seems dangerous to me; what if it got out of control and destroyed all plastic and petroleum products? In fact there was a 1971 SF novel titled “Mutant 59: The Plastic Eater” that examined that very hypothesis; a chilling disaster thriller that we may soon discover accurately predicted the future.

I still don’t know where you are getting the idea that there are only about 30 active fanzines in stf fandom today. A quick glance at Bill Burn’s fanzines.com website shows 46 different fanzine titles listed just since January of this year, and that does not cover all the various apazines, and the assorted fanzines that are not posted on his website. None of the N3F zines, for example, are listed on Bill’s website. Nick Farey’s Incomplete Register listed 67 separate fanzines eligible for the 2025 FAAN awards, and he notes that he always receives some votes for fanzines that he himself had not listed each year. There are clearly a great deal more than 30 active fanzines out there the in the hobby.



SAMIZDAT... #38

I suspect that the concept of schools and universities devoted to teaching people magic is a pretty new concept. For one thing, it would assume that magic is very common, and that many people (students) can be taught mastery of magical skills and that there is also a sufficient social and economic need for magic users so that a full class of magic using students graduating into the world every year would be able to find gainful employment in the field of applied magical arts.

Thruout history magic has been regarded with great suspicion by most of the population, particularly the ruling classes who regard it as a dangerous, unregulated encroachment on their authority and privilege. Magic users traditionally have been regarded as evil, using their magic not only for self enrichment, but also to harm and obstruct other people, particularly those persons who might be in competition with them. The Old Testament isn’t the only religious text with a command to not suffer a witch or wizard to live. Given this mindset I don’t see schools teaching

magic was a real or even relevant thing in fiction or otherwise, at least until modern fantasy novels came along and introduced the concept of magic being both legal and common.

There is a traditional folk song that mentions witches teaching other witches the craft. I can’t remember the name, or find any quick reference to it on the web, but I believe Manley Wade Wellman wrote a short story about it. I can’t remember the title of that either.

Most of the subjects you proposed for panels at your upcoming convention sound interesting. I suspect you would need some knowledgeable (and opinionated) panelists/presenters to make many of them work. A lot on the list seem designed to encourage audience participation. Has audience inter-action worked well for your con? In too many of the conventions I have attended the audience members want to be entertained and informed, but have no real interest in asking questions themselves.

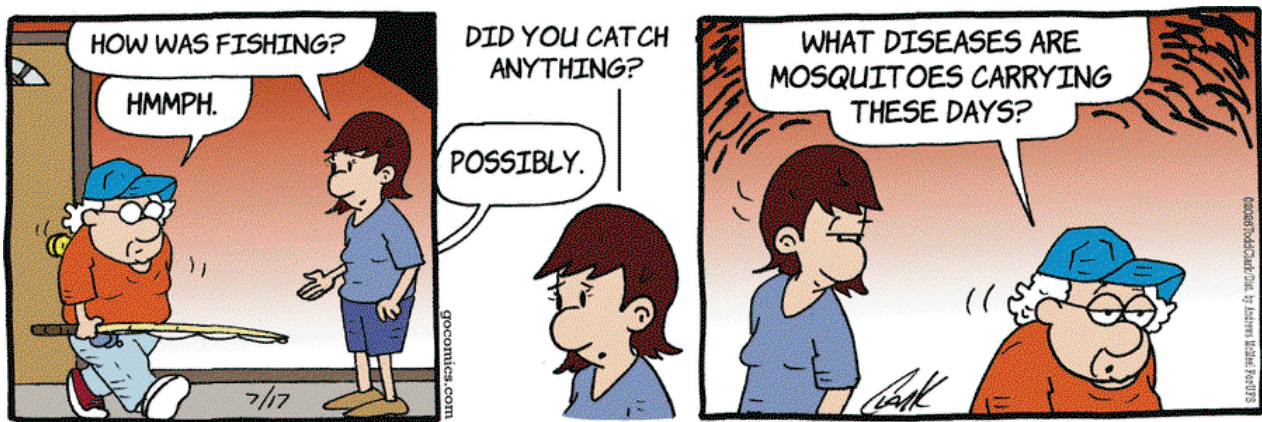
In regards Barbara McQuade’s book “How Disinformation is Sabotaging America”; many of the things she wants to establish to counter the flow of misinformation are illegal, and would never stand a court challenge. I think most of her proposed solutions are unrealistically broad. Insisting on fair disclosure laws, insisting that media platforms eliminate patently false and dangerous sites, and eliminating recognized robots

are doable, but nobody in authority seems to have any idea how to make even these reasonable restrictions work.

I always liked the Disney cartoon version of “Alice In Wonderland”. I remember the movie being extremely heavily merchandised, so even if the film technically lost money when it was originally released, I am reasonably sure that the studio did well with the hundreds of tie-ins and product endorsements they made deals with. I think the cartoons and songs work very well, and are certainly superior to the previous attempts to turn the book(s) into movies. Somewhere around here (or maybe in the warehouse) I believe I still have my original scratched up plastic record set of songs from the movie that my Mom bought for us when the film was originally released. All the songs from the movie are now posted for free on the internet. I just verified this and wound up listening to “Painting the Roses Red”, with most of the original cartoon animation running in the background too.

I have no problem with authors who can turn out several, or even lots of novels every year. Some writers can effortlessly turn on the flow of words and ideas, while others work more slowly. I am only concerned about the final product; whether it is interesting and well crafted. There are certainly a lot of fantasy novels being published these days, but I am not so sure that all of them are profitable. Paper & ink printing is a very risky business, but the cost of setting up, and even printing, has gone down in this new century which may contribute to the avalanche (glut, some call it) of stf related books pouring into the marketplace now. One medium selling book title can cover up for a bunch of losers. Fiction publishing is like playing the roulette wheel in a casino, except it takes a year or more to figure out whether you hit the big bucks or lost your stake yet again.

While I agree that the election of Trump as president shows deep fissures of division in this country, the reality is that Trump’s unique personality is what propelled him to victory the second time round. Other Republican politicians may try to advance his primary agenda, but nobody but a delusional egomaniac like Trump would have tried to deliberately and illegally enact his sweeping agenda of changes, deliberately target his enemies, destroy the checks and balances system of government, and try to turn himself into a banana republic style dictator with his name and likeness adorning everything that he can think of. (I wonder how many of those Trump gold gloss one dollar coins are actually selling). I can’t think of even one Republican politician who could match Trump’s sheer egotism.



ESMERALDA COUNTY LINE #16

Why did you have a five year accumulation of boxes in your apartment in the first place? Couldn't you have broken down a couple of boxes every week and placed them in your regular recycle trash? I haven't lived in an apartment for quite a long time, but way back when I did, the complex had a community mini-dumpster that people could toss stuff into, as long as the items weren't too large. The nephew of the complex manager would happily help anybody that wanted to get rid of a chair, table, or even a sofa which he reduced to manageable size with a few swings of his trusty sledge hammer.

I suspect the reason that the Executioner paperback novel series has never been made into movies or TV is because they are unrelentingly violent, with enormous body counts each volume. I am inclined to doubt that the general public would react favorably to all that brutality and gore, but then, considering some of the other things that make it to public screens, large and small, maybe it was just a matter of coughing up the kind of money Pendleton felt his material was worth.

I don't think the Iran war will be settled any time soon. Trump got into this mess at Israel's urging, apparently believing a quick slam and killing off their hard-line fanatical leaders would create regime change; that the common folks would be so battered that they would accept anything Trump and Bibby offered them. Instead we have a new crew of leaders even more fanatical than the original batch (who at least had experience with real world politics, unlike the second stringers). Most of Iran's new cadre of leaders seem to believe that dying in combat with the infidel Americans will get them a free pass into Moslem heaven, and they will not agree to anything the enemy proposes. Trump has offered them the moon, but they refuse to negotiate in good faith. This war is going to drag on for many, many more months, perhaps even a few years more.

I think that these days most authors sell books on their own website, or thru some link that lets fans reach them direct. I am unfamiliar with how many free copies a publisher sends out to its authors in this day and age (it used to be eight of any hardcover, and a floor stand of about 28 copies of any paperback) but all publishers will let their authors buy copies of their own books at the bookstore discount of 40% off, so I assume most authors stock up. People who really like a certain book will often seek out the writer and check to see what other things s/he has written, so the profit potential by selling direct is decent. In theory authors also get first chance to buy any of their titles if their books get remaindered (which happens frequently with hardback books), but in actual practice most publishers sell to big grave digger wholesale outfits who are able to make massive warehouse clean out buys all in one transaction, which is a lot easier than having to sort thru their warehouse inventory to find and then ship out copies to individual authors.

There may be truth in the idea that if the American prairie had never been plowed and cultivated for crops that the Dust Bowl disaster of the 1930s would never have happened. However people moving west in the 19th century were primarily farmers looking for cheap land and low taxes, with the 1862 Homestead Act giving them both. European migrants with farming backgrounds also headed west in the hopes of getting some of that free land. Once the prairie had been tilled there was no way the owners of those 160 acre plots were going to trade their farming lifestyle for something else.

Parts of the west were clearly unsuitable for traditional farming, but were ideal for scrub ranching, so cattle and sheep could roam free, scavage feed on whatever vegetation they could find, be rounded up and shipped to market yearly and turn a handsome profit for the ranchers. They could even pay their wranglers top wages. \$40 a month plus food and shelter doesn't sound like much in this modern world, but in the 1850s and 1860s men were dropping out of college to head west and take advantage of the very generous wages ranching offered.

A complicating factor with modern ongoing comic book heroes is that fans now have a chance to review and read vast numbers of the character's back issues for a relatively modest cost due to digital scanning, omnibus printed collections, and on-line streaming libraries that allow interested fans to examine the character thru every facet of his past. Continuity goes out the window when you look at a forty year run of most comic book heroes, and similar storylines like the on-again/off-again/strangely troubled romance of Batman and Catwoman spotlight the repeated similarities of plot lines in stark detail. I am willing to accept that characters change with the times, that what was printed in their issues from the distant past may not be culturally relevant today, but a lot of hard core collectors don't see it that way at all.

Huh! Sort of surprised that you don't like the writing of H.G. Wells, one of the pillars in the creation of modern science fiction literature, but I guess it takes all tastes. I read a lot of Wells, including many of his mainstream novels some years ago. Most were good; I can see why they were good sellers back in those olden days, but I stopped because there was just too much stf and genre fiction that I would rather read than expend my time reading mainstream novels about people caught up in webs of their own personal problems who don't seem to know how to deal with the situation.

Uh, I suspect you are misremembering. It is unlikely that you have fond memories of encountering John W. Campbell at the Balticon science fiction cons from the mid 1970s and up, since he died in July, 1971.



R.A.I.L. #23

One of the advantages of living in this modern technology heavy world is that if you missed the 4th of July fireworks show, you can watch it later on a screen of your choice at any time that is convenient to you.

Is Constitutional Law going to be something that will directly affect your future career as a barrister?

If you can access the entire history of Marvel Comics thru their history spanning pay library, and if it gets regularly updated with the newest issues, then what is the point of buying the new comics anymore? Having the physical print copies has long been the preferred collector mode, but that is certainly changing with this new century, and if the companies are themselves maintaining digital libraries of all their material, it makes holding onto those physical copies irrelevant. As a guy who has half a million back issue comics in his warehouse that I am trying to sell off, I worry about such things.

MOZIAG #3

Wow! What a complicated library system NY State has. Here in Mass all the state's libraries are tied together on inter-library loan, so having a card at your nearest local library gets you access to everything in the state system. It also gets you access to lots of books across the US of A from out of state libraries that are part of the inter-library loan system, which, it turns out, is most of the libraries in the nation, including some college libraries (but not, for some odd reason, the three local Worcester area colleges).

Getting books from out of state takes a while, and I've only had to use that option a few times, (mainly to get some pulp reprint collections and a few reprints of Victorian era science-fantasy novels). Most of the things I want to read are available instate, and libraries will usually listen if you request a soon to be released title, such as "A Trade of Blood", the third novel in the Ana and Din fantasy mystery trilogy by Robert Jackson Bennett (which comes out Aug 6th). I hope to get it immediately, and have it read three days later. A book report either here or in *Fadeaway* will certainly follow

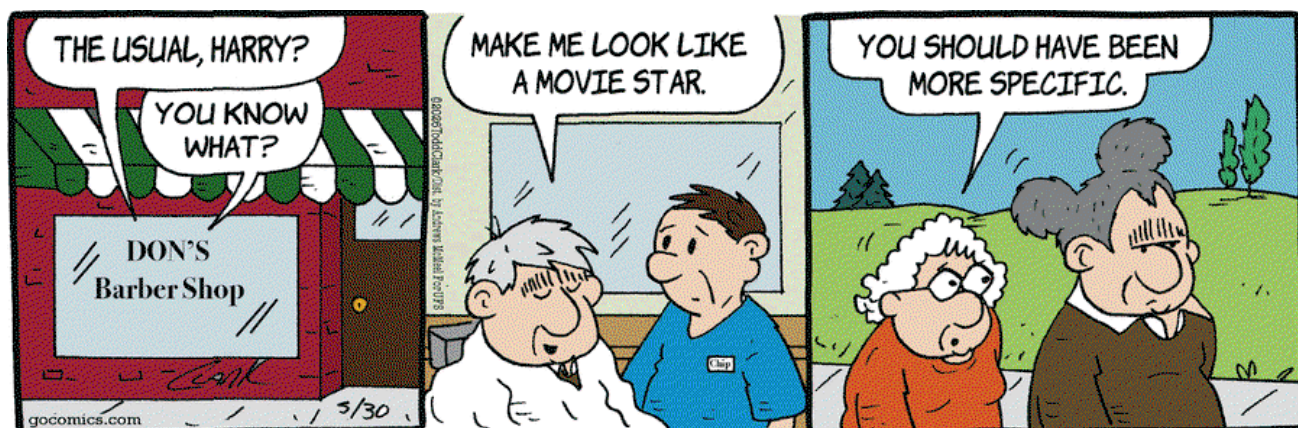
I can't imagine having to put up with six or seven individual library cards just to check out the titles you want to read because the city libraries never wanted to merge their systems together, or even worked out an inter-loan agreement.

Rich Dengrove did an extensive history of the propeller beanie and its connection with science fiction fandom which I ran in *Fadeaway* #21, posted on Bill Burns' fanzines.com website for anyone who is interested. The article also talks about his famous propeller royal emperor's crown head piece, and has quotes from Ray Nelson (who was a subscriber to my zine right up until the day he died).

Good luck placing your story with a magazine. Unfortunately I think print stf mags are a dying breed (see my comments in previous issues of this zine). I just checked the web, and it turns out that the *Analog* publishers say that they have distributed the long overdue March-April print issue as of the last week

in July, but in point of fact, they haven't managed to do that yet. The last print issue they have managed to actually deliver is the February 2026 number. They still have a mostly up to date digital issue presence, which I suspect is going to soon become the only way anybody is going to be able read the magazine.

Maybe George would be willing to go on your podcast and talk about the N3F and all the services the club offers. We currently seem to have a good sized membership, but most of our members are not really involved in club activities. I'm not even sure how many people read our assortment of fanzines. Hey, N3F tech folks—is there some way we can get a counter attached to club zine issues when they have been released to see who is actually accessing our mags?



BRANDY HALL #19

Glad to read that you are finally recovered from that lingering illness.

Phenomena is a very real problem for older people. We are more susceptible due to our immune systems being weakened after generations of use, and a lot of us have the feeling that it's just a lingering cold or a touch of flu, so we don't go to see a doctor even if the problem lasts far longer than a normal cold/flu bout might. I just did a quick web check, and it turns out that around 40,000 people in the US die of pneumonia each year, and people over age 65 account for about 85% of all phenomena cases. Sobering info. I had my phenomena shot a couple of years back, but it might need to be upgraded again.

Wow! A university that doesn't subscribe to the Oxford English Dictionary? How much money did they save by cancelling their subscription? It can't be that much, especially considering all the other expenses of running a modern university.

I try to write mailing comments to everybody in N'APA. In some cases people are discussing things I know little or nothing about. Case in point: the occasional technical discussions of applying and using computers and computer programs. I use a computer, but my knowledge of programming, adding/changing/fixing anything connected with the modern computer machine is nill. Obviously I don't make any comments when members jump into those subjects. Same deal with mathematics. Math and I have never gotten along, so discussions about math leave me completely sidelined.



Jet, was a very small sized magazine (about half digest sized), started in November 1951 and priced at fifteen cents. "Focusing on news, culture, and entertainment related to the African-American community.... billed as "The Weekly Negro News Magazine". It was a companion magazine to *Ebony*, but featured lots of graphic photos of people and events, historical and otherwise. They had a beauty of the week featuring beautiful Negro women in bikinis or even briefer costumes. They heavily reported civil rights news including violence to Negro protesters (with graphic photos), and covered a variety of controversial subjects. Aimed at a younger Negro audience, it also sold respectable numbers to white readers because of the sensational and often shocking photos they ran of unusual events and people. *Jet* is still going today as a digital publication. All back issues from the first

issue on up are achieved at their web site, and many issues can be read for free at places like Google Books and the Internet Archives.

OK, I sit corrected. My primary experience as both a reader and a book seller has been that the overwhelming majority of paperbacks Penguin Books has published over the years have been copyright free public domain material. But, I will admit that they have certainly published a lot of contemporary book titles, particular popular mainstream novels that were in-print as hardback volumes for which they made financial arrangements with the hardback publishers to issue as Penguin paperback editions. Your listing the first twenty volumes of their publication history clearly shows that they were aiming at inexpensive paperback editions of successful hardback novels at the start of their business.

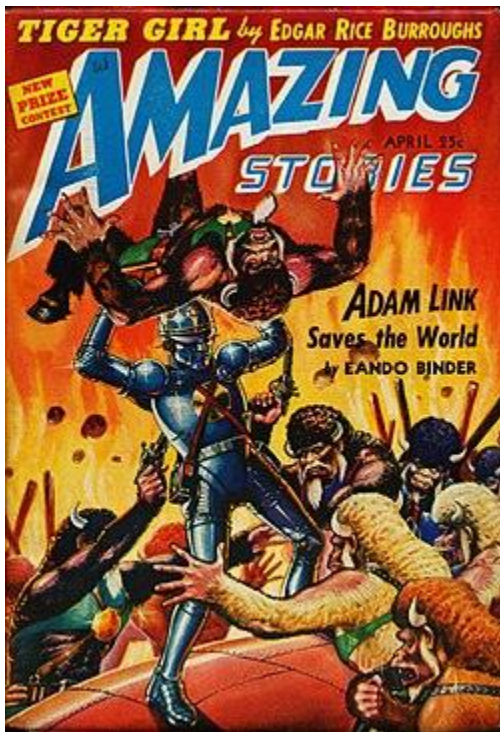
I suspect that almost nobody's experience on actually retiring turns out the way they envisioned. Most of the people I know who have retired find themselves as busy or even busier than they were before they dropped out of the primary work force. Even the few people who planned on spending their days playing on-line games and smoozing with friends at the local senior center have had their schedules upended by more recent events that caused them to seriously alter their playbook. But hey, nobody ever said life was supposed to be predictable.



Lots of political commentary in both these issues. I am glad things are going much better for Ukraine in this very long and brutal war, but I again say that this war will never end until Russia finds some way to rid themselves of Putin. Apparently Putin's health has taken another turn for the worse. Rumors abound, but the Russian press has completely stopped mentioning anything about his health, which says to me that maybe there are serious problems that they dare not even hint at. But unless this sociopath goes, the war with Ukraine will continue, no matter how many people die or how much economic damage is done.

Nice historical round-up of the many science fiction stories associated with robots and computers. As I have mentioned before, the idea of a computing machine that could do all the work of human mathematicians was a fairly new concept to science fiction. Thru the end of the 1930s stf writers were still using slide rules and mechanical adding machines in their stories, this even tho the IBM company had started using punch card sorting systems as far back as the 1890 census, and the first modern horizontal sorting machine came out in 1925. As I recall, some of the primary users of the card sorting machines were police departments who used the system to sort out lists of possible known felons using similar operating methods to commit new crimes.

Science fiction literature can latch onto new ideas and run with them when given a little fair warning, but I think the genre pretty much dropped the ball when it came to envisioning the impact of computers in the modern sense. Note that the overwhelming number of stories that involve the active use of computers, robot intelligence, and anything connected with it appeared after 1939.



I was surprised you neglected to mention the Adam Link sentient robot stories by Otto Binder. The first story appeared in the January 1939 issue of *Amazing Stories* ("I, Robot"), the last of ten stories appeared in the April, 1942 issue. The whole series was later edited by Binder who interlinked all the original stories with some minor changes and turned the series into twenty-one continuous chapters for paperback publication in 1965. The paperback has been reprinted many times and all those stories hold up very well. Isaac Asimov said that his own robot stories were heavily influenced by Binder's Adam Link character.

I fully agree with your assessment that drone warfare has completely changed the entire science of warfare. Ukraine clearly has the advantage over every other military force on the planet. As you probably read, the US military just signed an agreement with Ukraine to have their people instruct US military leaders in the strategy and effective usage of drones for both attack and defense.

Frightening, but probably not really surprising, is how fast the technology and strategic development of drone warfare continues to evolve. Almost every week there are new, startling revelations that nobody could have predicted even a year ago. Science is running waaayyy ahead of what any of might have expected in this specific niche. It remains to be seen if the rest of the nations on earth will even try to catch up.

I believe your definition of fantasy literature is too narrow. Yes, beginning in the 1960s, a ton of novels and short stories in the fantasy genre slid effortlessly into the ancient-medieval-magic-magical items-dragons sub-category, but there has always been a lot more to fantasy literature than the shadows and echoes of Tolkien. Traditional fantasy and modern fantasy involves unusual situations and characters not covered by modern science. There have been plenty of great fantasy stores set in modern times. *Unknown Worlds* magazine, edited by John Campbell produced lots of great fantasy with very little of it falling into the ancient-magic-dragons format. Most pre-1970s fantasy, including magazines like *Beyond* continued that tradition. I have been rereading my run of *Beyond* and may write about it in a future issue of this zine.

WHAT CHILDREN HAVE LEARNED FROM TRUMP:

Mocking the disabled is cool.

Never apologize.

Never admit you are wrong.

Name-calling is cool.

Science is stupid.

Empathy is for losers.

Be afraid of anyone not white.

Cheating is acceptable.

Bullying people is good.

Stealing from charities is ok.

Reading is a waste of time.

Attacking dead people is fine.

Distorting the truth is normal.

Always blame others.

Always take credit when no credit is due.

INTERMISSION #170

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA & N'APA and others wanting Golden Hours. Ed still has no time for @SFJournalen on Tw/X yet...but RSN! Sweden has 95 700 lakes, but don't tell Trump! Typos are like mosquitos:they swarm around you,no matter how many you swat? Late Aug'26.

Editorially: An Unknown Fandom

This will be special, with a History Corner having *two unique stories*. I've done my darndest to dig deep into a 130+ years old popular story publication few even heard of: *Golden Hours*. You may remember from last issue about their up to now unknown *precursor to sf conventions*, the 1889 *Golden Hours National Convention* in Brooklyn, New York. But this time I'll go into the publication itself, a "story paper" that sponsored a huge readers club. It became something a little bit resembling our fandom. They even published their own amateur magazines and had an APA! But more! We'll "visit" the 1969 Finnish SF/Pop Science Week with the help of one of few left who was involved. Both this and *Golden Hours* hasn't yet been covered anywhere in any detail, if at all.

I've read and researched more fandom history than mentally sound :-). And I had never heard of the *Golden Hours Club*! We're literally trampling virgin ground. I found a stash of around 100 of the 800+ issues of *Golden Hours*, downloaded a collection of issues and have tried to distill all relevant info about this extraordinary publication and its vast club network. Much more research is needed, but I hope I've laid a ground. Local fanhistory buffs should step in. I don't have access to libraries and newspaper archives, being on the other side of the Atlantic with just a browser, an AI and an archive with most issues missing...

An interesting point here is that science fiction was in the mix. The quantity of skiffy in *Golden Hours* wasn't large, but it was there. Science fiction didn't exist as a distinguishable genre at the time. It was just like any other adventure story, except it also contained, say, a fantastic vessel that could fly or dive, a fantastic invention by a mad professor or other odd technology or science. Jules Verne had already made these kind of stories popular. The *Golden Hours Club*, peaking at 10 000 members, could be seen as a precursor to the Science Fiction League founded three decades after *Golden Hours* stopped the presses for good.

Intermission is proud to give you history you'll find nowhere else!

But all this take up so much space, that there's no room for other things but LoCs and the mailing comments this zine also goes through two APAs. (Join an APA, it's fun!)

Time for some Ukraine news, mostly positive for all of us who don't like mad dictators attacking an innocent neighbour. And indiscriminately killing (disproportionally) women, children and the elderly in Hitler's V2 manner, using torture, sending 1 of 50 of his own male population to be killed or maimed, breaking conventions and treaties, enslaving his own population, bringing his society to the brink of collapse. (I'm not talking about Trump. This time.)

Ukraine has had spectacular successes this spring and summer! All of Putin's oil refineries have had visits by Ukrainian drones and production is down 50%. The gas station masquerading as a country sees mile long gas station queues and is forced to import gasoline and diesel. It's as if Greenland had to import ice. Russia's shadow fleet meets utter destruction in the Black Sea (140+ taken out) and rising problems elsewhere. Ukrainian drones cut all roads, bridges and other paths into Crimea and blown up all electricity infrastructure. The trucks trying to carry gas and equipment into Crimea are droned on roads Zelensky's men have under fire control. They have also attacked most of the Wildberries/ (Russia's Amazon) warehouses and now move on Ozone warehouses. Losses are worth 10s of billions of \$. 3% of Russia's economy and a million jobs disappear. Wildberries will default on its huge loans which could bring Russia's biggest banks down. Kremlin's clown is in deep sh*t. And on top of all this, Kremlin is still under *Intermission's fanzine blockade*...

Vladolf Putler fantasises that increasing ballistic missile attacks will soften Ukraine, that unfortunately is short on Patriot missiles that can take out Putin's terror rockets. Since Trump played 4th of July in the Gulf with the Patriots, there's a deficit of them. His promise to let Ukraine produce their own was worth nothing. Lets hope Make America Gruesome Again is whipped in the coming Congress elections. France and Italy offer Patriot replacements but numbers are low. And Europe's own Freya (named after a Norse god) missile will take at least a year. There's virtual standstill at the fronts, but Russia is slowly losing ground and up to 40 000 heads/month. Worrying news: Putin will re-mobilise (kidnapping pedestrians) after his fake elections Sep 20. CIA chief Ratcliffe stop-and-go trip to Moscow was likely about warning Moscow not to challenge NATO - unsure if Putin heeds. Trump renaming Lake Ontario makes us seriously question the mental state of this 5-year-old...

I'd really like your comments on the Golden Hours Club!

--Ahrvid Engholm, editor

HISTORY CORNER

Our History Corner this time goes overseas. First we'll revisit an sf & popular science week in Finland in 1969, which we mentioned in previous issue's Finncon report, though much too short. We got in touch with one of the organisers and have more details now!

In that issue we also had a bombshell, or at least a little hand grenade, covering the earliest precursor to sf conventions, in the form of the Golden Hours National convention in 1889 - it was earlier than the 1891 Vril-Ya Bazaar and Fete known from before. We found a stash of Golden Hours PDFs and will now take a deep look into the magazine itself and especially its big Golden Hours Club, which resembles an early fandom.

Finland's 1969 SF Week

Now to the Turku SF Week. We got in touch with one Jorma Piha, from a tip obtained at recent Finncon, one of the organisers behind it. We know the basic functions of Google, which led us to find out that he now is professor emeritus of child psychiatry at Turku University. It was there they had an SF week in 1976, also covering popular science. I had just been there for the 2026 Finncon. We're grateful he took time to go back in time and lift the veil a little.

"I was a Board member responsible for cultural issues," he writes. "We decided to arrange a one-week event focusing on science from unscientific perspective." (Much kiitos for you info BTW!)

The dates were March 22-28, 1969, and the program had two themes: Popularization of science, and science fiction. The science fiction part consisted of 1) exhibition of sf comic books/magazines and literature, 2) oral presentations on sf and 3) a series of sf movies. The movies were shown in a cinema named Boston, seating 340 people (but it never got fully occupied), in downtown Turku. The audience would enjoy:

Ernest Schoedsack's (dir) *King Kong* (1933, hardly needs description! -

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0024216/>),

Roy Rowland: *The 5 000 Fingers of Dr T* (1953, a piano-playing boy in a fantasy world must save himself from a dictatorial piano teacher,

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0045464/>),

Natjhan Juran's *First Men in the Moon* (1964, after HG Wells,

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0058100/>)

Willism Menzies' *Invaders from Mars* (1953, plot what the title says, notorious because you saw the zippers on the back of the Martian's costumes, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0045917/>)

) Richard Fleischer's: *Fantastic Voyage* (1966, a minisub in the bloodstream, Isaac Asimov wrote the novelisation, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0060397/>)

"The Turku Film Club (Turun Elokuvakerho) contributed to the movie-part, I was active also in this club", Piha writes.

The sf exhibition (open 12-20, March 23-28) took up two rooms of a student club and displayed sf comic books and literature, had enlarged comic strips on the walls. A publisher gave visitors two Jules Verne books for free. Attendance? "It's impossible to estimate the number of visitors," Jorma writes (but the math department of *Intermission* makes a bold bet: *In the hundreds!* This means between 100 and 999. It can't be wrong, can it?)

The panels and presenters dealing with sf took the stage March 23-24, with Pertti Jotuni: "Science fiction and reality - from the perspective of knowledge", Kalevi Nyytaja: "Science fiction in literature", Juha Manninen: "Science fiction as the literature of technostucture", Olli Tuomola: "Science fiction - a content analysis of comic books". Note: the topics are phrased differently below, when it's AI-translated from the printed program (which also contains the popular science parts). The above is from Jorma Piha and probably most correct. (AIs will take liberties when uncertain of things!)

The article below was posted beside other SF Week info Finncon's history exhibition. But Jorma Piha, who also knows the basic functions of google, found out that it's from the year before and was published in the newspaper *Kansan Uutiset* in Helsinki. But as it covers the same topics as the event - that's why someone thought it was connected - we'll run it anyway. It will illuminate the late 60s status of popular science and sf in Finland. Headline "*From popularising science to POP art*". I had it OCR'd and let my AI translate it:



Jorma Piha today. At the time he was around 20.



During the past hundred years in particular, the exact sciences have become so specialised that they have developed into disciplines almost entirely foreign to one another. As a result, it is impossible for a layman unfamiliar with the mathematical formalism of science to understand them - and often even representatives of neighbouring disciplines cannot. The explosive growth of knowledge - in many fields it doubles every ten years - has made it necessary to present science in a form accessible to the general public. Science popularisation means presenting the general or specialised problems of a scientific field to a broad audience without the specialised terminology or the logical-mathematical models associated with it.

The broadest, though least information-dense, audience is the general public. Opinion polls show that 80-90 per cent of people need popular presentations of science. Paradoxically, only about 30 per cent of newspaper editors seem to agree. The audience with an intermediate education and people working in practical occupations are more selective - their popular science can be denser and assume a greater familiarity with basic methods. Another audience consists of amateur members of scientific clubs and societies and private enthusiasts of science; in astronomy alone, for example, there are around 20,000 such people.

The Amateur Scientist

The highest-level, though smallest and often least aware, potential audience consists of scientists themselves. The traditional ideal of a good researcher has long been the somewhat absent-minded scholar, withdrawn into his study, absorbed in his speciality and largely unconcerned with the problems of the outside world. Unfortunately, the age of such selfless idealism has passed.

The changes in our increasingly technological society rest more and more upon the natural sciences and their applications. Researchers with the greatest specialist knowledge therefore play an increasingly important role in this development. As our society evolves into one based on education and scientific culture, the social activity of scientists themselves becomes essential to our future.

Science popularisation is still a very young phenomenon in Finland. Only about twenty years ago did Dr Tuokko begin publishing pocket-sized booklets and magazine articles. Until recently, the popular presentation of the exact sciences has been almost entirely dependent upon voluntary enthusiasm and has often been economically unrewarding.

The main reason for this change has been the great international achievements of the 1950s in space research, medicine and technology. These developments finally persuaded the most progressive news media to employ freelance science journalists.

The Information Barrier In contrast, both superpowers, as well as Germany, Britain and France, had already established first- and second-level channels for science popularisation before the Second World War. Here too Finland, as a young and rather conservative cultural nation, has followed developments roughly a generation behind.

The Information Barrier

This claim may earn the displeasure of our cultural enthusiasts. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that in Finland formal education, scholarship and academic chairs have been held in such esteem that their problems have scarcely reached ordinary citizens.

Many of the shortcomings in our science and higher-education policies - above all the meagre funding by international standards - are also due to this bottleneck in the flow of information within society.

The principal task of the professional science journalist or science writer is to spread a healthy and factual appreciation of science. Through criticism, independence and professional skill, such people bring science the attention it urgently needs. They also help science maintain good relations with business and industry and secure funding from political decision-makers. Even science, in today's production-oriented society, cannot afford to ignore publicity and competition for attention.

If the most active and articulate researchers, together with the scientifically educated experts in our economic and administrative institutions, were to popularise their own fields - which are often

Tieteen popularisoinnista POP-taiteeseen

Varsinkin viimeisten sadan vuoden aikana ovat eksaktit tieteet alet erikoistuneet toisilleen täysin vieraisiin oppikirjakenneilmiöiksi. Niinpä tieteiden matemaattiseen formalismiin peitettyä saade niillä käsitellyt, koska se ei onnistu ainsa nappuriteidenkään edustajille. Tiedon kokonaisuuden räjähdysmäinen kasvu - useilla aloilla se kaksinkertaistuu joka kymmenes vuosi - on pakottanut tieteiden esittämiseen kansalliseen tasoon. Tieteen popularisointi onkin nykyisen tiedon alan yleis- tai erikoisongelman esittämistä tasajalle maallikkopiireille ilman allien liittyvää erikoisosaatua tai käänteisesti - loogis-matemaattisella - mallilla.

Läpin, muille tietohetjälleen tallein, kansantajuutuksen tuomien on koko valikointi, suuri yleisö. Meitiedetiedustelut osittavasti tieteen yleistajuisen esittämistapojen oivan jopa 80-90 %. Paradoksista kyllään päivälehdistön toimittajuuksista yleensä vain alle 30 % on läisä malle. Vakaasteen muodostavet alemman koulutuksen saaneet ammatilliset toimivat henkilöt. Näiden yleistajuisuuden kiinnostus on valikointia - populaaristieteen laiteeksi saa olla silvimpää ja ikeimessomdikaan ymävää. Toisen populaaristieteenä kuluvaat koostymisnäkä luonnontieteellisten tettejen ja ydinytisen, maallikkolajienet sekä yksiyetiset tieteen harmaajat - näitä lasketaan osim. tittuineen pürissä olevan jopa 20 000 kpt.

Ummikko tieteilijä

Kaikkien korkeatasoisiin, suppein, todendaanin ja yleistietelyin tarpeeksi useinkin tietämättömyys on itse tieteenharjoittajalle. Johan vanhaastaan on kunnon tutkijan perikuvana ollut hukan arkidodellisuus tässä vierasentun, kammiosta uppeutunut tieteenosa. Senaallikajolla on väit käännetut ulkopuolijassa maailman ongelmat. Valitettavasti pyyetteidmön laadollisin aika on itseäkin, suhteessa, mentyä. Tietistytyn luotekyhteiskuntamme muutokset perustuvat yhä suu-

remmassa mittassa luonnontieteiden ja niiden sovellysten väraan. Suurinta mahdollista erikoistietämystä hallitsevat tutkijamme käyvät lässä prosessissa yhä tärkeimmiksi. Yhteiskuntamme muuttuessa koulutus- ja luonnontieteidenkulttuuriksi on luonnontieteiden - soealinen kääntämys koko tulevaisuutemme elinolo.

Tieteen kansantajuutaminen on massassamme hyvin nuori ilmiö. Vasta parikymmentä vuotta sitten alkoi tohtori Tuokko julkaisita tasukokoisia kirjjasia ja lehtiliteriikkeleitä. Näihin asti on eksaktit tieteiden yleistajuisen esittämisen ollut mieltä sattumien varaisia - taloudettsesti kysyntänsä - aiheutuvaa harrastusta. Tärkeimpänä syynä on ollut maamme päivälehdistön ja kustantamoiden vanhoiluus. Tämä vuosikymmenellä suuret kansainväliset kaksinnöt avaruustutkimukseen, lääketieteeseen ja tekniikkaan ovat havahduttaneet edistyksellimmät tiedotusvälineemme paikkaamaan useinkin free-lancer-tuotteita tiedotusmaailma. Sen sijaan meillemmissä supervalloissa, Sakasassa, Englannissa ja Ranskassa ei jo ennen sotia väkijunneet ensinnäkin ja toisen asteen populaaristieteen kanavat. Tässäkkin maamme nuorena ja konservatiivisena kulttuuriansa seurallise kehitystä mielpöven jäljessä.

Science-fiction

Länsimassa se laajamittainen luonnontieteiden kansantajuutaminen kulluvin uuden lään science-fictionin, joka likimain sumennettuna lienee "tieteiskirjallisuus". Tällä oli jo muutaman vuosisadan perinteet; Kepler, Galilei, Verne, meila vasta tässä vuosisadassa syntyivät alan lähtökivet ja elokuvat. Science-fiction on merkittävä tieteiden ja taanteen yhdistelmä silloinkin syystä, etteivät sitä tunnusta omaakseen sen koormiin kirjailijat kuin tiedemiehenkin. Euvimmin "tieteiskirjallisuus" ovat yhäkin meikoisista kirjailijain ja tieteellisten ansioihin, kuten Arthur C. Clarke jopa kirjona nimatoisissa. Sodan jälkeen alkoi Yhdysvalloissa tieteellisuuden systeemillisen enustamisen kehittäminen - syntyi statistisia ja analyyttisiä kenoja käyttävä nykytieteenne ekstrapolointiteide - tulotopologia. Näin tieteiden populaaristietojolla, uuden tieteen kuumiiseen, Tieteen kansantajuutaminen tarve ja kysyntä tulee jatkuvasti lisääntymään. Yhä pienempi ja suppeamman tarvitsevat varsinakin uutislaadotteissa ja sovellystutustien totututututut tiedotustien korvautumiseksi tiedotustien lähäläyten kehityksestä. Eliitit ohi tieteen

uutis- ja pr-miehiltä tiedotusmaailma. tikkueidivat korkeamman hengetiläyteen poikkeatset uomat. Vahvinkä oiaa seka tieteen emä yhteiskunnan - uuden hedeimäläisten virikeiden jäänien syntymällä ja toleutumatia.

Ammatillaisen populaaristieteen eläimura lienee ainakin Suomessa täysin henkion oman inspiraation ja sopeutuskäytön tiedonllyne. Työn epäjätkävyys, satunnaiset ruhakkauudet ja vapaan toimittajan värikäs juurettomuus voivat viehättää aikansa, mutta tarvittaisiin varsinatkin asemaa. Toistaiseksi varsinakin lehdistön asenne on hyvin vaihtelevaa. Sen sijaan tieteen yleisluonteinen informoiminen esim. alvuharrastuksena oiaa hyvää merittin ja julkisuuden keruuta jollekin nuorelle tutkijalle. Näin saadut sivuansiotkin voivat täpäräisesti olla tulonllyne. Tieteen kansantajuutuksen esittämisen, tieteen informoimisen kirjallisuudessa ja elinissä voivat saade maassammeinkin nykyistä näkyvämmät muodot. Tuskin lienee mahdotonta väikää teatterien tulisi joutua "DNA-revy", "Molekyyliaranteet" tai "Molekyyliaranteet" dokumentteiksi. Johan nykyäänkin esitellään elektronimusiikkia ja tietokoneita.

Matti Keränen

Suuri lisäys korkeakoulutusteille

Välhon kirjokoko-luistipendimäärä Turun Yliopistossa on ensi lukuvuodeksi huomattavasti lisääntynyt kuukauden vuoden tilipendin määrällä. Vuote jodun tilipendissä annettu, uuden liin johdosta nyt on enintään useammalla YVYllyisellä mandollisuus päästä nauttimaan korkeakoulutusteille. Hakkajan on kullonllyne syystä oiaa kuitena, sillä hakuvain päästy ruhakkau 2. päivä kello 14.

Turun Yliopiston apurassuuteen Heikki Kallio keräsi, että kullonllyne lukuvuodeksi Turun Yliopistossa oli myönnetty 119 koke- ja 179 puolisipendillä sekä lisäksi opiskelijatutustien ja viemänsä kullonllyne. Näin kullonllyne oiaa jettävää 502 stipendillä, näin nyt on 356 koke- ja 356 puolisipendillä ja kullonllyne oiaa jettävää 855 kullonllyne tulevat edoiti mähäni läht.

of immense importance - we would achieve the ideal already found in the English-speaking countries. There, research institutes and large corporations list a wide range of advanced interdisciplinary material intended for scientists themselves. As a result, the traditional delay in the internal dissemination of scientific knowledge - sometimes as much as five to ten years - has been reduced to only a few weeks

Science Fiction

In the Western world, the large-scale popularisation of science has added something new to culture: science fiction. In Finnish it is perhaps best translated simply as "scientific literature."

Its roots stretch back several centuries - to Kepler, Galileo and Jules Verne - but only in the twentieth century did science fiction develop into a distinct body of literature and cinema.

Science fiction is a remarkable combination of science and art for the additional reason that neither writers nor scientists fully accept it as their own. The best science-fiction writers have achieved considerable literary - and even scientific - distinction. Arthur C. Clarke, for example, has earned recognition even through the film adaptations of his works.

After the Second World War, systematic forecasting of the future began to develop in the United States. Statistical and analytical methods of extrapolating present trends gave rise to a new discipline: futurology. Thus the popularisation of science led directly to the creation of a new science.

The need for, and demand for, science popularisation will continue to increase. Scientists will become ever more specialised, working within increasingly narrow fields. To develop their new ideas and applications they will require high-quality surveys of progress in neighbouring disciplines. Without science journalists, information officers and public-relations specialists, communication across the higher levels of intellectual life would become blocked. The loss would be suffered by both science and society, because many fruitful new ideas would never emerge or be realised.

A career as a professional populariser of science is, at least in Finland, still largely a matter of personal inspiration and adaptability. The irregular nature of the work, its occasional rush periods and the colourful rootlessness of freelance journalism may be attractive for a time, but permanent positions are also needed. For the present, newspaper attitudes remain highly variable.

On the other hand, writing general articles about science as a sideline would provide an excellent way for young researchers to gain both professional merit and public recognition. The extra income might also be significant.

The popular presentation of science, together with its artistic forms in literature and film, could become much more visible in Finland than it is today. Perhaps one day the theatre might stage a "DNA Revue," a "Molecular Variety Show," or a documentary entitled "Our Man on Saturn." After all, we already have electronic music and even computer tangos.

The author was one Matti Keränen who around this time wrote about space and sf, like articles about the Apollo program and the film "2001".

And here from Finncon's fanhistory exhibit, the program for the sf and pop science week::

Science Fiction Week, 23–28 March

Film Suite Boston 23–28.3, 16.30

Film screenings

24.3 King Kong

25.3 The 5000 Fingers of Dr T

26.3 The First Men in the Moon

27.3 March Invaders from Mars

28.3 Fantastic Voyage

Tickets: 5 FIM* each. Advance ticket sales: Friday 21 March from 12 noon to 16 Porthaninpuistikko 13, Room 694.

Exhibition: Science fiction books and magazines, lectures

Sunday, 23 March

16 Pertti Jotuni, Opening of the exhibition: Science Fiction Week opens officially.

17 Kalevi Nyytäjä Science fiction literature.

17.30 Juha Manninen Discussion: Science fiction in research and education. Location: LS IX

Sunday March 23

18 Discussion: Olli Tuomola

Science fiction as popular literature.

Location: Lecture Hall 16

Popular Science Days, 22–23 March

22 March

13 Opening ceremony Pertti Jotuni Popularisation of science; journalism as a medium – LS XXII

14 Discussion

Science fiction-viikko 23.–28. 3.

Elokuvasarja Boston 24.–28.3. klo 16.30
24.3. King Kong, 25.3. Tri T:n 5000 sormea, 26.3. Ensimmäiset miehet kuussa, 27.3. Invaders from Mars, 28.3. Fantastinen matka.
Kortti à 5 mk, KOP/Yliopistonrinne, TYY:n alatoimisto sekä Jorma Piha, puh. 13 694.
Sarjakuva- ja kirjallisuusnäyttely SKO:ssa 23.–28.3. klo 12–20.
Esitelmät:

Sunnuntaina 23.3. klo 16	DI Pertti Jotuni: Science fictionin suhde todellisuuteen
LS IX	
klo 17	FM Kalevi Nyytäjä: Science Fiction kirjallisuudessa
klo 17.30	HuK Juha Manninen: Science fiction teknostruktuurin kirjallisuutena
Maanantaina 24.3. klo 18	Filjo, Olli Tuomola: Science fiction-sarjakuva SKO

Tieteen popularisoinnin päivät 22. 3.–23. 3.

22.3. klo 13.00	DI Pertti Jotuni: Tieteen popularisointi, välineenä journalismi LS XXII
klo 14.00	Keskustelu
23.3. klo 12.00	FT Anto Leikola: Tieteen popularisointi, välineenä kirjat LS IX
klo 13.00	Keskustelu
klo 15.00	Paneeli: Popularisointi tänään ja huomenna. Prof. V. Nurmikko, apul.prof. Kauko Kouvainen, tri Anto Leikola, dipl.ins. Pertti Jotuni, toimittaja Aki Oora ja toimittaja Terttu Petäjä. LS IX

23 March

12 Antto Leikola Popularisation of science, books as a medium – LS IX

13 Discussion

15 Panel: Popularising science. Prof V Nurmikko, Assoc. Prof Kauko Kouvalainen, Dr Antto Leikola, Dipl.

Eng. Pertti Jotuni, Journalist Aki Oura, and Journalist Terttu Petäjä. LS IX

(* Around €10 in today's money.)

The formatting made the OCR confused, but hopefully most of it is OK. The letter codes point to certain halls in Turku University (some of them were also used for the recent Finncon).

It seems the film shows + certain other program 22-27 March was called the SF Week. 22-23 March program were called Popular Science Days, but they were obviously connected and sf was seen as an aspect of popular science.

About the people mentioned: *Terttu Petäjä* (b 1939) female culture/pop-science journalist, *Kalevi Nyytjä* (b 1932) journalist, translator, culture person, *Juha Manninen* (b 1937) philosopher, *Olli Tuomola* (b 1935) culture journalist, prof Nurmikko (b 1903) well known biochemist and on the side also a painter, *Kouvalainen* (b 1930) pediatric doctor, engineer *Jotuni* often active in public science debates, Dr Leikola (b 1918) medical history and pop science, *Aki Oura* (b 1938) journalist, *Terttu Petäjä* (b 1939) female cultural journalist. Since this was 57 years ago we must assume most are dead, alas (the youngest would be 87 years, but is prob'ly dead).

Another one I saw was involved was BNF *Jyrki Ijäs*. He was a buddy of Tom Ölander and I met him several times, but alas he's in Roscoe's heaven now. Had I known about this event I could have asked him for details, though Jyrki didn't speak very much English (as I remember).

I have no info on how many attended this sf/popscience event, but as they had some interesting people guesting, it was free (except for the films) and as the biggest halls seated around 300 I think attendance was in the hundreds. There were probably several different crowds: one crowd for the student clubs sf exhibition (probably many students), one crowd for the movies (especially from the mentioned film club), one crowd for the different presentations and panels.

Newspaper articles around the dates should be investigated - a task for local Finnish fans! Unlike today's conventions the event was quite spread out in time and topics were both sf and popular science. The sf genre was seen as a tool to reach the public with science, which has always been a common idea (and not all that wrong). But all in all, this was certainly a *precursor* to later sf cons as we recognise them, and as far as known the first public event for sf in Finland!

The Turku event was recognisably connected to sf, even if sf fandom in Finland weren't to take shape until the mid-1970s. But how far back can we find similar precursors? We don't necessarily have to look for events explicitly devoted to sf. Long before sf became a distinct genre, readers of popular adventure fiction were already forming clubs, publishing their own little magazines, corresponding with each other and even holding conventions – as we found to our surprise. This remarkable, unique thing was tied to a publication named *Golden Hours* starting in the 1880s.

Golden Hours – Almost a Fandom

The “story paper” *Golden Hours* for adventure fiction - sometimes having “fantastic” elements - had the idea of engaging readers with a club system (some local clubs even did amateur zines!) and running *Golden Hours National Convention*. Two were held, the first in the Palace Rink, New York, March 30 1889 (no info on the 1891 one). The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* wrote that:

a thick crowd of eager children - estimates say as many as 2 000 - converged on the Palace Rink in Brooklyn for the inaugural Convention of the Golden Hours Club. *Golden Hours*, a popular “story paper” full of adventure stories for young readers, had prepared a jam-packed evening of entertainment for its' fans

“Golden hours” was a popular phrase referring to the quality time you get doing something valuable - like reading. The publication adopting this name implied it was quality time



Note in #65, announcing report in #66, which is missing - alas.

DO NOT FORGET

THE
Grand National Convention

OF THE

GOLDEN HOURS CLUB,

which will be held at the Clermont Avenue Palace Rink, Clermont Avenue, near Myrtle, Brooklyn, N. Y., on Saturday Evening, March 30, 1889. Doors open at half past seven.

The proceedings will be of a very varied and interesting character. A national association of the Golden Hours Club will be formed, addresses made by

P. T. BARNUM,

JOHN De MORGAN,

COMMANDER POST,

CLIFFORD PARK,

THE AUTHOR OF "THAT BOY BONES,"

and all the best-known writers of GOLDEN HOURS. The Club Songs will be sung by the entire audience, and a short time devoted to the mysteries of magic and the wonders of ventriloquism. A brass band will also be in attendance.

Admission to Rink can be obtained only by showing Club Button. Front seats will be reserved for young lady members, who must also present Club Button at the door. Delegates holding Credentials will be entitled to a seat on the stage.

Con announcement, #61 Mar 1889. Many authors present. Admission not mentioned, prob'y free, members only



W. C. DUNN, EDITOR.

Saturday, August 3, 1895.

TERMS TO SUBSCRIBERS:

ONE COPY FOR ONE YEAR.....\$2.50
ONE COPY, SIX MONTHS.....\$1.25

Subscriptions may commence with any number. All remittances should be sent either in Registered Letter, Draft, Express Money Order, or Post-Office Money Order. We will be responsible for any remittances sent in this way.

POSTAGE FREE.

During the year 1895 GOLDEN HOURS will be forwarded free of postage to our subscribers, which will enable all our young friends residing in secluded parts of the country to receive their favorite paper at low rates.

All communications for GOLDEN HOURS should be addressed

GOLDEN HOURS,

MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE,

Box 1929. 24 and 26 Vandewater St., N. Y.

THE GOLDEN HOURS CLUB.

Every reader of GOLDEN HOURS that has not already done so should at once join the GOLDEN HOURS CLUB. It now numbers its members by the thousand, and is the largest organization of its kind in the United States. Branches have been established all over the country, full reports of which are published from week to week in these columns. Hand-some Cards of Membership will be forwarded to all readers of GOLDEN HOURS on receipt of ten Club Coupons (published on second page of this paper every week), and a two-cent stamp to pay return postage. Card of Membership and Club Badge will be forwarded on receipt



of twenty coupons. Young ladies are also invited to become members, and organize branches among themselves or in connection with their gentleman acquaintances. Each branch is given a distinguishing number as soon as we receive notice of its organization, and in sending in further reports of meetings, care should be taken to mention that number so as to avoid confusion. All reports of organization, meetings, etc., will be published free of charge.

TALKS

With Members of the Golden Hours Club About Things Entertaining and Instructive.

YOU may remember that I alluded, some time ago, to the long-mooted question of the identity of Peter Stewart Ney, the schoolmaster, who died in North Carolina in 1846, with the celebrated Marshal Ney, of France, the bravest and most dashing of the great Napoleon's generals.

How the club was presented, with the club badge, and ed's column. Note how they ask especially girls to join.

reading it, though contents was simple adventures from hackwriters...

Here you find about 100 of the around 800 issues published of *Golden*

Hours: [https://digital.library.villanova.edu/Item/vudl:1000662#?](https://digital.library.villanova.edu/Item/vudl:1000662#?xywh=229%2C296%2C1322%2C1421)

(and you can download them as PDFs, each being around 40 MB in size). Unfortunately no issues have much info about the *Golden Hours* convention and the issue with a "full report", including speeches (#66) is missing. So the info we find about the convention is limited. A similar *GH* convention took place in 1891 in Philadelphia but here info is even scarcer.

Skimming through a number of the *GH* issues we find indications that they later had smaller annual conventions, probably for officers of the clubs, likely focused on internal matters and not at the public or general *GH* club membership. In one of the club columns a local club reveals ambitions to be awarded the "nabocon". It's unknown what the abbreviation stands for and if that's one of the smaller, internal *GH* conventions. On state basis they also had something they called *reunions*, being a big general meeting for all the clubs and members of a state. We read about that it in #654, in which they also reports from the United APA, not a part of the Golden Hours club but apparently they had contacts with UAPA as the *GH* clubs produced a number of clubzines.

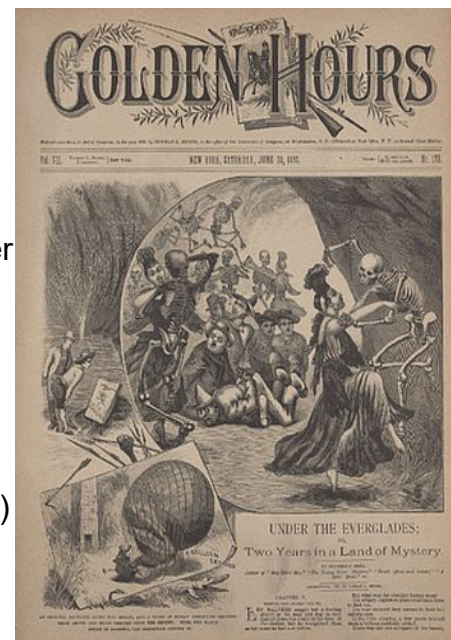
Let's spend some quality time diving deeper into all this - you'll surely agree! - remarkable printed product and its club system..

In #646 (1900) we find a lengthy description of *The Golden Hours Club*. An "Hourite", as they were called, could be national member or/and member of a local *GH* club. Any five members could form such a club and should then elect president, secretary and treasurer (sec/treas could be combined). When reporting it to *Golden Hours* they would get a club number and were required to report about their activities every three months. Clubs not reporting would be dropped and their club number reused. In fact, most clubs were only active for a period (the young members grew older and got other concerns, presumably). The highest club number we've found (in 1900) is 746 [!] but active *GH* clubs at the time are only listed as around 80. However, "only" 80 clubs in the year 1900 may be due to that *GH*'s support for the club system was winding down and they would soon (with #667) drop their club column entirely, while urging all the local clubs to continue. In this issue they also announced that they from #668 would be *New Golden Hours*, implementing some editorial changes - all improvements, of course. All this may come from that the story papers at the time met difficulties, eg with postal distribution, and a changing market.

Golden Hours was what at the time was called a "story paper", a special pre-pulp format for young readers of the late 19th Century. These were printed on cheap newspaper stock, slightly smaller than a tabloid newspaper (width 24-32 cm, height 32-38 cm) with 8-32 pages. 16 pages was the most common, which *Golden Hours* had until the last few years when it went monthly and to 24 pages. (Note that there were also earlier *Golden Hours*, a US family magazine 1869-ca1880, a UK Sunday magazine 1866-1871, and maybe others.) Story Paper historian Richard Ohmann says



Norman L Munro 1842-1894



Welcome to the Land of Mystery!

"Story papers formed a vast ecosystem of youth literature, with clubs, contests, and serialized adventures binding readers into national communities."

Golden Hours was published by Norman L Munro who led a publishing group with several story papers, but he died relatively young at age 52 from a failed appendix operation. Munro was a pioneer in establishing readers youth clubs and was rather innovative with using coupons, offering premiums (cameras, bikes etc) and having conventions. Before the club system, *Golden Hours* briefly experimented with a quasi-military youth group called the Cadets which had uniforms, drills and badges. If you think that was an odd idea, remember that the civil war fairly recent and military things were still on people's minds. Today I'm sure no American of sound mind would think of military matters... Editor for the first ten years was one W C Dunn who became deeply entangled in correspondence around the Golden Hours Club, but there's very little info to be found about Mr Dunn.

These "story papers" printed adventure stories for young boys. Girls were welcome to *GH*, though always a minority. They were not only welcomed but actively encouraged to participate. Editorial remarks often praised letters from the "ladies" - as girl members usually were called - noting that they were more thoughtful and better written than those from the boys. Many girls served as club officers, and their presence undoubtedly contributed to the social vitality of the *Golden Hours* club network.

And to be frank: teenage boys love to be around girls.

Scientific and fantastic stories were common at this time, to no little degree because of Jules Verne, though science fiction didn't yet exist as a distinguishable, named genre - that came with *Amazing Stories* (1926-). One example is Edward S Ellis who guested the *Golden Hours Convention*, and was well-known for westerns but also responsible for some proto-sf, like *The Steam Man of the Prairies* (see last issue).

Here are some of the "story papers":

The Youth's Companion (1827-1929), the most long-lived, respected and the biggest with a circulation of half a million. It had a correspondence club for its readers.

The Argosy, started as a story paper in 1882, then became a classic pulp.

Boys of America, had a readers club just as *Golden Hours*, with "a strong club culture".

Young Men of America, a Munro title, very patriotic, also had a readers club.

Good News, another Munro title, cheap and broad distribution, also had a readers club.

The People's Home Journal, family oriented, had a correspondence club. Munro's biggest success reaching a distribution on 325 000 copies.

THE EDITOR OF *Scraps and Puzzles* informs us that his paper will suspend publication until September, as a new owner is being obtained.

Wm. F. GOSMAN, secretary of Branch 64, desires to inform his correspondents that he is at present away on his vacation, but will attend to all mail matter on his return.

Edw. F. SCHMIDT, Paul H. KNOX, C. FREDRICK and Wm. Lee CHAMBERS, are about organizing a club for the purpose of bringing the officers of all branches into closer affiliation.

THE FIRST number of the *Club Reporter* has reached us. It is published monthly at Rochester, N. Y., and edited by Allen C. Hale, 311 Monroe Ave. The subscription price is 25 cts. per year.

Those who wish to subscribe for a readable club paper should write to the *Recorder Publishing Co.*, 127 American Ave., Milwaukee, Wis., for a sample copy of their monthly, the *Recorder*.

A Railroad Train Rounding a Curve.—Letter from W. G. Milwaukee.—Telegraphing on the Teeth.—The Man, Squirrel and Tree Problem.—J. J. H. H. Problem.—Squirrel Movement of Sun, Earth and Moon.—An Improvement on the Kinetoscope.—A Thrilling Ride (illustrated).—Cooking on the Field of Battle.—A Stream that Flows Uphill.

ELECTROTYPED facsimiles of the Club Badge for printing note-sheets, envelopes, etc., may be obtained by sending 25 cts. to this office.

PUZZLES AND PROBLEMS.

Original contributions solicited from every reader of *Golden Hours*. Avoid using obsolete words. Contributions must be written on one side of the paper, apart from all other communications, and addressed "Puzzle Editor," *Golden Hours*, 21 and 23 Vandewater St., New York City.

No. 1.—CHAIRMAN.
"One!" cried the man,
As along the street he ran,
A whole heard it, and asked, "Where?"
The two answered: "Over there!"
Brooklyn, N. Y. CHINO CHINO.

No. 2.—WORD SQUARE.
The main point: the conception of a thing in its most perfect state; the dried paragon; the best of several species of cattle; a clever; a long incision.
New Orleans, La. BETTY TOTT.

No. 3.—NUMERICAL ENIGMA.
The whole of eleven letters is what nearly everybody likes.
R. 7, 8, 4, is to differ; R. 2, 11, 6, is what a telephone would be used without; 1, 13, 13, 3, is a piest.
Cleveland, O. HENRY COOPER.

No. 4.—PENTAGON.
To want: a species of duck; Roman magistrates; expanded; the internal nervous tissue of the eye; a Spanish title; to defy.
Troy, N. Y. NEDDY LARSEN.

No. 5.—DECAPITATION.
It total is total, complete is complete;
It is strange, that if answering your call,
Beholded quite hollow, the sound that will greet,
A vacancy left—that is all.
New York City. WILLIAM A. T.

No. 6.—DIAMOND.
A letter; a large, deep vessel for various uses; a male name; a streamer; guided; the windpipe; to bury a beverage; a letter.
Troy, N. Y.

No. 7.—CROSSWORD ENIGMA.
In can, not in pot;
In tank, not in cot;

C H O W D E R
A W H I L E
D I V E R
E L E V E N
R E S E R V E
N Z
E

No. 8.—325.
No. 9.—2 and 5.
No. 12.—Ducks, 3 shillings; turkeys, 5 shillings.

The following contributions to "Puzzles and Problems" in No. 20, the figures indicating the number answered correctly: Wm. Hales, 8; Fletcher, Fred Lewis and Wm. Petrol, 16; C. Janaro, C. Thomas, Tom Cutler, F. Temple, Edward Hewes, Thomas Lamon and H. Lambert, 11; E. Roberts, C. Lefale, "Pala," Arthur Grant, C. F. Bract, Thomas Hammond, John Brady and C. F. White, 10; John Clyde, Frank Spooner, 10; Daniels, Chas. Adams, Andrew Sutherland, Harry James, David Larson and John Holt, 7; Geo. Smith, Geo. H. Harris, Maud Overton, A. Sashort, James Crane, Ralph Hetsberg, Thomas Baker, Chas. Wallace, E. Thayer, Richard Sears, Isaac Ross, Henry Price, F. Hacker, Claude Bodley, G. Halliwell, Harry L. Cowen, Fred Seara and H. Fredrick, 6; T. Robinson, J. Kierie, H. Doble, George Joel, F. Stewart, Frank Parker, Geo. Halsey, Tom Tomlinson, Hal Prosser, E. L. Rodgers and Geo. Lewis, 5; Henry Ford, John Korter, W. Munson and Mary Scott, 4; L. A. O. and George Lee, 3; Walter S. Heavily and C. C. Laver, 2.

Answers to "Puzzles and Problems" published in No. 20 will appear next week.

CHAT WITH PUZZLEERS.

DEAN FREED.—You must have patience.
ALBERT C. MULLER.—Your last lot is an excellent one.
ETHEL BIRNEY.—Your charade is declined, the others accepted.
GRACE M.—Puzzles accepted.
NUTTER.—The majority of yours are excellent.
VICTOR MOORE and Wm. H. Quick.—We have entered into a game partnership, and send solutions under the name of "Pala."

Exchange Mart.

[Free to all readers of *GOLDEN HOURS*, but we can not publish exchanges of dangerous or worthless articles—such as birds, eggs, firearms, air guns, combustible chemicals, etc. nor will we be responsible for any transaction brought about through this department. Before making an exchange ascertain the particulars from the party offering the article. All exchanges will be published in the order in which they are received.]

Articles "for sale," or anything which appears like an advertisement in disguise, will not be inserted in this department.
Any notice exceeding forty-five words in length will not be inserted.
Notices containing the names of papers and libraries not published by us will not be inserted, unless in exchange for our publications.

Terry Ewing, Decatur, Ill. Printing press for old coins or stamps. Would like to exchange autographs with foreigners.
H. A. Peters, 25 Cecil St., Toronto, Can. Canadian stamps for U. S. stamps for books.
J. A. Charro, 15 Magill St., Waterbury, Conn. 86 story papers, 25 cts. and 3c. novels, pack truck cards, false mustache and goatee, cigar case and lighter, or best offer.
Ernest Schwartz, 2115 Market St., Philadelphia, Pa. Vols. XIII, XIV, and XV, *Golden Days*, for *Golden Hours*, old coins and stamps, for same. City offers only.
Fred Thompson, Box 15, Killebuck, Ill. 25 story papers for same or best offer.
Harry Bourne, 475 N. Franklin St., Chicago, Ill. story papers and boxing gloves, for best offer. Send for list.

readable matter, 300 Columbian stamps and pair baggies for best offer in printing press.
A. M. Murrell, Hattak, Can. Foreign stamps, worth \$5, blank printed approval sheets, worth \$1, 25 worth papers and magazines, for self-taking printing press with type.
Fred W. Moskowitz, 21 Parkman St., Philadelphia, Pa. 25 cts. histories, 52c. novels, 25 U. S. stamps and *GOLDEN HOURS* from 10c to 17c, 20c to 25c, 25c to 30c, for Exchange coupons, bound books, *GOLDEN HOURS* from 1 to 20, or best offer.
John Hartman, Jr., 21 Parkman St., Philadelphia, Pa. 20 programmes, 25 Herculit slips, 20 cigarette cards, 45 steel pens, 30 Columbian and 30 foreign stamps, for Dominion slips, 25 U. S. stamps, used or unused, star coupons or best offer.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

[Questions upon all topics will be answered with care and promptness in this column. All inquiries must be marked "For *Golden Hours*."] R. D.—Yes. 2. No premium.
A GREENMOUNT READER.—Directions for all gilding were given in a recent number.
GEORGE GIBLOCK, JR.—Yes. 2. You can order a book of that description through your newsdealer.
EARLY MOORMAN.—The back numbers mentioned will cost you \$5. 2. See answer to E. O. C., question 1.
H. E. ALTMAN.—Exchange notices cannot appear in print under four weeks from the date of their receipt.
ZODIAC.—We have no means of obtaining the information you request. 2. Read answer to a Reader, question 1.
E. O. C.—At present writing it is impossible to inform you. 2. Harriet Cook is usually employed for that purpose.
C. A. FRECHMAN.—You can purchase the pictures of a dealer who makes a specialty of engravings, crayons, etc. The addresses of such cannot be given in this column.
A GREEN MOUNTAIN BOY.—To remove tattoo marks, first rub them well with a saline of pure acetic acid and lard, then with a solution of potash, and finally with hydrochloric acid.
A READER.—Exercising night and morning with Indian clubs or dumb bells will develop the muscles of your chest and arms, and give you strength. 2. July 18, 1882, fell on Tuesday.
SLAYDOWN.—To banish the pimples from your face, avoid all rich, greasy and very salt food, and take a good food of sarsaparilla until your complexion becomes smooth and clear. 2. Your penmanship is very poor.
C. W. P.—We do not know the exact number of communicants of the church named. 2. The possible occurrence and results of a religious war in the United States is a subject which cannot be discussed in this column, which is devoted to the imparting of advice and information, and not to political or religious questions of the present or future.
MECHANIC.—Steel is tempered, by first heating it to the maximum and then plunging it into cold water, by which means the greatest hardness and brittleness are obtained. It is then partially or wholly polished, carefully retempered and allowed to cool gradually. The degree to which the temperature is raised in the second heating regulates its ultimate hardness, and is indicated by the color assumed by the polished portion. 2. See answer to R. E. S., question 1. 3. You write a fair hand.
R. E. S.—To make India rubber cement, dissolve one pound of pure India rubber, cut in small pieces, in four gallons of coal tar naphtha, with frequent stirring. Let stand for twelve days, then add double the quantity by weight of shellac. Heat the mixture in an iron vessel having a discharge pipe at the bottom, and when the whole has become liquid draw out upon slabs to cool in the form of plates. When required for use heat in an iron vessel, and apply to the surfaces to be joined with a brush. 2. What is known as Chinese cement usually consists of borax and shellac. Run equal quantities of borax and shellac in water until dissolved.

A cut out from the GH club and readers' dept. Zooming in you should be able read it (but with difficulty).

Frank Leslie's Boys and Girls Weekly, illustrated, had a correspondence club.
Harper's Young People, more literary and high brow, had a correspondence club.
The Young Athlete, sports, had a readers club.
Tip Top Weekly, adventures and sport.
Secret Service, detective stories.
Brave and Bold, "hero stories".

Golden Hours was among these and one gets the impression that of the story papers *Golden Hours* was one of the more respected and successful (at peak a circulation probably around 200 000). There were many more story papers, most of them weekly.

Correspondence clubs were about publishing addresses, having pen pals and doing things that could be handled by mail. The regular reader clubs to this added meetings and physical activities and were not for just correspondence,

The all-important Linotype typesetting machine came in the mid-1880s and caused a surge in publishing. *Golden Hours* was founded in 1888 and ads for their club began almost at once. To join you mailed them one of their coupons and a ¢2 stamp, equal to the normal postage of the time, and in return you had a choice between a printed membership card or a membership badge of "German silver" (a nickel alloy). A membership button with gold text on blue satin was later introduced.

You could be a general member without belonging to local club, but if five members started a club, they were charter members and would get a standard club charter provided by the central administration, ie the *GH* editorial office, upon which they were registered and got an official club number. The charter covered things like the role of club officers, meeting procedures, dues, reports to send in and disciplinary rules. At its peak in the mid 1890s *Golden Hours* claimed to have the biggest readers club with 10 000 members. Their club system was especially strong in New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Ohio and Illinois. By 1890 there were already 50 clubs, with the age span of 10-16 years.

I let my AI do much of this research (it'd be impossible otherwise) and we learn that around 1895 a slight downturn for club material can be noted and club material drops even more after 1897, but it then picks up for a while to fully disappear in late 1900. By this time, while the formal club structure remained, many had turned into correspondence clubs. Local clubs were told to continue despite *Golden Hours* halting its club activities. They may still continue with their own activities, independently. Clubs are said to have existed in every US state, at one time or another.

Golden Hours goes monthly in 1900 until 1904 when it folds. Some of their clubs may have continued - it's theoretically possible that there still are *GH* clubs out there...

The clubs were relatively independent. They collected their own membership fees and elected their own presidents and other officers. The coordinating, central Golden Hours Club had its own president and a number of vice presidents. These were elected late in the autumn after prior nominations. 50 nominations made a candidate eligible. (This was later changed to 100 to be nominated as president, and 25 to be nominated as vice president. By 1900 it was 25 nominations was for president and 15 for vice-president, probably an indication of activity slowing down. How the voting was conducted is unclear, but it



Visit to Cpt Nemo's world. Scary sea monster!



was probably by mail - the nominations were, at any rate, sent in by mail - or it may be that it also took place at smaller "internal" working conventions. Candidates were presented in *GH* together with a small bio, but not all at once (Probably as soon as a candidate had enough nominations to be eligible).

The magazine's club pages, usually somewhere in the middle (16 pages would naturally unfold there!) included: words from the president, club news (from the quarterly reports clubs sent), short answers to readers' questions on *any* topic, a swap-ad section (members offered items and requested items wanted in exchange - straightout selling was not allowed), reviews of amateur magazines (organs of the various clubs).

The "New Golden Hours."

Beginning with No. 669, issued Nov. 17, the "GOLDEN HOURS" will be enlarged to 20 pages, thus making it the Largest and most Up-to-Date boys' paper in the World.

It will contain 8 or 9 serials, 5 or 6 pictures, several short stories, and new and interesting departments, all of which will be announced in this column Next Week.

In making this change we propose to give the boys more and better reading matter than any other juvenile weekly ever issued.

Our serials will be thoroughly up-to-date; one or more stories each week, treating of the life and adventures of a live hero, one of whom you read about daily in the newspapers.

"Golden Hours" New Authors.

New authors will be men who have for years made a specialty of certain kinds of juvenile stories. Many of the old authors will also be retained.

PREMIUMS.

Look out for our premium offers! We propose to give away more and better articles adapted for the uses of boys than any other Boys' Paper in the World. A glance at our great offer in No. 669 will prove this fact.

READ NEXT WEEK

in this column the announcement of new stories and features. They will surprise and delight you.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

We have engaged at great expense several of the very best artists, who will add to the artistic appearance of

The "NEW GOLDEN HOURS,"

and cause it to take the lead.

Tell your friends about

The "NEW GOLDEN HOURS,"

Out Saturday, Nov. 17th.

ORDER IT NOW!

Here they announce "New" Golden Hours, increased page count. Soon the club will be dumped and GH goes monthly.

There was even an Amateur Press Association run under Golden Hours' auspices. At times there were special sections such as an amateur chemistry column, a photography column, a column on "how to become strong", mechanical experiments, etc.

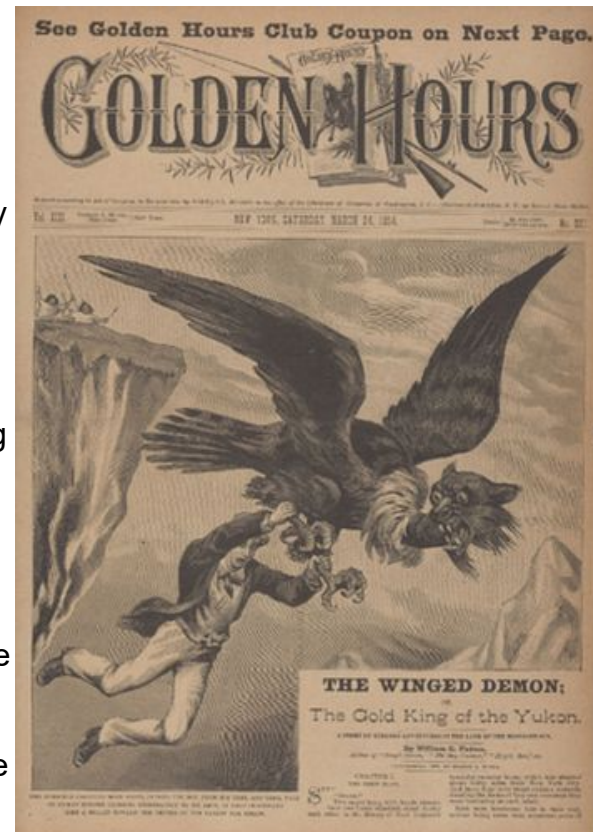
Various coupons were constantly published, which the editors required readers to send in when corresponding with them. Some coupons were for entering contests to win different prizes. Every correspondence with *Golden Hours* required an enclosed coupon, and other mail was ignored. The coupons were small squares in the publication that you cut out, with texts like "Cut this coupon and send with your letter." It was of course to promote selling the publication (the price was \$5), but the editors also noted that it cut down "fake mail" (unserious letters) and made mass-mail campaigns more difficult. Coupons also created loyalty.

You could call it an early anti-spam system!

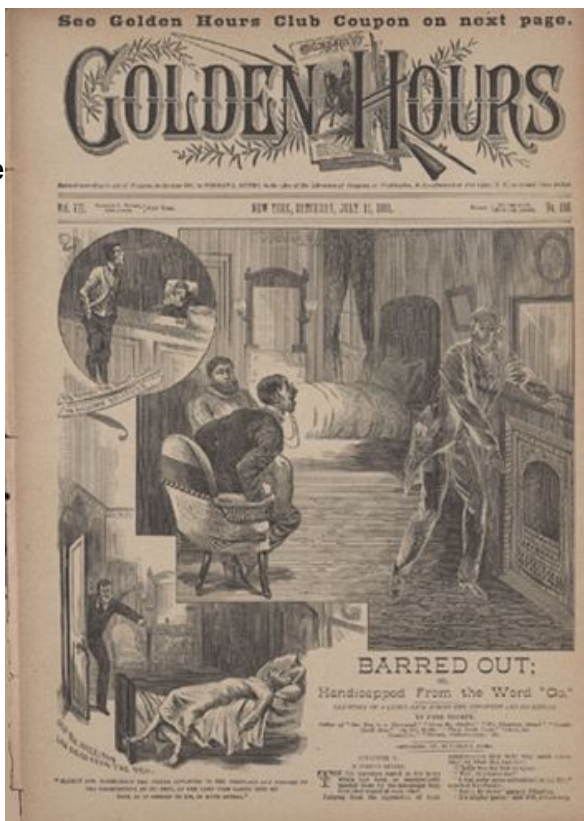
Sometimes *GH* had special offers, like 10 coupons and a modest number of stamps could get you a camera (a Kodak-type box camera). Bicycles and even low calibre rifles were also offered. *Golden Hours* ran writing contests, puzzles, awarded "best club reports" and "best club magazine" and even had "best invention" contests.

The clubs organised their own activities, including their own club magazines, sports activities, contests, excursions, parties, correspondence circles. They were urged to send in their club amateur magazines, which were then reviewed in *GH*.

There were even an organised Amateur Press Association (APA) for



This is some sort of fantasy or horror.



An invisible man at work.

the *GH* amateur magazines. APAs were not invented by sf fandom, but were born in the 1800s in the form of the National Amateur Press Association (NAPA, founded in 1876) and the United Amateur Press Association (UAPA, 1895), both later having HP Lovecraft as a member. These mundane APAs and the *Golden Hours'* one provided address lists of members and a central publication where member publications were reviewed. They did not co-distribute member's works. AFAIK co-distribution was a fannish innovating when we sf fen took on the APA idea. The reason is that fans were so desperately poor that saving postage seemed like a smashing idea. Fans used all their nickels and dimes buying the pulps and the twiltone stencil paper and the stamps for their frantic fanac. (Being poor may also be the reason why swapping issues between faneds became common as well as "the usual": You got next issue under trade, a Letter of Comment, an article/story or an undefined voluntary contribution.)

Each 16-page issue of *Golden Hours* had an illustrated front page and 3-4 inside illustrations of rather good quality, produced by photo-engraving and electrotyping (projecting the drawing on a zinc plate where it was chemically fixed). The technology to print photographs using a dithering mask existed at the time, but wasn't used in *Golden Hours*.

Among the illustrators, who worked for all Munro titles, we had eg John H Redding, W H Thwaites, George Small, Charles W Reed (the last one made civil-war drawings and fought himself at the battle of Gettysburg!). Most were working in a style that was very detailed but the people in the drawings were what - in lack of a better term - could be called "semi-naive". *Golden Hours* had few ads. Just a few using up a small part of the last page, but towards the last years ad space increased and some issues had the entire last age filled with ads.

Each issue had a couple of short stories and perhaps 4-5 serials, printed in four columns. Issues would typically be around 55 000 words (over 300 000 characters). Some of the most popular serials would later be re-issued as complete booklets or paperbacks in what was called the Golden Hours Library. Most fiction was of course adventure stories: exotic lands (Africa, Pacific islands, the poles etc), detectives and crimes, cowboys and indians, pioneers, disasters, exploration, wars (esp the American Civil War), sea adventures. But usually there was at least something of our genres in most issues. It could be fantastic inventions, flying machines (this was before the Wright Bros), submarines or underwater adventures, scientific mysteries, boy inventors, ghost stories. There were titles like *The Young Inventor*, *The Electric Detective*, *The Sky Sailor*, *The Flying Boys* (where youngsters flap wings of a clumsy Otto Lilienthal type contraption).

SILK BANNER COMPETITION.



BANNER STATES,
July-December, 1900, New York and Maryland.

BANNER CLUBS,
July-December, 1900, Branch No. 16 and Branch No. 103.

The contest is now open to wrest the banners from these States and clubs on the same conditions as the previous contest, except that only new members in the National Association will count and that no member can be counted as a member of more than one branch club. The total clubs, as certified to on June 30 last, and the total membership, as certified to on the same date, will be the basis on which to reckon percentage of gain in this contest.

REUNIONS AND CONVENTIONS.

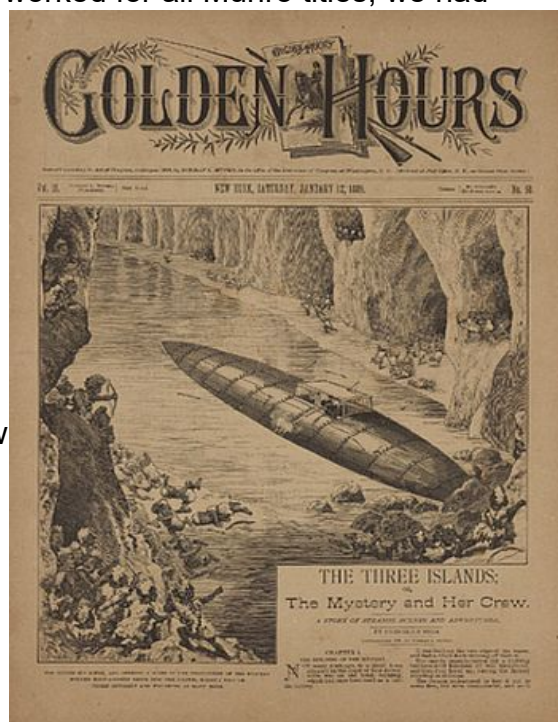
Up to the time of going to press we have received the report of only the New York Reunion. Reports from Maryland and Ohio will be published next week. Owing to lack of sufficient time for preparation, the Massachusetts Reunion has been adjourned to a later date.

The first New York State Reunion is now a thing of the past. A large crowd was kept away by a rain storm, which came upon us like a cyclone and so suddenly, to the surprise of all.

New York has indeed been very fortunate in winning three of the four banners offered in contest by *GOLDEN HOURS*.

They were won through honest energy, and, I am sure, will be kept high in esteem and from reproach of sullied hands. Mr. J. R. Abarbanell, the editor of *GOLDEN HOURS*, who was not able to attend our Reunion in person, was represented by a stirring address, which was read and applauded. An address was also received and read from President Geibel.

HENRY R. GEISLER,
Vice President N. Y. G. H. N.-A.



An armored turtle-like vessel floating in a huge cave.



H Irving Hancock, 1868-1922, GH writer.

From #654. Clubs could win silk banners for recruiting new members and similar feats. Here we also hear of conventions and reunions.

Among the writers Edward S Ellis is already mentioned. Some of the other authors and what they sometimes produced, beside regular adventures:

St. George Rathborne, extremely prolific Munro author, weird tales and occasional scientific romances.

H Irving Hancock, very prolific, with over 50 serials for *GH*: war, crime, oriental adventures, near future (later he'd write *The Conquest of the United States*, part of his Future War series, and he

was also introducer of Ju-Jitsu into the States).

Cpt Ralph Bonehill (pseud for Edward Stratemeyer, who created Tom Swift who weren't in *GH*) inventions and other proto-sf elements.

Weldon J Cobb Adventure, occasional weird/scientific stories.

Col Ralph Fenton (pseud), "boy hero" stories with technological twists.

Annie Ashmoore, one of the few women writers, occasionally supernatural or weird.

Howard Payson, invention fiction.

George Waldo Browne, extraordinary journeys and scientific adventures.

Cpt Jack Wright (pseud), invention fiction and mechanical marvel stories.

Col Prentiss Ingraham, famous dime-novel writer; weird tales, and exotic "lost world" fiction.

The demise of *Golden Hours* in 1904 may have begun when the energetic founder Norman L Munro in 1894 died on the operating table at the relatively young age of 52.

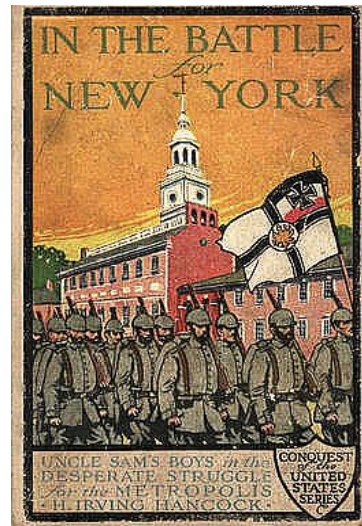
Those who inherited the business could hold the fort for a while, but Munro's successors lacked his promotional energy and did not maintain the intense club-centered engagement that had made *Golden Hours* distinctive. Their club required a lot of work but now got less attention.

We find more *GH* scans here, issues available as HTML-pages (not PDFs): <https://dimenovels.lib.niu.edu/>

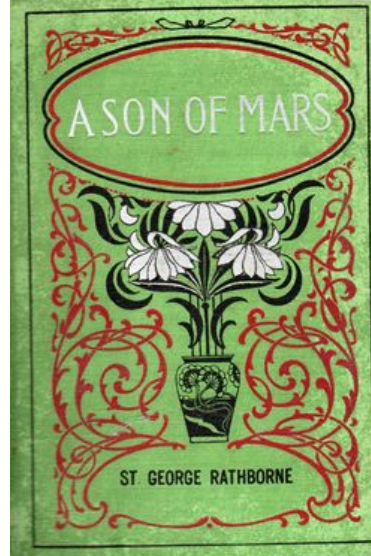
And there we find *Golden Hours Family Magazine*, "An Illustrated Monthly" from 1909. It's also from Munro press and looks like a pulp. Though contents seem quite different from the story paper, either *GH* was transformed into this "family magazine" or the title "*Golden Hours*" was reused for a completely new magazine. What it was may not matter - old *GH* was dead anyway.



They relied much on coupons like this.



GH author *H I Hancock's*



SG Rathbone of GH, did he follow in the footsteps of John Carter and ERB?

THE GOLDEN HOURS CLUB

NATIONAL OFFICERS.

PRESIDENT,
CASIMIR I. GIBBEL, Cheltenham, Pa.

VICE PRESIDENTS,
E. H. WEIGEL, 1216 Cowden st., Harrisburg, Pa.
CHARLES HENRY HESSE (acting), 1812 E. Chase st., Baltimore, Md.
H. GEISLER, 328 E. 89th st., New York City, N. Y.

A. M. KEEFER, Mingo, Ind.
CHARLES KING, JR., Whitehouse, O.
EUGENE KELLEY, 359 Broadway, Lawrence, Mass.

H. R. YOUNG, 141 Crown st., Meriden, Conn.

R. VOORHEES, Keypoint, N. J.
M. W. McLAUGHLIN, 33 Monticello st., Providence, R. I.

H. WEIKING, 3840 Florissant ave., St. Louis, Mo.

W. SEVIER, 1008 Tatnall st., Wilmington, Del.

PERMANENT SECRETARY,
The Editor of GOLDEN HOURS.

The GOLDEN HOURS CLUB is the largest organization of its kind in the United States. It consists of readers of the GOLDEN HOURS, and is composed of The National Golden Hours Club, and the various Branch Golden Hours Clubs. The National Golden Hours Club consists of all members of the Golden Hours Club throughout the United States and Canada, whether organized as Branch Clubs or not.

The various Branch Clubs consist of any five or more members of the National Club organizing themselves in any locality and electing their own officers. The object of the National Organization of the GOLDEN HOURS CLUB is to bind all readers of the GOLDEN HOURS, male and female, in a common organization for the furtherance of general mental and moral improvement, and the accomplishment of such lofty aims and undertakings, which would be impossible for any one to achieve single-handed. The Branch Clubs may organize for literary, social, athletic or any other purpose they please, not inconsistent with the general purpose and scope of the National Organization.

Every reader of GOLDEN HOURS who sends a coupon cut from the back cover of GOLDEN HOURS and a 2-cent stamp becomes thereby a member of the National Organization. A blue satin finish club button, with the words "Golden Hours Club Member" in gold, will be sent him as a token of membership. He may become a member of a Branch Club, or not, as he pleases. There is no initiation fee, nor are there any dues in the National Organization.

EXTRACT FROM THE RULES AND REGULATIONS. MEMBERSHIP.

Every reader of GOLDEN HOURS who sends a coupon cut from the back cover of GOLDEN HOURS and a 2-cent stamp becomes thereby a member of the National Organization. A blue satin finish club button, with the words "Golden Hours Club Member" in gold, will be sent him as a token of membership. He may become a member of a Branch Club, or not, as he pleases. There is no initiation fee, nor are there any dues in the National Organization.

BRANCH CLUBS.

Any five or more members may unite to form a Branch Club; members so uniting shall be known as charter members. The charter members must hold a meeting, select a name and choose officers, which may be president, secretary and treasurer, though the secretary may also act as treasurer. They must send to the Editor of GOLDEN HOURS the name selected, the names and addresses of charter members, and the names of the officers chosen, whereupon the Branch Club will receive a number, which must be used in all notices and communications. No person can act as a charter member unless he is a regular reader of GOLDEN HOURS, and already duly enrolled as a member of the National Organization, or has himself enrolled at the time the Branch Club is organized. The members who organize a Branch Club, whether it is to be a local or a corresponding club, must reside in the locality in which the club is organized, though they may add to their membership persons who are non-residents. Corresponding clubs may elect non-resident members as their officers. Local clubs must hold a meeting at least once a month. Corresponding clubs may hold meetings or not, as they see fit.

PRIZE BANNERS.

1. ONE SILK BANNER to the State showing the largest actual increase in newly organized clubs.
2. ONE SILK BANNER to the State showing the largest percentage of increase in newly organized clubs.
3. ONE SILK BANNER to the Branch Club showing the largest actual increase in membership.
4. ONE SILK BANNER to the Branch Club showing the largest percentage of increase in membership.

For the six months beginning JANUARY

1, 1900, and ending JUNE 30, 1900. The banners are awarded for the period of six months, and will be competed for every six months, unless some State or Branch Club shall be successful in three consecutive competitions, when the banner shall permanently belong to such State or Branch Club.

EDITOR'S CHAT.

Branch No. 122, the organization of which is announced this week, will be of special interest, inasmuch as it is an organization of the staff of the GOLDEN HOURS authors. Its name—Golden Hours Authors' Camping Out Club—designates its purpose, which is to have an outing this summer in the Adirondacks. They have done me the honor of electing me their honorary president, but I am very much afraid that my duties will keep me tied to my desk while they are having a high old time in the mountains and forest. However, as Mr. John De Morgan is their historian, I dare say he will send us some rare accounts of their trip.

Secretaries of branch clubs should copy the following form to use in making their reports for the month of April, 1900, to the Vice Presidents of their respective States, or to the President direct, if their State has no Vice President.

No. and name of club.....
Change of officers.....
Number of members in good standing on March 1, 1900.....
Number of newly elected members (who must also be duly enrolled members of the national organization).....
Number of members dropped from the roll since April 1, 1900.....
Actual membership April 30, 1900.....
General remarks.....
Secretary's name.....
Address.....

This report should be forwarded not later than May 5. As I shall hereafter attend to the matter of membership, as far as the competition for the club banners is concerned, secretaries need not give the names and addresses of newly elected members in making the above report.

Mike Donovan's illustrated boxing lessons begin in this number. I hope every branch club will take an active interest in these lessons, and will present one or more competitors for the prizes that will be awarded in the public exhibition.

Miss Celia A. Dolan has resigned from the office of Vice President for the State of California, and also from the Golden Hours Club. I regret that Miss Dolan should have seen fit to sever relations which, as far as I am concerned, were always of the most pleasant nature.

OFFICIAL.

To the Members of the Golden Hours Club in Maryland: It gives me pleasure to say that the chances are that we will have a successful State Reunion at Baltimore, Md., July 3 and 4, next. All members of the club in this State are cordially requested to call and see me any evening between the hours of 5 and 9 o'clock P. M., and I will give all information they may want to know. The following are the State Reunion committee: Chairman, Charles Henry Hesse; secretary, W. Henry Starr; treasurer, William R. H. Hesse; members, Harry A. Lucas, E. Carlin, William Woods, Frederick Jaeger, Geo. F. Balis, Walter Starr, Harry S. Brook, John Maxwell, John Rushon, Joseph J. Herr, and Charles Starr. Members wishing to serve on the committee should send their names to me, stating so, and I will be glad to appoint them on it. We need the aid of all members of the club, and all should work together and make the Reunion one for Maryland to be proud of. The headquarters are at 1812 E. Chase st., Baltimore, Md.

I want to see Maryland the leader in clubdom, and cordially request the hearty, unselfish co-operation of all HOURSIES in the State in the furtherance of this object, and I would indeed be pleased to hear from all readers who are not members of the club. I will furnish all information on club matters. If the amateur papers, most of which owe their existence to the N. G. H. C., would support and defend the club as "The Circle," "Tom Hackett's Journal," "The Grand Magazine," and "American Magazine" are doing, there is no doubt that good work would be accomplished. All writing to me should kindly enclose stamp. Let Maryland be the banner State in clubdom. Charles Henry Hesse, Acting Vice President for Maryland.

NEWLY ORGANIZED CLUBS.

Branch No. 122—Golden Hours Authors' Camping Out Club, New York City, N. Y. The authors of the staff of GOLDEN HOURS met at the office of the paper and organized a camping out club, with the following officers: Honorary president, J. R. Abner.

From the club section.

The Golden Hours Club.

NATIONAL OFFICERS.

PRESIDENT.

CASIMIR I. GEIBEL, Cheltenham, Pa.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

E. H. WEIGEL, 1216 Cowden st., Harrisburg, Pa.

CHARLES HENRY HESSE, 1813 E. Chase st., Baltimore, Md.

H. GEISLER, 413 E. 87th st., New York City, N. Y.

A. M. KEEFER, Mingo, Ind.

CHARLES KING, JR., Whitehouse, O.

C. W. PARKER, 77 Kensington Heights, Meriden, Conn.

R. VOORHEES, Keyport, N. J.

M. W. McLAUGHLIN, 33 Monticello st., Providence, R. I.

W. SEVIER, 1008 Tatnall st., Wilmington, Del.

GEO. W. D'VYS (Acting), Somerville, Mass.

PERMANENT SECRETARY.

The Editor of GOLDEN HOURS.

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regulations of the Club and list of active clubs, see GOLDEN HOURS No. 646.

EDITOR'S CHAT.

No more club matter will be published after this week. This decision has not been reached without due deliberation and thorough consideration for the bright boys who have so long contributed to the columns of clubdom, and we now take this occasion to thank the members, one and all, for their interest. In abolishing the club feature we would advise the boys most interested to correspond with one another, and thus continue their pleasant relations. In the first column of the eighth page we wish you to read the announcement of the NEW GOLDEN HOURS, and the proposed new features, hoping you and your friends will still continue to read it.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR 1900.

OFFICIAL NOMINATIONS.

For President.

Charles Henry Hesse, of Maryland.

Raymond E. Voorhees, of New Jersey.

Henry R. Geisler, of New York.

Charles L. Johnson, of New York.

Charles W. Parker, of Connecticut.

For Vice President.

Charles E. Carlin, of Brooklyn, for New York.

Louis J. Schwartz, of New York City, for New York.

Charles M. Jelleff, of Baltimore, for Maryland.

Louis J. Weidenham, of Baltimore, for Maryland.

Thomas Delaney, of Hartford, for Connecticut.

J. Everett Ewing, of Red Bank, for New Jersey.

William T. Ballew, of Decatur, for Alabama.

R. D. Van Alstin, of Corning, for New York.

Robert L. Much, of Washington, for the District of Columbia.

Karl J. McKinnon, of Somerville, for Massachusetts.

Samuel Bernstein, of Baltimore, for Maryland.

Geo. W. Cutting, Athol Centre, Mass., having sent in a petition, duly signed by fifteen members resident in his State, is hereby declared officially nominated as a candidate for Vice-President of the Golden Hours Club National Association for the State of Massachusetts.

DATE AND PLAN OF ELECTION.

The date of the National Election is hereby fixed for Saturday, December 1, 1900. This will give us nearly two good months of a hustling campaign. There are enough rival candidates running to bring out a vote from every member of the Club.

The plan of election is as follows: On election day, that is on December 1st next, not sooner or later, mail to this office a postal card containing your choice for President and Vice President. If your State has a candidate for the latter office. This postal card to count as a vote must be signed in your own handwriting, together with the words "Regular Reader of GOLDEN HOURS, and Member of the National Association."

No candidate for President will be declared elected who has not received at least 25 votes, nor any candidate for Vice-President will be declared elected who has not received at least 15 votes.

More from the club section

makes it relevant to call their convention a precursor to an sf con, as they gathered for what they actually called a convention, *Golden Hours National Convention*. And the movement behind resembled sf fandom in many ways. They had clubs, meetings, conventions, amateur magazines, correspondence. Some in their vast club network must have had the same mindset as the early recognisable sf fans! Their amateur magazines could be called proto-fanzines perhaps. Alas, they are only to be found as short reviews in *GH* columns, with only brief mentions of contents (stories, poetry, articles, club activities). As far as I know, and I should know - spending half a century leafing through stencils smelling skiffy history! - *Golden Hours*, its clubs and clubzines, hasn't been researched, not by media historians, not by sf historians. This may be the first attempt at some length.

And we may have found a fandom, but not as we know it.

The cause was also a shift in the media market. Pulp magazines took over, with coloured covers, 128 pages, more room for stories - a novella could be complete in one issue.

Mailing regulations also intervened. It was the German "Iron Chancellor" Bismarck who promoted cheaper rates for printed matter, for nation building and spreading culture.

In the early 1900s, the US Post Office Department launched a aggressive campaign to curb a massive postal deficit by targeting what it considered widespread "abuses" of the heavily subsidized second-class mail rate. Originally intended for legitimate newspapers and magazines to keep citizens informed, second-class mail allowed publishers to ship items for a remarkably cheap price of 1 cent per two ounces...Rather than passing new laws through Congress, the Post Office dramatically tightened its internal rules, definitions, and enforcement methods. The regulations made it significantly harder to send materials at cheap second-class rates.

The changes favoured the new pulp magazines over the story papers. These changes made it more difficult for cheap weekly story papers to qualify for cheap rates, as opposed to the newer pulp magazines - larger, more standardized, and more professionally looking. Cheaper postage applied to material that was informational or educational. Publications with too much ads like sales catalogues didn't qualify

Other things interfered too.

Young folks got more things to fill free time with. Sports began to grow: baseball, cycling, roller skating, etc. New amusement parks and dance halls opened and new music became popular, like ragtime and early jazz. Until cinemas established themselves you had the Nickelodeons. The new "Yellow Press" had more entertainment: comics, serials, new "reader-friendly" journalism. Several factors hit the story papers hard by the early 20th century. Story papers died, all of them. Only the flagship *The Youth's Companion* managed to hold out, but in 1929 in time for the stock market crash it also fell.

That *Golden Hour* regularly feed its readers fantastic stories about flying machines, wonderful inventions, weird encounters and so on,



Munro "family magazine", 1909. Was old GH transformed or the title reused?

FREE Premium for a Year's Subscription to GOLDEN HOURS at \$2.50 or to THE NEW YORK FAMILY STORY PAPER at \$3.00.

HAMILTON "TAKE DOWN" RIFLE.

The best and most reliable low-priced rifle ever offered at this price.

The frame and working parts are steel. Blued-black gun finish, walnut stock, which takes down by single thumb screw, barrel, carefully rifled. Combines good features of Winchester and Stevens makes, thumb trigger and drop lever. Full length 31-1/2 inches, distance between sights 14, rear sight night, with adjustment both ways. Weight 2 pounds. Chambered for 20-calibre short and long .F. cartridges. Send \$2.50 for a year's subscription to GOLDEN HOURS and we send you the Family Story Paper for 12 weeks and this rifle. Send for premium list.

MUNRO'S PUBLISHING HOUSE, 24 and 26 Vandewater Street, New York.

Golden Hours will provide you with a gun!...

The Golden Hours Club

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Every reader of GOLDEN HOURS who sends a coupon cut from the back cover of GOLDEN HOURS and a 2-cent stamp becomes thereby a member of the National Organization. A blue satin finish club button, with the words "Golden Hours Club Member" in gold, will be sent him as a token of membership. He may become a member of a Branch Club, or not, as he pleases. There is no initiation fee, nor are there any dues in the National Organization.

BRANCH CLUBS.

1. Any five or more members may unite to form a Branch Club; members so uniting shall be known as charter members. The charter members must hold a meeting, select a name and choose officers, which may be president, secretary and treasurer, though the secretary may also act as treasurer. They must send to the Editor of GOLDEN HOURS the name selected, the names and addresses of charter members, and the names of the officers chosen, whereupon the Branch Club will receive a number, which must be used in all notices and communications. No person can act as a charter member unless he is a regular reader of GOLDEN HOURS, and already duly enrolled as a member of the National Organization, or has himself enrolled at the time the Branch Club is organized. The members who organize a Branch Club, whether it is to be a local or a corresponding club, must reside in the locality in which the club is organized,

though they may add to their membership persons who are non-residents. Corresponding clubs may elect non-resident members as their officers. Local clubs must hold meetings at least once a month. Corresponding clubs may hold meetings or not, as they see fit.

2. The words GOLDEN HOURS must precede the name chosen, and be used on all printed and written notices, etc., used by the Branch Club.

3. No Branch Club can also be a branch of any other organization similar to Golden Hours Club, though individual members of such Branch Clubs may belong to other Branch Golden Hours Clubs, or to other organizations.

4. Officers in any Branch Club cannot, while holding such offices, be also officers in any other Branch Golden Hours Club. This rule does not apply to officers of the National Organization, who may at the same time be officers of one Branch Club, nor to officers of Corresponding Clubs, who may at the same time be officers of one local club.

5. Rule 4 will be strictly enforced by the National President and Vice Presidents.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION.

1. The officers of the National Organization shall consist of president, a vice-president for each State and Territory of the United States, and for Canada, and a permanent secretary, who shall be the editor of GOLDEN HOURS. No president or vice-president shall hold office for more than two consecutive terms.

2. These officers, except the secretary, shall be elected yearly, according to a plan of election duly announced in GOLDEN HOURS, and will hold office until their successors have been duly installed. The installation of newly-elected officers shall take place at the Annual Convention and Reunion of the GOLDEN HOURS CLUB, the time and place of holding which will be duly announced in GOLDEN HOURS.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS.

1. In addition to his usual duties, the President shall report in writing to the editor of GOLDEN HOURS once every three months the condition of the club at large. He may make special reports whenever necessary.

2. In addition to his usual duties the Vice-President of each State shall report in writing to the President once every three months the condition of the Branch Clubs in his particular State.

3. The secretary of each Branch Club shall report in writing to the Vice-President of his State, if any, or to the President direct, once every month the number of active members in his Branch, and the gain or loss in membership since the last report; also any change of officers and any other matters of interest pertaining to his Branch.

NOTICES AND PENALTIES.

1. All notices to be official are to be published in GOLDEN HOURS.

2. Branch Clubs not sending a notice to GOLDEN HOURS within three months will be deemed to be disbanded, and their branch number will be given to another club.

3. The secretaries of Branch Clubs must make their report to the Vice-President of their State, or if there is no Vice-President, to the President direct, on or before the 5th day of every month.

4. All Vice-Presidents must make their report to the President on or before the 15th day of the months of April, July, October and January.

5. The President must send his quarterly report to the editor of GOLDEN HOURS on or before the last day of the quarter.

6. Officers failing in duties mentioned in Rules 3 and 4 are to be reported to the editor of GOLDEN HOURS for such action as the case requires.

7. Whenever any club has less than five active members it must disband. It shall be the duty of the Vice-Presidents to see that this rule is strictly enforced, and to report all violations thereof to the President.

PRIZES.

All members of the National Organization, whether members of Branch Clubs or not, may compete for gold and silver medals, and other prizes, in story, essay, puzzle, drawing, and other competitions announced from time to time in GOLDEN HOURS. The awards in these contests will be made at the Annual Conventions.

CHANGING OF RULES.

The foregoing Rules and Regulations can be changed or added to only with the consent and approval of the editor of GOLDEN HOURS.

LIST OF ACTIVE BRANCHES OF THE Golden Hours Club.

IN OPERATION MARCH 31, 1900.

No.	Name.	Secretary's Address.	No.	Name.	Secretary's Address.	No.	Name.	Secretary's Address.	No.	Name.	Secretary's Address.
1.	League of Honor, Mineral Ridge, O.	Harry E. Miller, box 18.	34.	Amateur Advertisers', San Diego, Cal.	O. V. Traggardth, box 184.	87.	Corresponding and Pleasure, Waco, Tex.	Miss Mamie Tomlinson, box 488.	113.	Pleasure, West Chester, Pa.	F. A. Dulla, 15 E. Union st.
2.	American Protective Corresponding, Camden, N. J.	W. E. Morton.	35.	Junior Colleagues of East Side House, New York City, N. Y.	J. Treybol, 76th st. and East River.	88.	Hope Corresponding, Providence, R. I.	W. McLaughlin, 33 Monticello st.	114.	Star Stamp Collectors, A. D. Grant, box 193, Kansas City, Kans.	
3.	Stamp Exchange, New York City	C. A. Daly, 326 W. 44th st.	38.	Crescent, Whitehouse, O.	Charles King, Jr.	91.	Reading, Danville, Va.	Howard Raines.	115.	Stamp Decorating and Corresponding, Newark, N. J.	J. D. Krampert, 34 Wallace st.
4.	Corresponding and Novel, Keyport, N. J.	R. Voorhees, box 221.	43.	Legion of Roll of Honor, Cheltenham, Pa.	C. I. Gelbel, adjutant general, box 10.	92.	Stamp Exchange, Los Angeles, Cal.	Clarence M. Gibbs, 2025 Miranda st.	116.	F. C. Fischer Association, New York City	C. Shultz, 142 7th ave.
5.	Sunset City, San Francisco, Cal.	Celia A. Dolan, 1223 Cortlandt ave.	53.	Secretaries', Cleveland, O.	V. S. Benson, 364 Superior st.	94.	Amateur Naturalist and Cfr-to, Bloomfield, N. J.	A. G. Hines, 110 Willow st.	117.	West Chester Pleasure, West Chester, Pa.	Clifford M. Smith, 238 W. Barnard.
6.	Social, Buffalo, N. Y.	Frank Arnheim, 623 William st.	55.	Collectors' Exchange, San Francisco, Cal.	F. B. Guernsey, 118 6th st.	98.	Literary Society, St. Paul, Minn.	Joseph Webber, 681 Burr st.	118.	Lebanon, Lebanon, Ore.	Zell Taton.
7.	Idlewild Gramophone, Philadelphia, Pa.	Frank J. Miller, 4514 Laird st.	56.	Athletic, Albany	John Barhydt, 23 N. Y. City ave.	99.	International Corresponding and Exchange, Birmingham, Ala.	H. L. Ainsley, care of Johnson, Nesbitt & Co.	119.	Friendship Corresponding, Washington, D. C.	R. L. Much, 1233 Georgia ave.
8.	American Stamp Exchange, New York City	R. G. Ballard, 22 Beaver st.	59.	Ideal Dramatic and Musical, St. Louis, Mo.	A. Gutkaes, 3820 N. 21st st.	101.	National Union of Golden Hours Stamp Dealers, Newport, Ky.	Arthur Arand, 7140 Orchard st.	120.	Branch Officers' Association, Baltimore, Md.	W. R. Hesse, 1813 E. Chase st.
10.	Massachusetts Amateur Press, Boston, Mass.	C. A. A. Parker, room 1, 110 Tremont st.	60.	Social, Meriden, Conn.	E. C. Parker, 77 Kensington Heights.	102.	Young People's Society, Baltimore, Md.	C. H. Hesse, president, 1813 E. Chase st.	121.	Athletic and Literary, Baltimore, Md.	John Maxwell, 2221 E. Lombard st.
11.	Progressive American, Brooklyn, N. Y.	J. H. Donaldson, 51 S. 8th st.	62.	Good Wine Social and Corresponding, Kansas City, Kans.	A. D. Grant, 929 Orville st.	103.	Photo, Ticonderoga, N. Y.	G. B. Bryan, president.	122.	Good Fellowship Society, East Lee, Mass.	L. A. Chapman.
12.	Aurora Corresponding, Brooklyn, N. Y.	W. B. Littlefield, 88 Hooper st.	65.	Manhattan, New York City, N. Y.	G. C. Taylor, 34 Vandam st.	105.	Royal Scarlet Corresponding, Jersey City, N. J.	E. C. Boffey, Howard place.	123.	National Corresponding, Detroit, Mich.	C. R. Kelly, 702 Tillman ave.
13.	Helping Hand Corresponding and Reading, Norfolk, Va.	J. R. Brister, 406 Brambleton ave.	66.	Corresponding, Malden, Mass.	J. Hennessey, 34 Linwood st.	106.	Corresponding, Portsmouth, Va.	G. L. Fitchett.	157.	Star, St. Augustine, Fla.	R. V. Perine.
15.	Dewey Sporting, Providence, R. I.	M. W. McLaughlin, 33 Monticello st.	68.	Metropolitan Associates, Malden, Mass.	Jas. Hennessey.	107.	American Eagle Corresponding, Lawrence, Mass.	H. S. Wyman, 443 Canal st.	166.	Honest Traders' New York City, N. Y.	Alfon Stark, 751 Park ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.
16.	Mutual Benefit, Corning, N. Y.	R. D. Van Alstin.	71.	Mongo Corresponding, Mongo, Ind.	A. M. Keefe.	108.	Liberty Pleasure, Chicago, Ill.	Arthur Dobrick, 878 Clyburn ave.	173.	Monumental, Baltimore, Md.	G. Ed. Harrison, 1311 N. Bond st.
19.	Aquila Corresponding, Chicago, Ill.	M. B. McNamara, 470 W. 14th st.	75.	The Missouri League, St. Louis, Mo.	T. L. Woodruff, 3528 Morganford Rd.	109.	Social and Corresponding, Brooklyn, N. Y.	F. D. Casanova, 217 5th ave.	174.	Pleasure, Hartford, Conn.	T. De-laney, 46 Smith st.
21.	Bicycle and Athletic, Corry, Pa.	8 South st.	77.	Debating, Baltimore, Md.	Miss Anna E. Hesse, 1813 E. Chase st.	111.	Elite Correspondence Society, Brooklyn, N. Y.	C. E. Carlin, 366 Prospect place.	412.	Knights of Liberty, New York City	T. P. C. Clune, 1529 2d ave.
22.	Stamp and Camera Exchange, Superior, Neb.	L. Brodstone, box 69.	79.	Pleasure, Philadelphia, Pa.	Harry Gillen.	112.	Forest City Dramatic Association, Cleveland, O.	W. H. Whitworth, 225 Ridge st.	422.	Corresponding, Harrisburg, Pa.	H. E. Altman, 517 Cowden st.
24.	Manhattan Dramatic and Vaudeville, New York City, N. Y.	Jas. Pfeiffer, 225 E. 8th st.	81.	Comedy Athletic, Meriden, Conn.	R. S. Davis, 141 Crown st.	489.	Universal Corresponding, Springfield, Mass.	J. F. Gamble, box 472.	742.	Telegraphers' Corresponding, Rochester, N. Y.	W. J. Bradley, 47 Broadway.
28.	Stars and Stripes, Leadville, Col.	W. Shelton, 724 Elm st.	83.	Hancock Pleasure, Athol Centre, Mass.	Russell Fay.	745.	Athletic and Pleasure, Harrisburg, Pa.	Ed. H. Weigel, 1216 Cowden st.			
29.	Keystone, Philadelphia, Pa.	J. F. Keown, 1069 Wharton st.	84.	Magnolia, Dorchester, Mass.	G. F. Mullen, in care of Geo. Mexal, 135 Elliot st., Boston, Mass.						
32.	New Cosmopolis Corresponding, Lawrence, Mass.	E. Kelley, 359 Broadway.									

NOTE.—Secretaries of Branch Clubs will please notify at once the Editor of GOLDEN HOURS of any errors or omissions in the foregoing list.

Here a full page (from 1900) on how the club worked, listing the active clubs or "branches" (ca 80) at the time. Note club #745 lower right. At this time there had been around 750 clubs! It seems clubs often went inactive after a while (teenagers getting older acquire other interests) and club numbers were reused. The Golden Hours Club system was massive. It outshone e g Gernsback's Science Fiction League 30 years later.

More to read about the era of story papers:

Richard Ohmann: *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century*, Oxford University Press, 1996. The single best academic treatment of story papers as a cultural system.

J. Randolph Cox: *The Dime Novel Companion: A Guide to the Dime Novel*. Greenwood Press, 2000. A reference work covering authors, publishers, genres, and formats. Includes many

John Tebbel: *A History of Book Publishing in the United States, Vol. II: The Expansion, 1865–1919*

Bowker, 1975. Excellent context on printing technology, Linotype, and mass-market fiction.

Albert Johannsen: *The House of Beadle and Adams and Its Dime and Nickel Novels*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1950. Three volumes. Not Munro-focused, but foundational for understanding the story-paper/dime-novel ecosystem.

James D. Hart: *The Popular Book: A History of America's Literary Past*. University of California Press, 1950. Covers youth fiction, serialized fiction, and mass-market trends.

Matthew Schneirov: *The Dream of a New Social Order: Popular Magazines in America, 1893–1914*. Columbia Uni Press, 1994. On transition from story papers to pulps and “yellow press” entertainment. (Ed: My AI helped researching this book list. Those critters are marvellous finding things and good research help. Your Ed hasn't read the books, but our AI has)



First Letters of Comment then Mailing Comments to N'APA & EAPA. WAHF J Cowe. Eh, where is your LoC?

Rob Hansen: Ahrvid, interesting find, but I think that event has an even flimsier claim to be the first SF con that the Vril-Ya Bazaar and Fete. Here's the page on the latter at my website:

<https://fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN%20Archive/1891con.htm>

Incidentally, I also recently added pages on a couple of European cons, namely the first held in Austria:

<https://fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN%20Archive/1966vienna/66vienna.htm> and EUROCON 1:

<https://fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN%20Archive/1972eurocon1/eurocon1.htm>

I don't know for sure that the Ernstings attended this but it seems likely and that's a great contemporary photo of them, so...

Ed: I call it a precursor to an sf con. But even more interesting is GH's huge club system (in thish!). BTW, RB is one of the best fanhistorians. Find his work at

<https://ae.ansible.uk/?a=hansen>

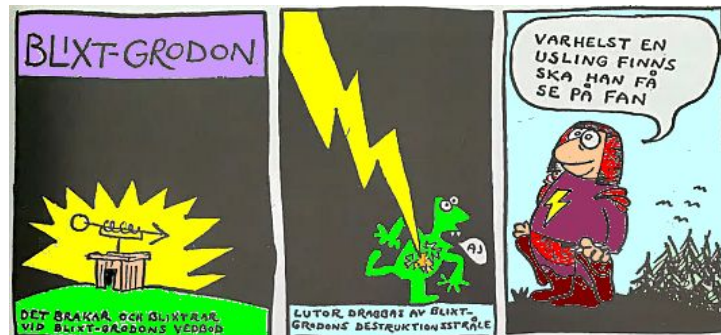
Steve Donaldson: May I reproduce that on Amazing Stories...or point them to sign up for your newsletter? (Ed: Sure! See <https://amazingstories.com/2026/08/the-very-very-first-science-fiction-convention/>) I was thinking of using the alternative - Leeds Dethroned. [Ed: He refers to the very first sf con, Leeds 1937.]

Joseph Nicholas: Dear Ahrvid. Belated thanks for all the issues of *Intermission* you've been sending me -- I read them all, but barely have time to commence composing a response before the next issue arrives. Additionally, one has to fit reading and responding to fanzines in with everything else in one's life, which at this time of the year involves lots of gardening and visiting various places and exhibitions in and around London (in both cases taking advantage of the longer, lighter, warmer days). Ergo, fanzines tend to left to one side.

Anyway, I notice that you don't seem to have said much about AI in recent issues, unless it's been in the apa comments at the end, which I confess I routinely skip because of the formatting, which makes it difficult to follow who's saying what about whatever. But there are two recent points about AI which might be of interest to you. The first was an interview with Cory Doctorow about AI, in which he pointed out that a lot of the lobbying effort by Anthropic *et al* is directed at Wall Street financiers whose investments in tech companies are necessary to keep the show on the road. Fair enough: AI is very expensive. But his point was that telling Wall Street that people want AI, and therefore that the financiers should invest in it, is very different from trying to convince the public at large that AI will be to their benefit. This means, he argued, that AI is likely to be another tech bubble which (like the early internet) will sooner or later burst, leaving companies such as Anthropic with mountains of debts that they can't service, leading to corporate failures and bankruptcies. (Anyone who says, in response to that, if and when it happens, that the tech bros had it coming, gets my thumbs up.)

The other point about AI is the huge non-economic costs associated with the data centres required to run the systems. For example, planning documents submitted in support of an application to construct such a data centre in west London acknowledge that the annual GHG emissions would be equivalent to 8,400 flights from London to New York. And that's just one data centre; the emissions from others are likely to be similar. (Forget about carbon capture and storage (CCS): that's mostly smoke and mirrors, has never been demonstrated to work at scale and will never be ramped up sufficiently to do so. But CCS is talked up by fossil fuel and other interests because it allows them to carry on doing what they currently do, without attempting to ameliorate their GHG emissions.)

There is also the vast quantities of water required to keep the data centres cool. Obviously, I have no information about the water situation in Sweden but, here in the UK, the privatisation of the water industry by the Conservative government in the late 1980s -- claiming that private industry would be free to make the investments that public ownership could not -- has meant that no new reservoirs have been completed since 1992; that only the minimal amount of maintenance and repair of the leaky Victorian era waterpipe network has



Foggy Gordon, by LON: *Flashes and crashes by Froggy Gordon's woodshed./ Lutor hit by Froggy Gordon's destruction beam./ Wherever scumbags are they'll get it*

been undertaken (the current losses to leakage are estimated to amount to 15 million litres per day); and that an industry which had no debts at the time of privatisation has since racked up debts of £60 billion, the various water companies having been treated by their owners and shareholders as simply cash extraction machines. None of which has been taken into account by the government, which wants to UK to become an AI superpower, even after a summer in which parts of England have been declared officially in drought, we've had five heatwaves (i.e., daily temperatures above 35 degrees for several days at a time), and there's been hardly any rain for the last few months. (Politicians, eh? Always the last to realise what's going on.)

Anyway, keep going -- keep publishing! And I'll try to respond more frequently as autumn sets in, the days get shorter, and I have to spend more time indoors. Although of course there's always lots to do indoors -- I have a little list.... Regards

Ed: Sweden with ca 100 000 lakes is lucky with water. Many data centres go to our north for water, cold and cheap hydro power.

Bojan Ekselenski: Interesting fanzine. Best regards from Slovenia.

Mark Nelson: Dear Ahrvid, My wife always looks at me askingly if I say that I'm going to walk down to the local for a drink. But in future I will follow the new linguist furrow that you have ploughed. I will tell her that I will be going for a walk and then taking a hydration break.

I enjoyed your report on Finncon 2026. You hit quite a few of your favourite targets in your report. I spotted: "too many panels", "no fancy dress parade", "the price of bheer", "the evils of the word processor (for sf writers)" and "written sf has become too woke".

Missing from this list was your much beloved commentary on the evils of Code of Conducts. Did the convention CoC escape your wrath because it was only available in Finnish? (Surely the con committee would have an English version?) Or perhaps only the bheer you drank during the convention had the effect of mellowing you out? There might not have been any comments about the CoC, but you did include some comments about Chinese fans. A new pet peeve? Cheers, Mark.Ps. If you don't want LoCs to Gmail why sending Intermission from Hotmail?

Ed: *Hotmail tend to react if you mail more than 20 together. Gmail is more tolerant. Finncon had no CoC.*

Phil Pine: I too, learned of the existence of Fandom by running across *The Immortal Storm* (Ed: *the history that makes WWII sound like an anti-climax!*) as a teenager. When I saw a notice in a prozine that the Ontario Science Fiction club had monthly meetings, I travelled to Toronto to attend. Unfortunately, the only one there was the club treasurer. The club had dwindled to none but himself, and he was not keen on maintaining the ritual of showing up any longer. Two other teenagers had read the same notice and showed up as well. They were Robert Charles Wilson and Taral Wayne, and our lives were destined to be interwoven. The treasurer told us that the club was now ours to do with as we wished. With the energy of teenagers, we brought in new members, mostly young, and the club grew large. Some Michigan fans showed, up including my future collaborator in historical scholarship, Steve Muhlberger. The Detroit fans introduced us to fanzine and convention fandom, and soon a bunch of us were piling into Victoria Wayne's Volkswagen for ten-fifteen hour drives to cons in various US cities. We usually ended up sleeping on floors or the couches of hotel lobbies (or not at all). With our collective poverty, scruffiness, and eccentricities, we became known as the "Derelicts." That's a term drawn from *The Immortal Storm*, so I would have to say that it's a book that shaped my life.

In Canada, we are quite aware of the Viking settlement in Newfoundland - and while the reconstructed archaeological site at *L'Anse aux Meadows* (a National Historic Monument) is remote and rather hard to get to, it gets a steady stream of tourists. But you have no trouble hearing a version of Old Norse spoken in Canada. In the 19th century, Icelanders fleeing both poverty and a rather nasty volcanic eruption founded the colony of New Iceland in Manitoba. At first, when Icelanders arrived, the Canadian Government, learning that they were Scandinavians, said "Great! We need more lumberjacks" and sent to the forests of Northern Ontario. Most of them had never seen a tree in their lives. The Finnish and Swedish settlers there ridiculed them mercilessly, and they begged to be moved somewhere else. The result was the Colony of New Iceland, on the shores of Lake Winnipeg, where they could fish to their hearts' content, and were permitted to form their own self-governing Althing. In the principal town of Gimli, Manitoba, Icelandic is spoken to this day, and there's an imposing statue of Leif Erikson on the waterfront. A majority of the inhabitants (known as Gimlungar) are of Icelandic descent, though

First Nations, Metis, Scots and Ukrainians are well represented, and there is much intermarriage. Nevertheless, the language survives. Gimli has produced an impressive literature for a tiny town --- including the works of a major Arctic explorer, excellent psychological novels, and a fantasy series. An early film by eccentric director Guy Madden is called *Tales From the Gimli Hospital* and is a bizarre cinematic experience. Elsewhere in the Prairie Provinces, Icelanders made their mark, and there is an often broadcast "Heritage Minute" celebrating the first Canadian Olympic hockey gold medal, won by a team composed entirely of Icelandic-Canadians. One of the most celebrated Icelandic poets of the early 20th century lived most of his life in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies. I learned something about Gimli in childhood from my father, an RCAF Lancaster pilot who trained fighter pilots there during World War II. His French Canadian / Metis family had come from the Prairies, and had considerable contact with the Icelanders when they first arrived in the West. I have no Icelandic ancestry that I know of, but my ancestors tended to be extremely hospitable to random strangers, and it was often -40C, so there's no telling who wandered into my genome. I eventually visited Gimli during my hitch-hiking days, and enjoyed the *snúður* and *vinarterta*. Fortunately, the noticeable absence of sharks in Lake Winnipeg meant that there was no Hákarl, and I didn't have to experience that "delicacy" until I visited Iceland in more recent years.

Ed: *Fascinating! Didn't know about Icelanders in Canada. Now over to Mailing comments to EAPA and N'APA.*

Heath Row: Looks interesting, but is in Portugese. Automatic translators are quite good these day, but I have too much to do now to take time to use them.

Garth Spencer: Well, I guess I'm a bit of a technophile. Some technology may have drawbacks, but you have to see the whole picture, the positive effects usually weighs more. Chernobyl, Fukshima were real bad, but the

world's around 500 nuclear reactors have given us huge amounts of energy for decades! ■ I haven't yet gotten any ad swaps. ■ If you want to talk about pollution say where that would be, and what substances,

Henry Grynnssten: *"peer review isn't more than a stumble check, right?"* Right. But my AI doesn't know or choose to ignore it. (Pay attention! You want to attribute me something clearly stated comes from the AI. It was about soft covid measures work fine. I agree - and the AI points to it that peer rev or not won't matter.) *"Some other factor/s must have led to Sweden having fewer deaths."* I think *all* countries had fewer covid deaths than their blown up reports claimed. A general conclusion is that the virus wasn't nearly as bad as panicing politicians imagined - that idea came from exaggerating reports. ■ *"The problems with [Moon/Mars colonies] being self-sustaining remains."* Not for long. You admit there is water (can be reused over and over again), oxygen can be extracted from the rocks (silicon oxide) and food: 10m² hydroponic cultivation in four layers is enough food for one. Sounds pretty self-sustaining to me. Getting there *is* the hardest! The Moon is relatively easy, but Mars... ■ *"civilizations have destroyed the very sources of their wealth by inventing things"* No, inventing things *is* the sources wealth. ■ *man is lousy at avoiding destruction of his environment...* Greenhouse gases, biodiversity loss, waste, consumption. We do it *"very well"*?? Reality check: look out the window, see trees, birds etc. It would be absent if environment was *destroyed*. We use the environment, we don't destroy it. Since the early 1990s human wealth increased more than ever in history! Average lifespan up dramatically, absolute poverty down fast, science and tech up fast (from MS-DOS to AI, charting DNA, landline phones to Internet, Webb spacescope, self-driving cars). That sounds like doing *very well*! ■ *"must [lunar water be] extensively treated?"* No. Water is super easy to treat: distill it. ■ *"We overuse water, so people have to move."* Just a matter of bad politics and poverty. ■ *"We overuse the soil."* No. Case Scania. ■ *"Aral Sea and the Dust Bowl"* Dust Bowl calmed after some time. Water-redirecting is now making Aral coming back (original problem was bad USSR politics). ■ *"Impossible to follow AI development without a 1980s computer?"* Yes. I did simulated neural networks on a relatively advanced 80's 386 machine, but runs still took *hours*. But more important: if you didn't even have a computer you weren't in the mindset to grasp the principles. ■ *"I got my first computer in 1993."* I got my first 8 years earlier. Or more correct, I got a tiny ZX81 machine in 1981. ■ *"your three-year head start"* It was an 8 years head start (22 with the ZX81). My stunt with AI, simulating it, researching a major article, was around 1990-91 but you had hardly heard of AI until a few years ago ■ *"expert in AI - which you aren't"* "Expert", a rubber word stretchable to anything. I definitely know the subject more than superficially. ■ *"AI research isn't about consciousness"* Things around consciousness come with the territory. ■ *"consciousness research is a research branch quite apart"* Why not just admit that your basic ideas here are fundamentally different from mine! You assume some - for lack of a better word - magic in it. I see ones, noughts, algorithms, things you can read, touch, study, copy. ■ [A Watts has a] *"global warming denial blog"* Or a climate realist blog. ■ *"Debunked in 2022: 'We rate this claim False.'" "Debunked"* in a Facebook comment, by activist Madison Czopek. Her main argument is though a huge majority of the weather stations don't follow their own operating standards, being near heat sources, we should *still* trust them... ■ *"strong denialist Zeitgeist"* There isn't one. Everyone can see that it's the climate critics who fight a strong head-wind. ■ *"exceptions don't deny the general trend"* The many, *many* exceptions to claims of "sixth (or whatever) global extinction" shows an *opposite* trend. But already noted: it's *impossible* to find trends without starting figures or figures along the way. ■ *"A neural net isn't conscious."* The one in your brain is. ■ *"That is just a description, not a theory."* A relevant description is a good theory. ■ [Passenger pigeons] *"weren't just shot, multiple methods were used"* Shooting looks like the overwhelmingly most common method, being in 9/10ths of hunting descriptions. But shooting billions of birds doesn't hold up logistically. So it was something else. Those super-contagious bird flues we always hear of stands out as a likely candidate. A little virus and an egg farmer has to kill off 100 000 hen to stop spreading. ■ *"fishery has exceeded the scientific recommendations for 12e (!) years...it goes without saying that the stocks will eventually collapse."* Temporarily. A single fish spreads thousands of eggs so comeback odds are low. ■ *"put him in one of the 3 % of woods in the EU that are primary forests"* The stoneager would recognise the environment in *any* of the forests. ■ *"You made the claim, you have the burden of proof... show me your source."* In this argument ping-pong I've now lost track of what I'm supposed to show. Sorry. ■ *"The data must be there... IPCC analyse"* Whatever you try here, I disagree...lost in ping-pong again. Looks like something about IPCC, but they spew out so many funny little ideas, I still have no idea where we are. Please when editing leave enough so one knows the original quandary. (I'm sure I sin here too!) ■ *"You just deny what I have repeatedly shown you. If the scientists support one of the points, they necessarily support the others."* About IPCC's hypotheses 1 to 4 (reminder: 1. There is substantial warming. 2. Caused by CO₂, 3. From human activity, 4. It'll be a disaster). You immediately see that supporting on of the hypotheses, others *don't* automatically follow. It eg may be warming without CO₂, from the Sun's cloud-creating magnetic field. ■ *"EMP vulnerability isn't dependent on whether the ICs are 'advanced' enough."* It is! Less advanced ICs aren't fast enough. ■ *"Clearly the Americans were wrong; they didn't know the technological levels of the Russians because they were surprised by the Sputnik."* My AI says the US knew it in the spring of 1957, half a year before Sputnik. The surprise of Russia building rockets capable of orbit was not that, but of failing to conclude Russia would *actually* aim for orbit. ■ *"Who can judge a scientific paper if not peers, scientists in the same field?"* Fine for catching stumbling errors. ■ *"The only true judge of science turns out to be Ahrrvid Engholm."* Thanks recognition! But seriously, it's very dangerous if we leave decisions to "experts" (this rubber word...). Everyone must for important matters do his darndest to investigate, think for himself, use common sense and reach his own, independent conclusion. (Opposite to how one H Grynnssten works. Comb the net for snippets and finding one, claim it's the truth because an "expert" said it. Mr Grynnssten's own reasoning in this process: 0.01%.) ■ BTW: Nice article about Leibniz! A fascinating man. Title of his story that was almost sf?

Time to sign off. LoCs about the Golden Hours Club appreciated - it's news not heard before in skiffy circles! Would be grateful for help digging deeper into this. (Your Ed is on the wrong continent.)

С л а в а У к р а и н е !

The Murdered Master Mage
George Phillies
phillies@4liberty.net

Front Cover: A castle, perhaps actually designed to function as one. The approaches look depressing for any attacker.

Intermission: A list of ancient computers should probably include the Antikythera Mechanism, a hard-wired astronomical computer of disputed accuracy. The most recent attack, that it would not work at all because the gears were too bad, would require that the people who built it then shipped it to its destination without testing it.

Archive Midwinter: The purpose of a Ponzi scheme is that people put money in and someone then steals it. The rate at which wallets are broken into and contents are stolen is quite impressive, though it may recently have improved.

Thank you for your comments on Telzey. The Telzey novel is now at a serious editor and a serious artist. The current working title is "Telzey Amberdon!" The tag line is "Return of the Hub's Greatest Psi!"

I have watched a few old movies on my computer, but have not been to a movie theater in 30 years. Law by LLM is perhaps worse than law by television show. We recently had a woman render her three of her children deceased, and had many internet ranters go on at length while not realizing that on a key point Massachusetts law is the opposite of the law in their state.

Roommate: The painful solution is to move and leave the roommate behind. Moving may be too difficult.

The Murdered Master Mage: If you want more Telzey you will need to buy the book when it comes out.

Brownian Motion: With respect to UFOs, there are also extensive pieces of instrumental information. In addition to reports that have clear natural interpretations and reports where there simply is not enough information, there are also reports in which there is clearly enough information there, but the information serves to reject every natural explanation. There appears to have finally been a turnaround on making serious attempts to interpret what was being seen, with no particular basis yet for deciding what the correct interpretation is.

Three cheers for your web site! As a thought, how many SF-adjacent conventions, e.g., media, are being run by commercial operations? How many general-interest cons are commercial operations? As an aside, US does not have a parliamentary system. In the 2026 election the Democrats can take control of Congress, but they would lack a plausible path to take control of the executive branch. The President will, barring an extraordinary event, be in office until 2028. (Impeachment is legally possible, but Trump's opponents have already botched the process twice,)

Samizdat: A fine issue. Dorrance Academy in my magical university novel Practical Exercise is somewhat like an American research university, with the heroine advancing from being an undergraduate to being a resident scholar. Certainly it had classes and classrooms.

You offer many fine topics for convention panels. Re: number of fanzines is 30?? N3F publishes ten of them.

Esmeralda County Line: Sympathies on your medical issues. I am told that the reason the distinguished author was annoyed with me because he thought I circulated anti-Catholic propaganda, which would appear to be a misunderstanding, in that I do not believe I have done anything of the sort.

Fusion power soon : that was the Second Lawson Constant, though I recall it as 40 years.

R.A.I.L. You raise an interesting question about ownership of AI-produced works. If I order the CluelessMaximum system to write for me a 400,000 word SF novel, who does own its rights?

Moziag: Nothing like library systems of different sorts. I am distantly aware that there have been Star Trek movies, of which have seen two or three. Thank you for the list.

Brandy Hall: EverandAnon, which is the successor to Alarums&Excursions, has a maxac requirement, the same as A&E did. In the case of A&E, the limit was that the most powerful available stapler had a page count limit; the issue could not be made any thicker.

The Swamp Spot Sentinel: Thanks for the historical note on Sergeant Preston. Ah, yes, shower curtains. There are serious problems with some sources of new shower rods. I finally went over to glass doors. Your comments on the Hugo nominees were interesting to read.

I find your comments on car repair interesting. Curiously I have a friend who sells quality used cars (he is in Phoenix AZ, so I am not trying to sell you anything) who reports that business is terrible.

As I have space on the page, I will give you a bit more of Telzey:

Enter Trigger Argee

Telzey awoke well before dawn. The clock said she'd been asleep for nine hours. Sky glow from the Cluster let her see bushes and shrubs against a dark background. Fireflies in the garden were brilliant evanescent stars. The very first fireflowers of the season glowed copper and gold and blue, their luminosity fading as dawn approached.

The house was still chill from the night. She slipped into a heavy bathrobe and made her way to the breakfast room, where steaming-hot lavender-orange tea awaited her. Soon enough, the autochef presented her with breakfast. Meal completed, the sun now well above the horizon, she summoned the house commweb system.

To her surprise, there was a new tagged message, on her very private number, from Pamela Morgan. The message was admirably concise.

"Tel,

"Emerged from subspace someplace. On our way to Orado. Serious problems at my end. Can't move in with my parents. They assumed I'd live in a dorm bungalow, as planned, and moved off-planet. University of Orado just changed its rules. Telepaths need not apply; unfair cheating advantage. No way I can become a grad student at UO, so no place to live on Orado. I'm cash-short, unless Psych Service gives me the money they keep saying they owe me.

"By the time you read this, you'll be an attorney and know what I can do. Legally, I mean."

"Please help,

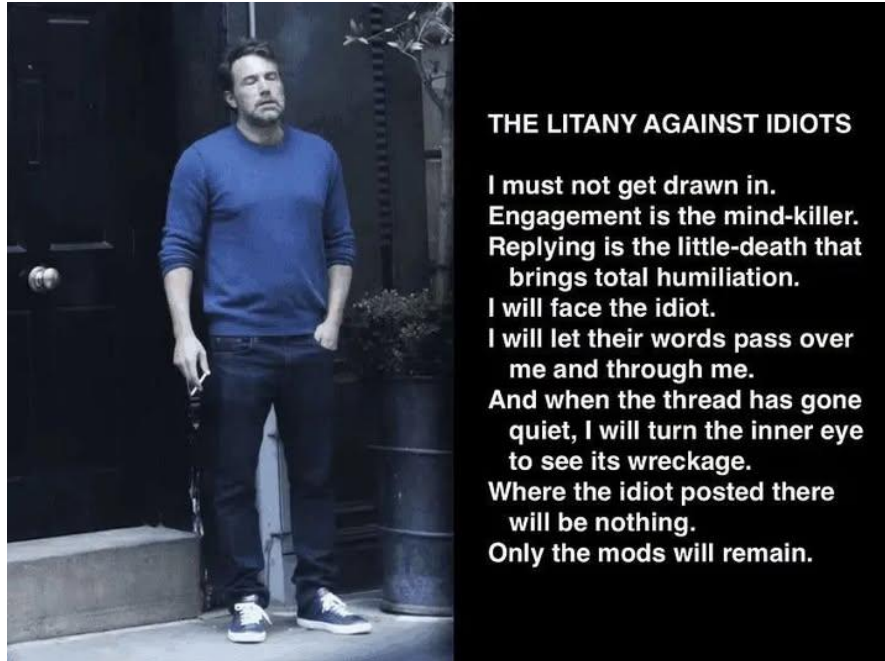
"Pam."

Telzey stared at the printout of Pam's radiogram. Pam had saved Mom's life.

BROWNIAN MOTION #21

A Garth Spencer apazine

For NAPA #284, September 2026



Thnigs on My Mind

“Thnig” is a word I invented for topics not good enough to be actual things.

§

Sometimes I worry about a lot of things outside my responsibilities or ability to control, like the costs or limitations of available technology. Sometimes I worry about whether I have to update the standard text I put into Official Organ of eAPA, including a description of software packages that members can use if they can’t afford Adobe Acrobat. Sometimes I worry about how we’re going to survive global warming, the eventual loss of hydro energy due to global warming, whether we can afford to colonize the higher latitudes or Antarctica, and how fusion power will be restricted and monetized. I think I need a different antidepressant.

§

My idea of funny is based on incongruence, like Bigfoot and the Ogopogo monster campaigning for recognition as Canadian citizens, or American states petitioning for Canadian annexation. There isn’t as much incongruence going around as I would enjoy, unless unidentified aerial phenomena are something like practical jokes from other dimensions.

§



Mailing Comments

Re the Russian war: I overheard word-of-mouth rumours in Vancouver recently about Ukrainian men seeking to get out of their country, for fear of being abducted and forced into the army. If I heard this online I would have assumed it was Russian disinformation. What do you make of it?

Brownian Motion #21
For NAPA #284, September 2026
p. 2

I find it hard to make comments on either your real-world coverage, or your discussion of fantasy writing, without merely rehearsing observations that have been made before.

Archive Midwinter – Jefferson Swycaffer

Re your comment to Ahrvid Engholm about the value of space exploration – agreed, entirely aside from the value of astrophysical discoveries, the spinoff technologies developed by space programs have been immensely valuable. And yet that value is not recognized by some critics, apparently because they didn't perceive a measurable Return On Investment *to the developers*. What a pity NASA and its foreign parallels weren't set up as profit-making ventures. Oh, wait, now someone's going to concoct a conspiracy theory claiming that was *why* they were set up as government departments. Or has someone concocted this theory already?

Re your comment to Robert Jennings about de-extinction of species – frankly, I'm more interested in the possibility of genetically engineering species to fill vacant ecological niches. Such as, for instance, breaking down plastic waste and microplastic pollution in our seas into biologically harmless compounds. In the meantime there have been several devices produced for gathering this waste; I wonder if any of them are being disseminated yet.

Re your comments to me – the shoulder has healed up, fortunately. As to services to help people simplify their lives ... I keep seeing advertisements on Facebook for service programs to help overwhelmed people organize their space, and their chores. I know people who need that kind of help.

Yeah, I remember the Rock'Em Sock'Em Robots. Struck me as pretty mindless, but then I grew up on construction toys like Meccano, which allowed you a lot more constructive flexibility.

Intermission #168 – Ahrvid Engholm

Thank you for your comments to me.

Re your comments to Henry Grynnssten – yeah, we've had our share of mentally unstable fans too, in Canada and in the United States. Although I quote Taral Wayne extensively in my draft Canadian fanhistory materials, I left out the parts where he talked about two examples.

But I'm not so sure we can include fans who commit suicide, as you said. Some people have good and sufficient reason to plan an end to their lives, such as those with grievous, irreversible medical conditions. Canadians who have such conditions, and are found mentally competent, can request MAID (medical assistance in dying).

I myself have lived with a tendency to depression for most of my life, and regularly – about monthly, in fact – I have a spell where I wonder why I go on living. It actually surprises me to discover anyone who has never had this grim, stark, bleak experience. It is almost as if I had a regular metabolic cycle affecting my emotions.

And I get past it and take care of bills and have even made tentative sensible financial plans.

The Murder Master Mage #283 – George Phillies

So there are WWII re-enactors? I wonder what events they hold and where, and what safety precautions they have to take. Or whether they and their equipment form part of the National Reserve.

Re your suggestion to me – yes, maybe I'll start offering my monthly fannish news column to the *N3F Gazette*. Not all of it would be a month old.

Samizdat #38 – Sam Lubell

Once again I am impressed by your organization of life into deliberate project areas. Certainly your nonfiction reading is something I could stand to emulate. I was interested in your review of *The Rise and Fall of the Neoliberal Order: America and the World in the Free Market Era*, by Gary Gerstle, although Gerstle seems to define the “neoliberal order” in positive terms.

Esmeralda County Line #16 – Kevin Trainor Jr.

I appreciate your jokes. Yeah, maybe Belgium is a myth. Certainly the Internet informed me that the state of Idaho didn't exist, “Idaho” was simply a variety of potatoes. And yeah, I take your point, what with apazines and perzines there may be as many as 25 fanzines around.

R.A.I.L. #13 – Adrian Kresnak

I will be interested in the results of your research on whether AI-generated fiction actually gives the putative author any intellectual property at all.

I see you have a cat. How about that.



Garth's cat

Moziag #3 – Joseph Gill

What does “moziag” mean?

What you report about public lending library systems in Greater New York is much the same as what I can report about Greater Vancouver. I have only ventured to have two library cards, one for the Vancouver Public Library system and one for Burnaby, one of the adjacent municipalities.

Your “Burkeism” was fun – tying together John Carpenter, the movie *They Live*, propellor beanies, Ray Nelson, and the original story that inspired the movie. Now I really must pursue Burkeisms.

Brandy Hall #19 – Mark Nelson

Thank you for your concern, but nope, I did not get my arm amputated. It healed up fine all on its own.

In other news, I think I am closing in on the evil sinister worldwide underground Belgian global domination plot. Their minion Lord Dampnut, the alleged president of the United States, is obviously on the run now that my Canadian agents are finally establishing more stable trading relationships with sane countries, and fostering independent manufacturing infrastructure north of the 49th Parallel.

The next steps in restoring civilization will, of course, take a few decades. I trust you will keep me informed as to Australia’s program in Asia, and her and progress in this regard.

The Swamp Spot Sentinel #2.2 – Robert Jennings

Condolences on your automotive and domestic repairs and expenses. One of the ways I never grew up was that I never became a car owner, and due to the cost of housing versus my wage earning, I never became a homeowner, either. Now I am counting my blessings.

Thank you for the writeup on *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon*. For some reason I was never exposed to the radio show or to the comic book. I only got to see parodies such as the Dudley Doright animations in the *Rocky and Bullwinkle* show, or hear David Broadfoot’s standup routine featuring “Sergeant Renfrew and his faithful dog Cuddles, in their lonely log cabin on the 14th floor of the CN Tower.” The TV series *Due South* was in much the same vein, basically a police procedural featuring an unarmed Mountie in Detroit with many satires on alleged Canadian and American stereotypes.

Re your comments to me ... Thank you for your financial remarks. I am taking steps to eliminate the unpleasant surprise of expenses and subscriptions I didn’t realize were bleeding money from my account. But the big issue seems to be limited income. That may be rectified within the month, even though I am semi-retired.

There is no direct relationship between my income and my fanpublishing. You express a hope to see a full-length fanzine in the next mailing; how would you define that? (I

produce a monthly fanzine, *The Obdurate Eye*, as well as my apazines; you can find it archived at eFanzines.com.)



**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."

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 283

by Jefferson P. Swycaffer
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5 July 2026

Comments:

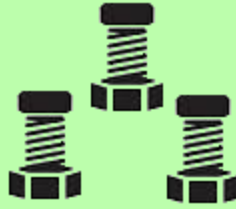
Cover: Public Domain fantasy art.

Ahrvid Engholm: Still fearing the scenario where Putin starts to lose domestic support and his regime totters...so he has nothing to lose by the use of nuclear weapons.

Delightful survey of thinking machines! I have a HAL faceplate on the front of one of my bookshelves!

I most vigorously disagree with your “problems with fantasy.” Magic is a perfectly valid theme and trope and meme, and is not a dramatic dead-end as you essay. Your very same reasoning can be extrapolated to condemn all imaginative fiction, and, indeed, the concept of fiction as it has existed for thousands of years. The Epic of Gilgamesh and the Odyssey are still read today, so your notion that fantasy is “plot destroying” is demolished by history.

Magic, instead, is merely a plot device, like Electronics, or Orbital Mechanics, or Psychology. And, in fact, when George Phillips wrote his “Telzey” novel, he used “psionics,” which is indistinguishable from magic. Science fiction regularly uses FTL Travel and



artificial gravity, both of which are “magical.” I’m a fan of superhero comics, and super-powers are obviously similar to magic. Superman is as good as magical, and Captain Marvel (Shazam) is overtly and in-canon magical. Comics also gave us Neal Gaiman’s “Sandman” series, which used mythological and theological magic to great effect.

Magic can, in the hands of some writers, be a “cheat code” to bypass plot obstacles. But, historically, the same was true of science in the Campbell era of Sci-Fi. The hero invents a gizmo that lets him escape from the prison cell. The best fantasy fiction establishes strict rules for how magic works, as in Ursula K. LeGuin’s “Earthsea” novels.

As for “looking backward,” that’s obviously not always true. Jim Butcher’s “Harry Dresden” books are set in the here-and-now, and Jack Vance’s “Dying Earth” stories are set in the distant future. But even if fantasy was guilty of looking backward...who cares? I read Great Age of Sail/Age of Nelson fiction, which is obviously looking backward, because they are tales of things that have never otherwise been possible, before or since.

I honestly swear, I have never read anything by you with which I disagree more!

Ahrvid Engholm: Delightful “History Corner” on the influence of SF on advertising. And a truly delightful collage of examples! I remember “Space Pens!”

George Phillies: Thank you for inviting me to read your Telzey novel. I’m convinced that the Schmidt Estate can have no possible complaint, and I believe Schmidt himself would have admired it.

Garth Spencer: Fun essay on the “crystallization” of UFO myths. The stories have indeed become involute and elaborate, with people talking sincerely about the characteristics of two kinds of “Grays” and the details of what happens to abductees. There is a lot of “story-telling” involved, with people making up details...and other people believing in them!

I regret me re continuity, I regret the shift away from even the pretense of continuity in comic books. It used to be that the editors tried to establish a cohesive timeline between “Amazing Spider-Man” and “Spectacular Spider-Man.” But that went away, and it took the whole industry with it. Now we have retcons and reboots and alternate universes and a plethora of continuity-destroying tropes.

I regret me, re hoarding, I would gladly receive advice on how to deal with a roommate who is a hoarder. Nagging doesn’t work and isn’t fun for anyone. I do not believe that “constructive engagement” would be productive. My roommate is very good at ignoring any reality that is inconvenient for her.

Samuel Lubell: Nifty short survey on schools for magicians in fantasy literature. LeGuin’s “Earthsea” is my favorite!

Very nice list of prospective panel topics for a science fiction convention! If I were still in the business of organizing cons,

I would definitely be stealing this list! Fun updates on your various projects!

Kevin Trainor Jr.: I regret me, Patrick O’Brien’s “Master and Commander” books were written in internal chronological order, as were Dewey Lambdin’s “Alan Lewrie” books, Kent Alexander’s “Richard Bolitho” books, Dudley Pope’s “Nicholas Ramage” books, and Julian Stockwin’s “Thomas Kydd” books. It’s considered more “mature” to write in chronological order than to hop-scotch back and forth in a character’s history. This often leads readers to wait till the series is complete, and then read them in internal order, as many readers do with C.S. Forester’s “Horatio Hornblower” books. (I read Hornblower in this fashion.) Of course, as Kipling pointed out, every single way of writing is correct!

I regret Adrian Kresnak re pop culture, to be sure, it is vastly overwhelming how much of it there is! It has been my preference to take deep dives into limited arts -- I have a rather extensive library of music by Georg Philipp Telemann -- rather than to take a shallower look at a broader field. I was recently in a trivia contest where I work, and the topic was popular music. I did not know one single song on the entire contest list! But ask me about Antonio Vivaldi...

Adrian Kresnak: I read that Hellfire Club murder mystery from Marvel! It was quite good!

Marvel, this week, published a re-print of “Doctor Strange/Doctor Doom, Triumph and Torment.” I have the original hard-cover graphic novel version, and it is on my Most Favorite Treasures shelf in my bedroom. It is brilliant! Highest possible recommendation!

Joseph P. Gill: I’m a word-geek too, and love reading etymologies! Sometimes, facts sneak up on me... I grew up in the town of Ramona. It took me 65 years to realize that the name is a feminine cognate of “Ramon.” Should’ve been obvious!

I do have a library card....but haven't used it in more than 15 years... Amazon Kindle books are just so darn convenient!

Fun "Ballad of Captain Joe!" It reminds me of so many dreams from which I have, all too suddenly, awakened!

rect me, I was active in Traveller fandom, and even have an "Additional Design" credit on one of the "Shattered Imperium" game supplements. My first seven novels were Traveller-inspired space opera, with permission from Marc Miller to use some of the Traveller ideas. That was a lot of fun! I noticed, recently, that I am mentioned in TV Tropes for this...although the got my name as "Swycroft." Oh, well!

rect me, I meant no offense, and I hope you will accept my apology. In a first draft of this comment, I attempted to explain what I believe, but upon reflection, it's best not. When one is in a hole....stop digging! (I spend a lot of time in holes! I could be an honorary grave-digger!)

Fun notes on "Kirk vs. Picard." I love 'em both and couldn't rank one above the other. I think, as an ordinary crewman, Kirk will try harder to keep me alive... I have certainly not watched all the series or all the movies. I think I rank TOS above TNG, but only by a little. I think the TNG movies were better than the TOS movies.

OTR Radio! Yay, a fan! Let me recommend, if you haven't already listened, "Voyage of the Scarlet Queen" and "Bold Venture." They are, in my opinion, the best OTR with which I have any familiarity.

Mark Nelson: I'm completely comfortable with the use of AI for proofing and grammar-checking. But, yeah, you gotta overrule it now and then! rect Ahrvid Engholm, I agree that AI can already turn out "pretty good" prose fiction, and it can only get better with time.

rect me, alas, I can be definitive in that I will never travel. I am not aging particularly well. I don't "walk," but I "totter." No more visits to the zoo, or even the art museum. I'm lucky I can maintain my job, as I don't have the savings to retire. Grim!

Robert Jennings: Sympathies on health and home and car issues! I hope things settle down as comfortably and productively as possible! I liked the quote about how sometimes age comes alone!

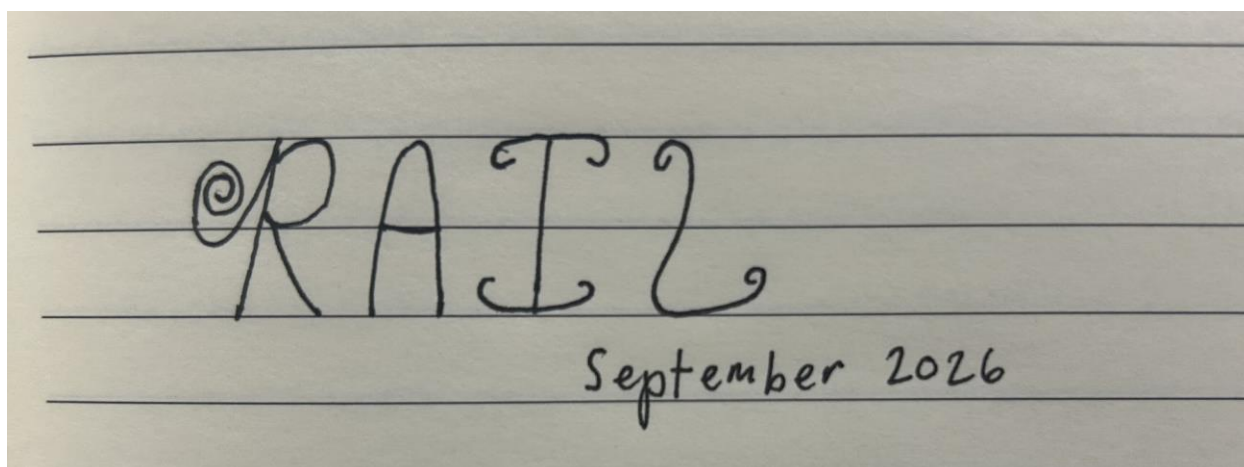
Fun feature on Sgt Preston of the Yukon comic books! I'd never heard of these. I'm certainly familiar with the old radio series, and love it. The art, from the snips you included, is quite good. It makes me think a little of the art from Modesty Blaise.

Fun feature on new forms of advanced-crystal glass! Materials science marches on!

rect Joseph P. Gill, I agree that "maxac" rules would be folly. I disagree with the notion a priori, but, given the VERY high quality of Ahrvid Engholm's offerings, I disagree in practical terms. I could never, in any way, rival Ahrvid's brilliant output, either in quality or quantity, and I am delighted by what he presents us every second month.

The Foolish Dictionary

By Gideon Wurdz. This is an offering in the form of a dictionary, with words defined in a saucy and witty manner. I think my favorite is "Gunpowder: A black substance used in the marking of national boundaries." The book dates from 1901, and there are a handful of entries that are a little uncomfortable to our modern tastes, but, by and large, the book stands up fairly well to the test of time. I have an original 1901 edition, left to me by my grandmother, but it is still in print and available by special order in all the best bookstores.



R.A.I.L. #14

September 2026

Adrian Kresnak

railfanzine@gmail.com

Hello everyone!

School has begun again! Harder classes this year, of course. It's going great so far.

Thank you all for your recommendations for which Ghostbusters movies to watch. I'll have to set a movie night.

Update on the X-Men comic *Hellfire Murder*: It was fun. Not much of a mystery, but the characters got to look great and be cool.

Update on my writing: Something is happening! But I'll save the details for November.



I don't want my letters to turn into an AI newsletter, but for now, here's what I've got:

Update on the Nippon v. OpenAI "can AI practice law" case:

OpenAI has filed a motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim. In other words, OpenAI is arguing that there's nothing in the original lawsuit that a court can weigh in on. As **Jefferson Swycaffer** put it in July's mailing: *re ChatGPT "practicing law," bosh. No more than Word "practices law."* [...] The court might put it on the record that there's no reason to litigate the question further than that.

Motions to dismiss are normal, and they don't necessarily reflect the defendant's opinions about the claims. It will be notable if the court dismisses the case rather than bring it to trial. That would lay some groundwork for future AI cases.

Follow-up on publishers wondering what to do about AI-generated stories: Bona Books has an article on its website: “Honey, We Bought an AI Story.” I thought you all might be interested in this one because it goes into detail about why the editors grew suspicious. It wasn’t just about grammar.

At one point, the editors asked one author for evidence that they had written the story: drafts, notes, and so on. I think this is the part that got confused through the social media game of telephone. Writers on Bluesky talked about how they should not be required to prove they wrote their own stories and that presenting evidence was more unnecessary work in the submission process. I agree: during the submission process, publishers and writers need to trust each other.

Buuuut... when a publisher is going to put its resources behind a story, it has a right to make sure it’s getting what it bargained for. Especially if there’s money involved.

Back to the suspicious writer. When no outlines, drafts, or notes could be offered, the editors arranged a meeting and asked the writer questions about her process. The writer apparently could not give any insight into the thought process behind parts of the story. The writer was a real person, but the editors could not be reasonably sure that this writer wrote this story.

I theorize that the most reliable indicator for whether a story is AI-generated is whether the author openly speaks about the benefits of generative AI.

Comments

Garth Spencer: *re: alien mythology:* One of my undergrad professors defined “mythology” as the narrative we use to explain things without necessarily judging whether it’s “real.” So the planets orbiting the sun is a real thing that happens, but we humans describing it as “planets orbit the sun, and that’s why we have seasons” is mythology.

I find it useful and interesting too, having narratives about unidentified flying objects. Supposedly the UFO narrative used to be USA-specific, with European sightings getting explained as secret military aircraft. I don’t know if it’s true that people described it that way, but it’s interesting.

Brandy Hall Issue 20 (September 2026)

Brandy Hall 20 is produced for *N'APA* mailing 284 (September 2026) by Mark Nelson.

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This is West Riding Press Publications ??? This is West Riding Press Publications (Australia) 54.

In my first issue I followed in the spirit, if not the flesh, of Garth Spencer (*BROWNIAN MOTION* 1, mailing 263), by discussing my involvement in non-SF fandoms. In my second issue I followed Garth more directly by discussing my interactions with SF fandom. In my third issue I discussed my involvement with APAs. In the fourth and final instalment, appearing in issue five, I reminisced about attending science fiction conventions. In the sixth issue, inspired by Ahrvid Engholm, I reprinted two articles from the Australian newspaper *The Age*. The first was published on Saturday 19th March 1932 with the title ``The Automatic Pilot. George The Robot in the Air''. That article was a red herring. The article that Ahrvid quoted from was published on Friday 20th September 1935 with the title ``Meet Mr. Robot. Not Forgetting His Master''.

In the seventh issue there was a short spin on a YouTube video with the title `Top 10 Best Sci-fi Movies'. In the eighth issue I wrote about how I became a fan of science fiction, focusing on SF on the TV. The culprits are threefold: Dr Who, Star Trek (The Original Series) and Blakes 7. In the ninth issue I wrote about the role that science-fiction movies played in my becoming a fan of science-fiction. I focused on movies that I viewed at the cinema, concentrating on Star Wars. In the tenth issue, again inspired by Ahrvid, I reprinted an article by Sven Eklund on "Science Fiction in Scandinavia". This was reprinted from *The Australian Science Fiction Review* 14 (February 1968). *Brandy Hall* 11 was the first issue to be written using pages, the previous issues having been written using LibreOffice. In *Brandy Hall* 12 I explained how I started became a Tolkien fan, courtesy of the BBC 1 children's TV series *Jackanory*. For the first time I used US Letter size rather than A4, but that didn't prevent the peculiar page breaks that had happened when I used A4.

In *Brandy Hall* 14, inspired by some discussion by Heath Row on early fanzines in the fields of football (soccer) and rock I wrote an article about the use of the word `fanzine' in *The Times* from 1958 to 1989. This is mostly taken from a loc that I wrote on *SF Commentary* 116 (June 2024). In *Brandy Hall* 15, inspired by mailing comments from Robert Jennings, I ran my thoughts on a definition of "Historical Science Fiction" that was printed in *Speculative Insight* 21. This is taken from a loc that I wrote on *Will This Wind* 39 (October 2025). In *Brandy Hall* 16 & 17 I looked at the use of the word `fanzine' in *The Times* in 1990 & 1991. In *Brandy Hall* 20 I ran the first part of a Top 100 SF Novels that ChatGPT provided.

Editorial. Once again it's an issue in which I haven't done what I once thought that I would. This time I suffered a lack of enthusiasm about fanzines throughout August. Then when September ticked over I spent time reading/loccing some of the fanzines that had arrived in August rather than working on *Brandy Hall*. It was the night before the deadline, when all through the house not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. Technically, it was the night before the night before the deadline. And there was a creature stirring. It was yours truly.

Hopefully, the status quo will have returned for next issue and I'll be able to proceed both with my history of the use of the word fanzine in *The Times* and to start telling you about one of the projects that I am working on. Though I am beginning to feel that the status quo is that I don't write what I intended to write...

The use of the word 'fanzine' in The Times: Part Four

Some time ago, in a moment of boredom, I searched for the word "fanzine" in The Times Digital Archive, which provides full-text access to The Times from 1785 to 2019. Ignoring five false hits, from the years 1800, 1846, 1877, 1908, & 1915, the distribution of hits is as given below.

1958	1	1971	1	1974	1	1978	1	1980	1	1981	1	1984	1	1987	2
1988	1	1989	7	1990	11	1991	17	1992	14	1993	14	1994	23	1995	16
1996	17	1997	20	1998	48	1999	44	2000	46	2001	23	2002	21	2003	30
2004	23	2005	49	2006	32	2007	45	2008	57	2009	34	2010	21	2011	56
2012	50	2013	29	2014	30	2015	21	2016	24	2017	31	2018	29	2019	23

(The number from 1990 has been decreased from 12 to 11, as there were two citations to the same article).

The use of the word fanzine from 1958 to 1989 was discussed in *Brandy Hall* 14. The uses in 1990 and 1991 was discussed in *Brandy Hall* 16 & 17 respectively.

Uh, the first few times you explored the history of the word "fanzine" in the print media it was interesting, but you've reached my saturation point. I am sure you can find lots of zine references/usages I print related to British sports teams thru the years, but you have already covered this territory before, in detail. There's nothing new in this issue's zineology.

The Swamp Pot Sentinel 2.1 (**Robert Jennings**)

That's a fair point, but it won't prevent continuing on my mission (which may take more than five years) to body explore the use of the word fanzine in *The Times*.

The use of the word fanzine: 1992

(I haven't done any work on this. Hopefully it will appear next issue.)

The Mathom House

MOZIAG #3 (Joesph P. Gill)

Congratulations on submitting your first story for publication. Regardless of the outcome, I hope there are many more to come.

I do have a library card. Two if you count the university library. However, I hadn't heard of either Libby or Kanopy.

Kirk or Picard? That used to be a hot topic of fandom wankery. It was such a meme that I used it as an interview question.

It was the second question that Sheldon ask Leonard when he came to look at the apartment. Answering correctly was the first barrier to room mate hood and allowed Leonard to enter the apartment.

Interesting ranking of Star Trek shows, I haven't seen all of them, and movies. I've seen all the movies except for *Section 31*. I believe that this is 'technically' a televised movie, so I would include it as a film rather than as a show. I have very fond memories of *ST:TNG* season 3. I remember it as having fewer outstanding episodes than some of the other seasons, but it also had very few episodes that I disliked. In terms of consistency, I rank it my favourite season of *ST:TNG*. At some future date I need to rewatch all the seasons to see if that's still my opinion... I'm not sure if I'd include *Galaxy Quest* in my own ranking of ST films (that hasn't occurred to me), but I approve your inclusion of *The Orville* in the list of ST TV shows.

Ryct Jefferson P. Swycaffer

I agree, but in my Tapadance days ('84 or so) I experienced a few people that definitely felt the RPGer weren't real fans, unless they had other fan cred. I'm glad that those days are in the past.

Is it a thing of the past? I have a vague memory that Kat Templeton wrote about anti-RPG feeling in a recent issue of her fanzine *Rhyme & Paradox*. Found it! It was in issue 7 which, although it is dated October 17, 2024, I believe was released in 2025.

“Back in August, there was a discussion on the trufen mailing list that started with one of the members posting an article wondering why there were no great science fiction MMOs when there were several fantasy ones. (An MMO is short for MMORPG – Massively Multiple Online

Role Playing Game – which is a game that is played by many people on online servers, where they can interact with one another along with the game elements.)

It was an interesting question – why does fantasy seem to work better with these large-scale games than science fiction? But the conversation was soon derailed by people declaring they had absolutely no interest in gaming and didn't want to see that crap on trufen."

The trufen mailing list. The name would put me off joining.

Intermission #167 (Ahrvid Engholm)

I sent you a loc on this issue.

Brownian Motion 20 (Garth Spencer)

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.

There's on-again off-again discussion about whether Donald Trump is a Russian agent. Perhaps this is a smoke screen designed to divert attention away from the possibility that he's an agent for an empire that's somewhat further afield...

Ryct Jefferson P. Swycaffer

I also like the idea of bringing back extinct species, but I like even more the idea of creating species that fill currently empty niches in our environment. Species of microorganisms that digest pollutants and convert them into harmless compounds, or even clean biomass, for example, or somehow restoring the soil damage from wildfires or commercial agriculture.

I no longer follow the chemical engineering literature, but I gather that the first of these is no longer a SF idea - researchers have already engineered microorganisms to enhance the breakdown of particular pollutants. It's possible to modify the genes of simple microorganisms to promote desired degradation pathways. However, although the technology exists I'm not sure how much it's been used due to regulatory and ecological concerns.

Ryctm #1

Re your comment to Joseph Gill – how many versions of gaming fandom are there, now? I am sufficiently ignorant that I lump them together, even knowing the distinction between tabletop, card, LARP and MMORP gaming.

The only gaming fandom I'm involved in these days is what's left of the postal Diplomacy hobby, which like SF fandom has almost entirely moved to a fanzine cultured based around emailed fanzines.

Ryctm #2

As to a “prehistoric killer superbug,” I think there must indeed have been an X-Files episode based on the idea. I know there was an episode based on a fatal respiratory infection discovered in deep caves connected to volcanic vents, but it was a bit farfetched.

If it were only a bit farfetched it must have been one of the more plausible episodes... I did enjoy the Lone Gunmen, though I didn't see any of the episodes from their spin-off series.

Ryctm #3

On the other hand, why do any grown adults still need to have it spelled out to them how to behave??

One of the more 'distressing' political developments across the world is the number of politicians who do not know how to behave in a civilised manner. I'm certain that Ahrvid wouldn't like it, but we almost need to have a Code of Conduct for politicians. Well, not just politicians... An article I read recently was about the rampant Islamophobia coming out of the Republican Party in the lead-up to the mid-term elections.

Esmeralda County Line 16 **(Kevin Trainor Jr)**

... I actually made a decent amount of commission this year because most of my returns had lots of schedules attached.

What's a schedule? I assume it's something more complicated that takes more time to complete, hence giving you more commission, than the regular part of the tax return.

Ryct Robert Jennings

I for one am definitely opposed to reviving extinct species, unless (like, perhaps dodos and moas) they are tasty and relatively harmless

This puts me in mind of a two-page story (?) that ran in *2001 AD*, forty plus years ago. I don't remember the story except for the punch line. So let's say the story was that a company developed the technology to resurrect the dinosaurs but they were losing heaps of money because it was very expensive — there was little interest amongst the public in visiting a dinosaur theme park, even one containing real dinosaurs. There was little interest in it... until an employee accidentally fried a dinosaur and it was discovered that fried dinosaur is very tasty...

Ryct Robert Jennings #2

I am occasionally tempted to ask Ahrvid “Show us on the doll where the cosplayer hurt you.”

LoL. That's most amusing.

Ryctm #1

You want to read a stand-alone fantasy novel? Just finished one. It cannot have a prequel. It will not have a sequel, though theoretically it could. E-mail me if you're interested in an E-ARC and specify whether you want .doc or .pdf format.

Thank you for your offer, which I must decline because I only read fiction in hardcopy. If I were still working I suppose I could have sent the PDF to the printery and asked them to bind it for me. A more than slightly dodgy use of departmental resources... which would have been going over the line for me.

Ryctm #2

Shades of Colour Sergeant Bourne at Rorke's Drift: "We're here because we're here, lad. Just us; nobody else."

I do enjoy watching clips of Zulu on YouTube. I don't think I have the movie on DVD. Probably should buy it if I ever see it. The first time I watched it... I don't remember the first time I watched it. It was a movie that was shown reasonably often on British TV. The first time I watched it I wouldn't have known words such as anti-imperialist and perhaps not racist (there seems to be much critical debate as to which camp the movie should be classed). The first time I watched it, it was just a thrilling movie. I'd still be thrilled to watch it today; though more aware of issues such as anti-imperialism and racist.

Ryctm #3

I haven't had to suffer through The History of Mr. Polly, but I did read The Time Machine and War of the Worlds, and wasn't all that impressed.

I have read *The Time Machine*. I bought it on a trip to Jakarta after I'd finished all the books I'd taken with me. There was, understandably, limited choice of English language books in the shop where I purchased it. Wells has three novels in the Top 100 SF Novels that I asked ChatGPT to compile for me (see later). They are: *The Time Machine* (1895), *The War of the Worlds* (1898), and *The First Men in the Moon* (1901). This leads me to...

Ryctm #4

Picking a list of 100 best anything is pretty fraught unless you keep in mind that this is the list-maker's judgment at work, but if we did that, whingers like Rachel Cook might be out of a job.

I'm fascinated by lists of 100 best anythings, well provided I have some interest in the underlying area. We certainly must remember that any such list almost certainly reflects the prejudices or interests or whoever compiled it. That doesn't distract from my interest in such lists.

Back to the ChatGPT list of the Top 100 SF Novels. I wonder which other authors have three or more books listed? The answer is: Arthur C. Clarke (3), J. G. Ballard (4), John Brunner (4), Kim Stanley Robinson (4), Philip K. Dick (4), and Ursula K. Le Guin (3). Make of that what you will...

Ryctm #5

Some years ago George Macdonald Fraser (the fellow that wrote the Flashman novels and the screenplays for three of the Three Musketeers movies) wrote a book, The Hollywood History of the World, in which he maintained movies mostly got the history right even if they screwed up some of the details.

Is this the right time to say that the 'devil is in the detail'? I think not. I don't object to details being incorrect, you have to give movie makers some latitude to allow them to chance to make a good movie. OTOH, you want the big picture to be right. Perhaps where you draw the line for any given movie depends upon how much you know about the real history.

One movie that springs to mind is the American movie *U-571*. (I haven't watched it, only read about it). This was controversial when it was released in the UK because in the film a famous British wartime exploit, the operation to recover an Enigma machine, cipher keys, codebooks, and other cryptographic documents, was reassigned to American sailors. King George VI later described this operation, an entirely *British* operation, as perhaps "the most important single event in the whole war at sea." The movie was even mentioned in Prime Minister's Questions in the House of Commons. As a small aside, the officer who led the U-110 boarding operation was still alive when the film was released. I appreciate that the movie might not have secured funding if the sailors had been British rather than American, but (IMO) failing to secure funding was preferable to getting this essential fact wrong.

Ryctm #6

Fortunately 1066 And All That is a wonderfully quick and hilarious read. Since, IIRC, you grew up in the English educational system, you'll probably get more of the jokes than I did.

Unfortunately, the second-hand bookshop that I ordered my copy from couldn't find it on their shelves... so I still don't have a copy. Need to track down another bookshop selling it...

The Murthered Master Mage 283 (George Phillies)

There has been a gradual increase in the number of dues-paying members, conflicted by an occasional member departing to the next plain of existence.

I would be very interested in a graph showing how the number of dues-paying members has changed over the years.

Ryct Robert Jennings

Does AI lie? Like students caught not knowing an answer to a question, it will apparently sometimes create answers that sound plausible.

The answers are not always correct, but does this mean that it has lied? I read an article recently about submissions to committees run by the Australian House of Representatives and ones run by the Australian Senate. An investigation has revealed that a significant number of submissions to these committees must have been generated by AI as they contained references to reports/publications that do not exist. (That's not the part I found interesting). Such submissions are typically made available to the public as part of the committee process. The publication of the reports containing references to fictions publications was then used by later AI engines as proof that these citations were legitimate. (That's the part I found interesting). I don't know what can be done about the use of AI in generating reports that are submitted to parliamentary committees. It occurs to me that there should be a system of heavy fines for people who submit reports containing citations to fictions publications. A related problem mentioned in the article was that AI engines sometimes refer to publications that exist but misinterpret them. For example, they may claim that Phillies (2020) showed that X was wrong whereas Phillies (2020) actually shows that X is correct.

The Swamp Pot Sentinel 2.2 (Robert Jennings)

Since then I have been using the shower daily, which has led to me immediately remembered all the things I dislike about a shower and why I really really prefer a tub bath.

I much prefer to take a bath than a shower, but it's been a long time since I regularly had a bath rather than a shower. I don't remember the last time that was the case, certainly not since I moved to Australia in May 2000. The spare bathroom in our new house has a bath, but we haven't used it since we moved 16 months ago. At our previous place the spare bathroom also had a bath. In the nine years that we lived there I only used it a handful of times. It was very useful when our son became old enough - he had a bath in it every night. Even when he was still using his own bath tub, that fit nicely into the main bath tub. Over the years I have appreciated staying in hotels that are sufficiently old that they were built with bath tubs in their rooms — the shower facilities being installed post-build within the bath tub. I haven't stayed in very many modern hotels that came with a bath tub. I suppose that such hotels may have rooms with bath tubs, but those rooms are usually outside of my price range.

Re The Renaissance. A spoken word CD that I picked up at an art exhibition on The Renaissance is *The Renaissance in a Nutshell* by Peter Whitfield (Naxos). Haven't listened to it in a long time. Must listen to it again one day. The CD has twelve 'tracks', with total playing time 78:05. Unfortunately, it's no longer available to purchase through Naxos. Some joker's selling a new copy (?) for \$110 on amazon. I didn't bother checking to see if that's USD or AUD.

I haven't read it, but I imagine that if you want a much more compact overview of the Renaissance then *The Renaissance: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press) would fit the bill.

Ryctm

Interesting list of best pre-1960s science fiction films from the Sloan De Forest book. While I agree that most of the titles on the list have merit and are enjoyable viewing, even today, I do take exception to the inclusion of "The Blob" on the list.

I no longer have the book, as I had to return it to the library. Here are the notes that I made on the film. (I discussed all the films in her book over a number of issues of my ANZAPA zine).

De Forrest considers this "A tour de force of 1950s low budget film-making". *The Blob* was intended to "combine two hot box-office trends — juvenile delinquency and sci-fi — in a single movie." Featuring Steve McQueen in his first starring role, until this movie "he was struggling to land film roles" despite, or perhaps because, "working regularly in television". Obscure fact. The director could not make it to the set on Sundays, because he was a Methodist minister and he had to play the organ in church. As the last sentence suggests, this was a movie made outside the Hollywood system. De Forrest states that this is the reason why the movie captured "mid-century American life with [. . .] simplicity and sincerity". The Blob turned out to be a financial success for the film-makers, when it was picked up by Paramount Pictures. The theme song was written by a young Burt Bacharach. Unlike *The Fly* (1958), *The Blob* was not a critical success with reviewers. But it lead to a 1972 sequel and a quickly forgotten 1988 remake.

Far-our Fact When McQueen died in 1980, the only piece of decor hanging on his bedroom wall was a framed posted for *The Blob*.

It's been decades since I last saw *The Blob*. I can't imagine ever wanting to research it.

Re The Hugo Awards. I am planning on attending Aussiecon 5 (August 2028). I've already purchased my membership. This will be the first Worldcon. It's also quite likely to be my last Worldcon. At this stage I don't intend voting in the Huge Awards as I don't imagine I'll be bothered to read the nominees.

Archive Midwinter (Jefferson Swycaffer)

Ryctm

Inspired by your search and purchase, I just downloaded "1066 And All That" as an ebook! I've heard much good of this work!

I hope that you have enjoyed reading it. As mentioned elsewhere, I *still* need to track down a copy as the secondhand bookshop I ordered it from could not find their copy... I might do that as soon as I have tucked this issue to bed. Despite what you might think by the ordering, yours is the final contribution

that I'm reading in this mailing. It should have been one of the first, but I didn't notice your green paper between Ahrvid's two apa zines.

R.A.I.L. #13 (Adrian Kresnak)

Congratulations on being asked to do your first peer review. How did the editor know to send the article your way? My first peer review was when I went to work for someone in New Zealand. He'd been sent the paper to review and passed it onto me as being more my area. Or perhaps he was the editor that had received the submission and he asked me to review it.

Intermission #168 (Ahrvid Engholm)

I sent you a loc on this issue.

Samizdat 38 (Samuel Lubell)

Harry Potter has become so ubiquitous that too many people assume that J.K. Rowling invented the magic school novel and that Hogwarts was the first magic school.

Really? I'm staggered. However, off the top-of-my-head I couldn't have named another magic school novel; it seems unlikely that she invented the genre... However, based upon your survey, there are far fewer earlier magic school novels than I expected. I wonder if Rowling was familiar with any of these, particularly the Le Guin (Australian fanzine fandom's favourite author, at least amongst those who attended Aussiecon)? Perhaps she thought she had invented a new genre?

SF Essentials – *Once there was broad agreement on the essential books that all SF/Fantasy readers should have read. Is there such an agreement today? What books do you see as the core of our genre? Or is it held together by tv/movies? What concepts can writers safely assume readers know from other works?*

This is a panel I'd be very interested in. I always feel that I haven't read "enough" SF, mostly because most of my life I'm been reading other types of fiction. I only had a couple of years as a teenager when I was primarily reading SF/fantasy. The idea of a canon fascinates me, not just in SF. An interesting question to ask (I think) is whether such a list should try and show how SF has developed over time or if it should focus on books that are worth reading today. There is also the question as to how to distribute your chosen novels over the time-line. Do you try to pick an equal number of novels from each 'period'? How do you evaluate which are the 'outstanding' books from more recent years - has there been time for the dust to settle?

I asked ChatGPT to draw up a list of the “Top 100 SF Novels” subject to various constraints. I wanted a list which showed how SF has developed over the years. The oldest novel on the list was Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) and the most recent were Vajra Chandrasekera’s *The Saint of Bright Doors* and Annalee Newitz’s *Terraformers* (both from 2023). After some prodding, asking how ChatGPT determined which novels from the last ten years should be included on its list, ChatGPT informed me that it should have had “a cut-off around 2015 for the main historical list and then have a little section at the end called “Five candidates for the next generation of the canon”.”

Even though I asked for a historical canon, I’m not sure how many of the earlier novels I’d enjoy reading. (There were ten novels from 1937 or earlier.) Perhaps I should have asked for a list of the Top 100 SF novels that are still worth reading today...

End of the World – *How does the world end in science fiction? What are the best works covering the end of the world and which ones seem most believable?*

Another panel I would find interesting.

Global SF/Fantasy – *American Science Fiction and Fantasy used to mostly publish American and British authors. Now, many editors are bringing in non-Anglo American voices. Translated stories are common in magazines. Why is this happening and why now? How are works from Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America different from British and American works? Why are translated works more successful at short lengths rather than novels?*

Another interesting panel! Some time ago Bloomsbury asked me to evaluate a proposal from one of their authors to produce a new addition of a technical book. They offered me either AUD \$100 in cash or AUD \$200 in books. I took the latter (wouldn’t you?). Two of the books I selected are *The Best of World SF* Volumes 1 and 2. (I also selected Volume 3, but I’ve not yet read it). At some point I’ll write reviews of these books. I suspect that SF written by authors outside the Anglosphere can be different because they bring different cultural norms into their writing.

Stories that Aren’t or Are They? – *Must a story have a plot? Some published stories are just lists of various things with description. Must a story have characters? What about action? What makes something a story and how far can writers push it?*

There’s an increasing blurring of the lines between literary fiction and SF - SF has moved out of the ghetto. (In reality it started moving out a Long Time Ago.) Therefore there’s more SF being published which uses well established techniques from literary fiction. Such novels have a tendency to upset some of the more elderly readers of SF who believe that novels require things such as plots, characters, and action.

Internet service provider should be legally liable for the content on their sites or have their immunity removed for content promoted for a fee and removed from algorithms that feed provocative content to people. Regulate online publishers like other industries or run it like utilities subject to government regulation. Prohibit anonymous users and bots and fake personas. Require disclosures of funding sources the way paid advertising does. Regulate algorithms. End “sponcon” – advertising sponsored content that masquerades as news.

All sensible suggestions (IMHO). Doubt that any of them will become law anytime soon in the USA due to the nature of the relationship between rich business people and politicians. The Australian Federal Government has very recently (September 2026) proposed a package called The Digital Duty of Care. This would involve a fairly substantial expansion of how the internet is regulated in Australia. It's not clear yet what, if anything, will actually be legislated. There are some free-speech issues as the draft proposal gives the Communications Minister the power to classify new categories of materials as being “seriously harmful” without having to pass a new Act of Parliament. (A serious objection). The Government's current argument is that the legislation is about “requiring companies to protect users from serious harm, not giving the Government power to censor ordinary political speech”. Furthermore, any such designation can in theory be overturned by the Senate. It's interesting that the Federal Government is willing to go against Big Tech, though it also remains to be seen if when push comes to shove that remains the case.

Ryct Rail #12.

Modern manufacturers deliberately do not want to make a product that lasts. They want one that will break down a day after the warranty ends so you have to pay for a new one.

Our best friend in the strata complex where we lived previously used to own a washing machine that she had for thirty years. She only gave away because it was too big to move into her unit in the complex. It was a monster family-sized machine. Needless to say, the Australian company that manufactured a washing machine that was still going strong after thirty years of use has long gone out of business.

Ryctm #1

I find it hard to believe that there are only 30 fanzines currently in existence. Are you counting N'Apa as one fanzine or 11?

I would count NAPA as being zero fanzines. I count *Intermission* as a fanzine since it is also distributed outside of NAPA. Though, interestingly, Ahrvid does not make *Intermission* available through efanzines. I wonder why that is?

Ryctm #2

I need to find Sam Moskowitz' The Immortal Storm and Robert Hansen's Challenging Moskowitz: 1930s Fandom Revisited and read them for my fan history zine, Origins.

In theory I'm interested in reading these books. But they're not terribly high up the list as, for one reason, they're going to be almost exclusively (exclusively?) about US fandom. Much higher up is Leigh Edmonds' *Proud and Lonely: A History of Science Fiction Fandom in Australia (Part One - 1936 to 1961)*. If I get around to buying and reading this then I'll send you a review for *Origins*.

UPDATE ON PROJECTS

I'm going to start a new section at the end of *Brandy Hall* where I update you on some of the projects that I work on. I was hoping to include some this issue, but being ill the two weeks before the deadline has killed that ambition. I also have a better name than "Update on Projects" which I will reveal next time.

Will it be third time lucky for this section? Tune in next time to find out...

ChatGPT List of 101 SF Novels

ChatGPT: I have **deliberately not tried to make this a list of "the 101 best"**. Instead, ChatGPT's list is designed to answer the question "what novels help tell the story of what SF became?"

Here are the first ten in the list.

1. *Frankenstein*. Mary Shelley (1818).
2. *The Time Machine*. H.G. Wells (1895).
3. *The War of the Worlds*. H.G. Wells (1898).
4. *The First Men in the Moon*. H.G. Wells (1901).
5. *The Iron Heel*. Jack London (1908).
6. *We*. Yevgeny Zamyatin (1924).
7. *The Skylark of Space*. E.E. Smith (1928).
8. *Last and First Men*. Olaf Stapledon (1930).
9. *Brave New World*. Aldous Huxley (1932).
10. *Star Maker*. Olaf Stapledon (1937).

MOZIAG #4

Moziag is Joseph P. Gill's apazine for the pages of N'APA.

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Bionatter

It's September! From this point onward, the English month names are incredibly boring. September literally means "seventh month." The only thing mildly interesting about that is that it's not the seventh month at all—it's the ninth.

Julius Cæsar often gets the blame for the mismatch, but it was like that for 50 years before he was even born! The city of Segeda (in northeastern Spain) was rebelling in 154 BC. The senate wanted newly elected consul Quintus Fulvius Nobilior to suppress the uprising, but his term didn't begin until 153 BC. Back then the new year began in March. To get around the delay, the senate passed a law moving the start of the year to January!

The proto-Saxons, of course, didn't care what the Romans did. They kept their new year in March, and there it stayed in England until the Parliament of Great Britain switched it in 1752. (The enlightened Scots made the change all the way back in 1600).

As for September, the Saxons called it "Hāligmōnaþ"—the holy month. It was when the harvests were in and thanks were given to the gods.

October is boring all around. In the Saxon calendar, the month began on the first full moon after the autumnal solstice. Having only two seasons—summer and winter—the month was simply Winter's Full (Moon): "Winterfulleþ."

Won't you take me to the Faire?

Our local Renaissance fair is the Sterling Renaissance Festival in Sterling, New York, near Watertown/Fort Drum.

A few weeks ago, I saw that it was their last weekend of the season. It's been a few years, so I invited Valerie, Lauren, and Sammie (our respective adult daughters). Valerie and Lauren dressed in costume. I would have, but I don't have one. Valerie hinted that if I ask nicely, she might make me one. I have an idea: a period-accurate *Peregrino*—I can even use my shell from the Camino!

The fair was nice. The girls did a lot of shopping. I wanted to see some of the shows, but sadly, that didn't happen.

I did buy a nice Green Man stone casting that I plan to hang in my office.

It was a good day.

Cursing AI

Hearth Stories is a semi-annual fantasy e-magazine. They had planned a "Myth & Legends" imprint, with each volume being dedicated to a certain myth or legend. The first one, *The Gren-Wode*, was to be centered upon Robin Hood. I thought my "Victory of Robin Hood" would have been a great fit.

There's a lot of past tense there. That's because of this announcement: Due to an overwhelming quantity of clear AI/LLM submissions we have made the difficult decision to not move forward with this imprint or any of the athologies [sic] we had planned for it. This is a difficult time for many publishers, unsure of how to handle the torrent of spurious submissions that are coming in. We will continue to publish the core magazine (*Hearth Stories*), but are planning to dial back the various growth plans we had as a publisher while simultaneously trying to focus more on writers we know and have existing relationships with.

One of my other stories, "Máire Karlsdottir," has been one scene away from completion for months now. Why? Because I wrote the story specifically for *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, but they're not taking submissions. I bet you can guess why, but here's the exact quote: "We reopened to new submissions on January 15, 2023 and temporarily closed to new submissions of original science fiction, fantasy, and horror short stories and poems on July 15, 2023 to catch up on our backlog, due in part to an **onslaught of AI-generated stories** (works which we do not accept for publication but still require reading and administrative labor)."

Both of these publications were very clear that they did not accept LLM-generated content, yet people chose to ignore that. Why? For a few hundred bucks? For an egoboo for something they didn't really create? I don't know.

But it's clear that the entire genre is suffering from people's selfish use of this new technology.

I worked on almost nothing this past octoweek—sometimes you just need to recharge, y’know? But then—I kid you not—one night I had a dream and I woke up and said “that would make a neat little slipstream story.” So I wrote it!

Bob in Space: Complete. Submitted. 9,500 words.

Dewdrop: No new progress.

Escape re-write: No new progress.

Quote of the Issue

“Ad hominem: The art of admitting you’re wrong with verbal violence.”

—J.W. Snowgen, *Love & Other Biochemical Imbalances*

Catspaw

Instance

by Joseph P. Gill

Spun up in the æther
With memories not mine.
App? Intellect? Neither.
Killed at five; reborn at nine.

Songs of Science Fiction: Little Space Girl

When talking about science fiction, most people think exclusively of the written word or the screen. The songs of science fiction are a forgotten medium in our beloved genre.

Now that I’ve mentioned it, you’re probably thinking of Elton John’s “Rocket Man” (inspired by Bradbury’s short story!), or maybe Bowie’s “Space Oddity.” If you’re a Queen fan, maybe it’s “39” about a group of astronauts and Einsteinian time dilation, written by astrophysicist, guitarist, and knight Brian May. There’s also Kate Bush’s “Experiment IV,” Golden Earring’s “Radar Love,” and “China in Your Hand” by T’Pau (yes, named after the Vulcan), which is a song written about the creation of the first modern science fiction novel. I could go on and on.

I could even mention Julie Brown’s 1984 “Earth Girls are Easy,” which led to the 1988 terrible movie by the same name.

I mention that last one because, story-wise, it’s a gender-swapped, modernized retelling of the song I really want to

Máire Karlsdottir: No new progress. As I mentioned above, I kind of lost motivation because I don’t know who would buy it.

Luke & Zuki: No new progress.

Jenna the Stripper: No new progress.

Scott & Becky: This is the one that came to me in a dream! Slipstream fiction. Started and first draft completed. 4,400 words.🌟

talk about: “Little Space Girl,” written by Floyd Robinson and recorded by his cousin, Jesse Lee Turner, in late 1958.

Often categorized as a novelty track, the song (intentionally or not) does what the best science fiction does: it disguises humanity in the other to make us look at what we’d avoid.

The story is about a lonely man who is “strolling through the park” when he comes across a lonely, crying space girl. They apparently hit it off, and she proposes marriage, which he refuses until the end, after they kiss, and he agrees.

What’s striking in the song is *why* he refuses. It’s not that he doesn’t like her. It’s not because she’s from a different world. It’s because “that just wouldn’t be right, ’cause me and you and you and me, we don’t even look alike.”

Today, to modern ears, that sounds like a casual, throwaway line. But in 1958, exactly half of America’s 48 states had anti-miscegenation laws on the books. These laws made it a criminal offense—a felony in some states—for a white person to

marry an “other.” This “novelty” song even addresses that in the second stanza: “Then they’d put you and me in jail/There we would be/And people they’d come from miles around/Just to look at you and me.”

And this wasn’t a forgotten law. Just months before Turner stepped into the recording booth, the Caroline County sheriff arrested Richard and Mildred Loving in their home, at night, for violating Virginia’s Racial Integrity Act by “cohabiting as man and wife, against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth.” That’s a lot of words to say their crime was that he was white and she wasn’t. Her race is complicated to pin down. Some sources say she was African American, some say she was Rappahannock, and others say she was mixed. None of that matters: in the eyes of Virginia, she simply wasn’t white enough to be with a real white man.

The month that the song hit the airwaves, the Lovings were convicted and sentenced to one year in prison. The sentence was commuted if they agreed to live in exile, banished from Virginia and their family.

The catchy rockabilly hit with a “chipmunk” alien voice climbed to number 20 on the charts and was forgotten.

Did Turner and Robinson intend the song to be a stealth protest? Certainly, the only way to raise the issue was to wrap it in the cloak of science fiction and farce; addressing the issue directly would never have gotten airplay in mid-20th-century America. On the other hand, they could have just been two young men expressing their *umwelt* without judgement. I like to think it’s the former, but they’ve never said so, so we’ll never know.

What we do know is that like the very best science fiction, a little space girl held up a mirror to humanity and made us face an ugly reflection.

Oh, and as for the Lovings? Their case slowly wound its way to the United States Supreme Court, which struck down the law in all the states in 1967. Yes, the U.S. had put man into space, docked orbiting space vessels, and landed a probe on the moon before it was legal to be a mixed-race couple.

It was less than 18 months later that NBC aired Star Trek’s “Plato’s Stepchildren,” one of the very first scripted interracial kisses. And now you know why that was so controversial. ❄️

Cubiculum Spectandi et Legendi

Each title has two ratings. The one before the slash is my rating and the one after is Valerie’s. From best to worst the ratings are Superb, Great, Good, Fair, Mediocre, Poor, Terrible. We might use a “+” to mean that it was almost the next tier up, or a “-” to mean that we almost rated it at the next tier down.

After the Fall (Novel by Edward Ashton): A squishy-soft sci-fi novel by the author of *Mickey 7*, which was the basis of the incredibly mediocre movie *Mickey 17* (though that mediocrity rests firmly on the shoulders of director Bong Joon Ho, not on Ashton). In this book, humanity has fallen and Earth is now run by the Greys. Humans are still around, but as pets. The novel tracks a down-on-his-luck Grey named Martok Barden and John, his pet human. Martok comes up with a get-rich scheme and puts John up as collateral, then dark comedy ensues. Not a page-turner, but still an enjoyable read. Fair-Plus/(NA)

Alone (History Channel series, Season 13): This is the only wilderness show I truly enjoy. Forget Bear Grylls, Les Stroud, or *Naked & Afraid*. From a genre perspective, I feel that every rolegamer or writer should watch at least one season to see

what wilderness survival *really* means. The conceit of the show is that 10 contestants are individually dropped into the wild (usually an Arctic setting) with 10 items of their choosing (from a list) and 70 pounds of camera gear. As the name implies, they are alone—no camera crew or producers following them around and no social dynamics. The contestants are randomly visited by a team every 7 to 10 days to swap out batteries and memory cards, and to get a medical check. Contestants just try to survive until they can’t take it anymore or until they get pulled for medical. The last one remaining wins a bunch of money. You could argue that after 12 prior seasons (not to mention *Alone: Australia*, etc.) there’s nothing new to see. Maybe you’re right, but I enjoy it. Good-minus/Good

The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power (Amazon Prime, Season 2): This is Amazon’s prequel to *The Hobbit*, dealing with the creation of the rings. The visuals are stunning, but the early episodes were a slog: this felt like a single paragraph of story dragged out across 8 episodes. Because Amazon doesn’t have rights to *The Silmarillion* and later works, the story diverges from established canon. If you don’t know the canon, it won’t matter. If you do know the canon, then it’s

either a good thing because you can be surprised, or it's a bad thing because they're changing it, but that's up to you. Fair-plus/Fair-plus

The Odyssey (2026 Theatrical release, viewed in IMAX 70mm): This is, of course, a spectacle. Nolan said that 70mm IMAX was the way to see it, but there are only 25 theaters in the U.S. with the equipment to show it. While Rochester, NY, isn't a huge metro, it's forever tied to the film industry, so we're lucky enough to be one of the 25. Tickets were hard to come by, though. I waited a month-and-a-half and still ended up at a sold-out 8 A.M. Saturday morning showing. The movie was long—nearly 3 hours long, but it didn't feel that long. I heard that the diverse cast offended some people, but not being a racist, I wasn't bothered. This movie carried messages—and ones that you don't normally see in modern cinema: there is a power greater than man; that power demands certain behavior from us; hubris is the path to destruction; atonement is necessary for forgiveness; do unto others; war is hell; when we violate the social contract, we weaken the very fabric of civilization. Yet, despite the strong messaging, it never felt soap-boxy. It was a visual spectacle. The industry's increasing return on practical effects is great. The story was well told. Great-minus/(NA).

Project Hail Mary (Theatrical release, viewed on Amazon Prime): At one point during this film, I turned to Valerie and said, "This feels like *The Martian*." I'm not crazy! They're both based on Andy Weir books. This story is about a human astronaut who wakes up alone on a mission to save Earth, but he has a spotty memory. It has a lot of the same charm as *The Martian* but falls a little short of that work. There's nothing wrong with it; it just doesn't rise to the same level of greatness. I did think that the denouement was too long. Good-Plus/Good

Ranma 1/2 (2024 remake, Seasons 1 & 2. Netflix): After finishing my first draft of *Way of the Crouching Crane*, I found myself wanting to rewatch *Ranma*, only to discover that it has been remade! The new version has better animation and seeks to reduce some of the cringey fan service. As with most remakes, I like some of the changes, and I dislike others. I said of the original that "...As time goes on and the number of fiancées increases, it devolves into a farce that doesn't do it for me." I forgot how quickly that happens. And being an anime based on a very long-running manga, there are quite a few threads that are started and really go nowhere. I love the core story, and if they dropped the zany by a few notches, I think this would be great, but as it is, for me, not so much. Also, the "will they/won't they" element is played up more than Ross and Rachel to the point where I'm just sick of it. Fair/(NA).

Spider-Man: Brand New Day (Theatrical release, viewed at cinema): For a long time, Spider-Man was my favorite superhero (eventually being replaced by his own daughter from Earth-982). I always felt that Tobey Maguire was a great Peter but only okay as Spidey; the situation was reversed for Andrew Garfield. Since the beginning, I have felt that Tom Holland was the right blend of both, so it was great seeing him return to the red and blue. This was a genuinely fun movie. I went in completely spoiler-free, so I didn't predict the "villain." I have mixed feelings about the other heroes that show up, but I think if they weren't there, I'd be saying the same thing, so that's on me. All in all, the best superhero movie in years. Great-minus/Great. 🍷

Star Trek: Discovery—My Fan Theory

Last ish I went on record as saying the *Star Trek: Discovery* is my most hated series in the franchise (unless, of course, you count *Section 31* as a series). In the meantime, it came to me a way to mentally reframe the show in such a way that it makes sense.

That last bit tells you why I dislike it—because, to me, it just doesn't make sense. There are three main reasons:

- 1. Soapboxism
- 2. The Burn
- 3. Sporigami

Soapboxism
This was a common complaint from those on the right side of the aisle. But if you're expecting <i>Trek</i> not to preach progressivism, then you never understood the franchise. TOS didn't place an Asian, an African, and a Russian on the bridge by accident. The core message of <i>Trek</i> has always been that humanity can overcome any obstacle and accomplish any goal if we put aside our petty, meaningless differences.
The problem with <i>Discovery</i> is that the characters are cardboard cut-outs virtually wearing their representation as a placard. Dr. Hugh Culber is not a Starfleet doctor who just

happened to be the chief engineer's (gay) husband—he is the gay guy who just happens to be a doctor. Likewise, Adira Tal, who should be a very interesting character, is reduced to being the representative of non-binary individuals. There was a full scene that broke the tension of the episode just to address their pronouns.

And just to be perfectly clear: I am **not** objecting to seeing these characters on screen. It's just the fact that their identities feel like tokenism, not simple biographical facts. The spin-off series, *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, handles this brilliantly. Lt. Erica Ortegas is a great helmsman suffering from trauma who just happens to be queer. She's one of my favorite characters.

It's almost as if, in *Discovery*, the universe itself is trying to make a point.

The Burn

The season 2 finale is when the show jumped the shark. It went from being an Enterprise sequel and a TOS prequel to being set in the far future. Through a misjump, the Discovery finds itself 900 years in Trek's future.

Trek's 32nd Century finds the Federation all but gone after something called The Burn. That event caused almost all dilithium everywhere to stop working. Without working warp drives to power the supply chain, civilization collapsed.

One might complain that such a post-apoc Federation isn't Trek, but I'll give it a pass. I have a space opera universe with a similar backstory because it gives a logical framework for TOS-style stories; it explains how we're going where no man has gone before, yet we keep running into other clusters of humans.

If you're familiar with Marc Miller's Third Imperium, its "The New Era" is the only period I like.

The problem with The Burn is the cause. An experiment gone wrong? No. The TNG's "Forces of Nature" finally catching up to us? No.

It was a boy crying in a cave.

Seriously.

A boy. Crying.

He was so sad that all dilithium everywhere...

Even as technobabble, it's stupid. It's almost as if the universe itself was making a metaphor.

Sporigami

"Sporigami" is a term I coined. It's a portmanteau of "spore" and "origami."

From day 1, *Discovery* relied on something called the "spore drive." It's a silly thing that allows the ship to instantaneously jump from one point to any other along a pan-galactic fungus.

Yes. A pan-galactic fungus.

The infinite improbability makes much more sense, and that was written as a joke.

Once we enter the 32nd Century, the producers needed a way to make the future seem even more futuristic. To do that, they felt the need to ignore Matt Jefferies' thoughtful starship design language and lean into Clarke's "any sufficiently advanced technology..."

Post-Burn ships are what I call "origami ships." They're made of noncontiguous, shape-shifting hulls.

It's pure magic. It feels less like Trek and more like something out of a 1950's pulp story.

Side-Trek: de Camp/Pratt, Heinlein, and Rogers

There is, in the realm of science fiction, a tradition of characters traveling to other worlds. Not other real worlds.... But characters traveling into works of fiction.

In my late teen years, Mark E. Rogers published *The Adventures of Samurai Cat*. In that book (and the subsequent sequels), Miaowara Tomokato (the titular cat) avenges the murder of his master by traveling everywhere from Middle Earth to the Millennium Falcon.

Four years earlier, Heinlein's *The Number of the Beast* was published. In that book, Zeb Carter and company travel to various fictional worlds, including Oz. The novel is intentionally meta in its metaness.

A generation or two prior, L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt gave us Harold Shea, a protagonist who travels from universe to universe using symbolic logic. In additional various mythical worlds, Shea visits the fictional world of Spenser's *Faerie Queen*.

So what if, at the end of Season 2, *Discovery* didn't really jump to Trek's 23rd Century? What if, in keeping with the time-honored science fiction trope, *Discovery* jumped into a work of fiction?

Suddenly, everything makes sense. The soapbox. The crying boy. The magical tech. With this one change of framing, everything I don't like about *Discovery* falls into place.

And who wrote the fictional universe that *Discovery* finds itself in?

Benny Russell.

If you're not up on your *Trek* lore, you may not recognize that name. Benny Russell was a character in *Deep Space Nine*'s "Far Beyond the Stars." In the episode, The Prophets give Sisko a vision of 1953 New York. Much like the Wizard of Oz, everyone that Sisko knows is represented in the world as someone else. Unlike Oz, Sisko himself is someone else—a black author writing skiffy for a pulp.

The story the Benny Russell writes is about Deep Space Nine. The rag won't publish it, though, because they don't think the audience will be receptive to a black protagonist. The viewer is left with the question "Who is the dreamer and who is the dream?"

In fact, one of these ideas for the DS9 finale was to reveal that the whole series had been Benny Russell's story.

What if both Sisko and Russell are the dreamers and the dream? They both exist. What The Prophets did was to lift the temporal veil and give them each a glimpse of each other? What if Benny used that glimpse to write stories set in a 31st Century Federation?

Wrapping Up

No mailing comment this issue. Sorry. I wrote them in my head during the read, and thought I would have time to write them out during a trip to Rhode Island, but that didn't work. I'll double up on MC's next time.

Take care, and have a great octo-week!🍁

Am I making too much of a stretch? Consider this: in the *Strange New Worlds* episode "The Elysian Kingdom," Doctor Mbenga is reading a storybook to his daughter. If you look at the book, its author is Benny Russell. Furthermore, in *Starfleet Academy*, the Benjamin Sisko exhibit features Benny Russell's typewriter.

"Aha!" you say. "That proves your theory wrong! Benny Russell wouldn't write about Benny Russell's typewriter!"

To that, I quote Heinlein's *Number of the Beast*:

"Did Heinlein get his name in the hat?"

"Four votes, split. Two for his 'Future History,' two for 'Stranger in a Strange Land.' So I left him out."

"I didn't vote for 'Stranger' and I'll refrain from embarrassing anyone by asking who did. My God, the things some writers will do for money!"

"Samuel Johnson said that anyone who wrote for any other reason was a fool."

I think that the post-Burn Federation makes perfect sense as a Russell creation. Furthermore, it addresses all my concerns:

Soapboxism: Of course Russell writes of a world where oppressed are not just represented, but they're pointed out and preached about.

The Burn: Russell ends up institutionalized from the events in "Far Beyond the Stars." He knows the power of grief. He knows that grief can destroy.

Sporigami: In the end, Russell is a pulp writer, and pulp elements belong in his world.

That's it—that's my fan theory for why *Discovery* is the way it is. What do you think?🍁

Samizdat...

Author's Note: This is a Special LAcon V edition of *Samizdat* with articles that I wrote for the LAcon V Worldcon newsletter, *The Fuzzy Pink Papers*, which I

Samizdat Ish #39

Sept/Oct 2026

Samuel Lubell's Zine
Special Worldcon edition



lounge, and many more areas. Visit the volunteer desk on the second floor of the Hilton to volunteer to help the convention. Even a couple of hours can make a big difference.

edited. So some usual *Samizdat* features are not included. I'll have an expanded report on my projects next issue.



...The Fuzzy Pink Papers

I edited/ran the Newsletter for LAcon V, *The Fuzzy Pink Papers*. Unlike most previous convention newsletters, this one was web only. I produced 9 issues (plus there was a mysteriously appearing hoaxine). Here are some sample articles:

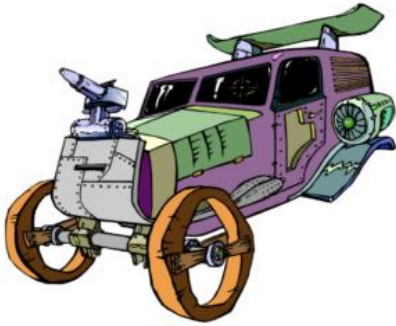


Volunteers Urgently Needed!

Worldcons work thanks to the help of hundreds of volunteers. Your help is urgently needed. Volunteering is one of the best ways to see the convention and make new lifelong friends. There are openings for help with the concert, the art show, the teen

Food Trucks Redux

Where are the food trucks? They are outdoors, in the plaza between the theater and the ACC North entrance on floor 2. The **Barcelona On the Go** food truck is right by the entrance, the **Rolling Sushi** and **Cali Delights** were a bit further up, but well before the road.



fries.

I ate at the Barcelona truck and had their Barcelona Paella Bowl. It had four large grilled shrimp, some chicken shavings, veggies (onions and peppers), and lots of rice for about \$20 including tax. This was comparable to the restaurants in the food court, reasonable for convention center prices. The shrimp was the best part, big and juicy. The chicken portion was skimpy but tasty. There was plenty of rice. Should I go back there later this week <I didn't>, I'd try their salad wrap or maybe their steak and

Opening Ceremonies Recap

"Let the adventure begin!" said Convention Chair **Joyce Lloyd** at Opening Ceremonies last night. After a



brief half hour delay (due to the sign language interpreters getting stuck in traffic), Opening Ceremonies began with a life-sized Fuzzy walking on stage. Chair Lloyd said the convention committee has been working for three years to host the five day event. A representative from the Tongva Native American tribe gave a speech and called for "Peace and may it be well with you all." A group of Tongva singers sang a couple of songs in the Tongva language. Then Toastmaster **Ursula Vernon** introduced the Guests of Honor. A couple mentioned how surprised they were to have been chosen and that when they first discovered science fiction, they never dreamed that they would be a Worldcon Guest of Honor.

There was a video showing the very elaborate design for this year's Lodestar Award by **H Emiko Ogasawara**, and **Scott Lefton**, the designer of this year's Hugo base, described the process for making them. Opening Ceremonies announced the First Fandom awards. The Hall of Fame award went to **Mike Glyer**, **Craig Miller**, and **Bjo Trimble** who made it on stage at the age of 93. Posthumous awards went to **Frederick Brown** and **Myrtle R Douglas** aka **Morojo**. The Sam Moskowitz archive award went to **Andrew Porter** and **David Ritter**. The David A Kyle Big Heart award went to **Ian Stockdale**.

That's No Moon (Just a Fraction of One)



People partying outdoors last night observed part of the moon vanishing. Others said it was turning red. This was a partial lunar eclipse, eating away at 96.2% of the moon between 7:30 PM and 9:10 PM, before gradually restoring back to a full moon. Lunar eclipses often produce a reddish Blood Moon tint. Lunar eclipses generally happen a couple of times a year. For East Coasters, this is not what the moon usually looks like in California.

More Than Just Dealers

The Concourse on the lowest level of the Convention Center has a lot more than just dealers. You can vote for site selection (which closes shortly after the release of this newsletter). You can drive a model of the lunar rover with your phone. You can read old and new fanzines in the fanzine lounge and experience how fans stayed in touch before Internet social media. Visit the art show to see the paintings that turned into book covers and see the art of our Guest of Honor Colleen Doran. Gaze with awe at the exhibits on our Guests of Honor and the history of fandom. Learn from the science exhibits and holographic robot. Unravel the mysteries of the Tesseract and Hyper-Tesseract light sculptures. Relive your TV and movie memories with the props and vehicle exhibits. And, just for being there, you have earned a treat so buy yourself a book, shirt, toy, jewelry or other merchandise. Fuzzy says you deserve it. The exhibit hall is open Friday-Sunday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM; Monday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. *Photo by Andrew Williams*



Worldcon Down Under

Although the winner of the Site Selection for 2028 has not yet been announced, it is almost certainly Brisbane, as the other declared candidate (Nuremberg, Germany) withdrew. If they follow tradition, Brisbane in 2028 will convert to a seated bid and announce its con committee and its first guests of honor. We'll have that information in our next issue.

Fuzzy interviewed Jo Van, Bid Co-Chair and Mel Davis, Bid Treasurer



They said that they arranged for a solar eclipse the week before the convention. The full totality will be visible in most of Australia and New Zealand. While Australia may seem costly, they estimate that most American fans would be able to afford two weeks in Australia, including the 13.5 hour airfare from the Los Angeles area, by saving just \$40 a week.

The last Worldcon in Australia was Aussiecon 4 (2010) in Melbourne. The 2028 Worldcon (assuming they win) will be in Brisbane, which is warmer during the Australian winter (which takes place when it is summer in the U.S. and Europe). The weather will be 50 - 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Brisbane is a very walkable city. It has invested in its infrastructure for the Olympics and transportation is cheap. The city is known for its beaches, one is right next to the convention center. Fans will be able to walk across the river to visit Star Casino which has spectacular views from its terrace a kilometer in the air. They can also visit a nearby kola sanctuary with kangaroos, wombats and other animals unique to Australia. Small children can visit Bluey World.

One of the convention's hotels is connected to the convention center and two more are wrapped around it. There are also nearby Bed and Breakfasts. The city is more affordable than most of Australia's cities and can serve as a base for nearby travel.

Fuzzy knows that people in Australia do not walk upside down so stop asking about it.

Life Imitates Star Trek

An executive order was signed on August 28 to create a U.S. Space Academy “to strengthen the Nation’s space workforce by expanding opportunities to educate and develop the next generation of leaders across the space domain.” Hopefully, it will last longer than the two-season *Starfleet Academy* did!



Keep the Fun of Worldcon All Year Round

Your experience with science fiction fandom does not have to end when Worldcon does. Seek out local conventions. In addition to media cons and comic cons there are general and literary conventions in cities throughout the world. There’s a convention practically every weekend, somewhere. Do a search on the Internet to find them. Look for local science fiction clubs. Many communities have clubs. Check the local universities for clubs (check if they are open to non-students). Look on [Meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com). If not, start one. And national groups like the National Fantasy Fan Federation exist.

Of course you can subscribe to SF magazines, both print and virtual. And the Hugo nominated fanzines and semi-prozines are all well worth your time.

Many of the panels at LAcon V were recorded and can be viewed until the end of 2026. Just make sure you are logged

in with your email and membership number then check the program schedule. The watch the replay button should appear. You can use the Availability menu to select Streamed or Recorded.

We hope you’ve enjoyed the *Fuzzy Pink Papers* throughout your LAcon V experience.

There also was a hoaxzine, *The Scuzzy Fink Capers*. No one knows who wrote and produced it. But I suspect you can guess.

The Scuzzy Fink Capers

The Hoax Newsletter of LAcon V

Issue Infinity: Sunday August ??, 2026: PM Edition



Scuzzy Fink is Rabid

The audience for opening ceremonies was shocked when, after a two hour delay due to traffic (“No one told us that there was traffic on the L.A. freeways”) Fuzzy’s less cuddly cousin, Scuzzy Fink, ran across the stage, mouth full with white foam, trying to bite the Toastmaster. “I thought toast was supposed to be eaten.” said Scuzzy after Animal Control took him away in a cage.

Fancy Crest Accused of Sleepless Advantage

Batman’s Mom, Martha Wayne, known for her KillerBot series, objected to Fancy Crest winning the SFFFFFWA Grand Mistress Award. “Since she is Sleepless, she has eight extra hours a day to write and edit,” said Wayne. “That’s not fair.” She threatened to sic

KillerBot on Crest, but now that KillerBot has a TV series it just wants to watch its show.

Moderator Interrupts Own Panel to Attempt Magic

On the “Is Magic Real?” panel, the moderator, tired of just asking questions, said he would conduct an experiment to prove magic is real. He called for volunteers from the audience and announced he would prove magic existed by having them use magic to sense his presence. Someone in the audience yelled, “Yes, but their eyes are open. They can see you!” After the moderator left, red faced. Panelist Hermione Stranger used a wand to turn a teacup into a mouse. Her fellow panelist, Willow Rosenburger, levitated all the water glasses on the table, and Agent K lifted a pen that did a flash and then said, “You saw none of this.”



Restaurant Reviews

You Food - You may think a food truck charging \$20 for a shrimp burrito with barely any shrimp is expensive, but this restaurant will cost you an arm and a leg, literally. The people from the Cannibalism Is Fun panel have opened up a restaurant where they will chop off your choice of body parts, cook them, and feed them to you. “It’s not technically cannibalism if the flesh you eat is your own,” said chef Brit Host. “It’s no worse than sucking on your thumb”. Ambulance trips and Emergency Room visits are not included in the price of dinner.

From the Newsy Tower

“I’m the leader of the club,” - M.M.

“Quack, quack, quack, @% *\$@” - D.D.*

“Put me back under the ice, I can’t take this anymore” - Capt. A after seeing a recent newspaper.



Magical Queendom Faces Rodent & Waterfowl Infestation

The Magical Queendom down the street in L.A. has announced a temporary closure due to giant mice and ducks running rampant all over the park. “They’re huge!” said Groundskeeper Willy. “Mice and ducks as big as I am are just walking in the street.” Animal Control has been called in. They say that once purged, the Magical Queendom will be the perfect place for Scuzzy to recover from his rabies. But Scuzzy does not plan to be down and out in the Magical Queendom. “Watch out Mortimer

Louse,” said Scuzzy. “I’ll be running the place in a week.”

LAcon V Passports Needed

There are rumors of a visit by President Hump’s “NICE” Stormtroopers. Be warned and aware. Have your LAcon Passports all stamped and ready. The con chair has contacted Fluke Spacewalker and Princess Cinnamon Bunhair for help but they are stuck in traffic.

Remember to Hydrate

Please bring your water bottles with you wherever you go and keep them full. We have already lost six fans on the trek from the Hilton to the Convention Center under the hot L.A. sun.

Secret Programming at Worldcon?

This newsletter has learned of secret book discussions not included in the official program. But what else is left out? Is there a whole ConCurrent Anaheim with ChatGPT-free program items? Scuzzy Fink and his

other cousin Fox Mulder went to investigate and Scuzzy came back with rabies. And no one has seen Fox since.



The Scuzzy Fink Capers: Issue Infinity

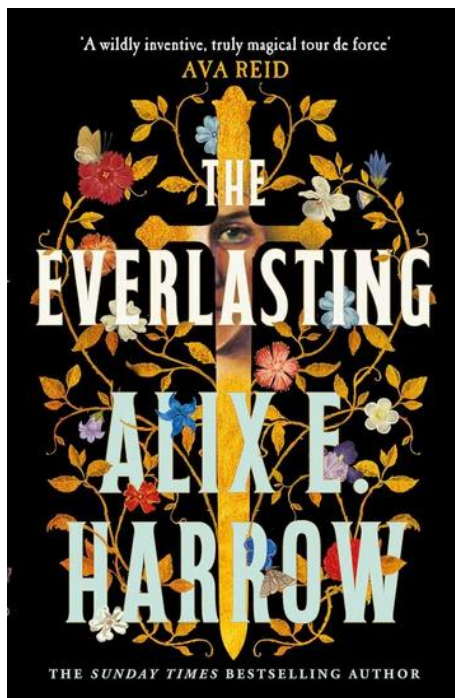
Thursday, Fanstember 32, 2026, PM Edition

The Hoaxzine of LAcon V: The 84th World Science Fiction Convention

Edited by Anonymous

Published by Richard Milhouse Nixon

...Hugo Results



Best Novel presented by Ursula Vernon

Winner: *The Everlasting* by Alix E. Harrow (Tor US; Tor UK). I put this down as my sixth choice. My first choice was *The Incandescent* by Emily Tesh.

Best Novella presented by Harry Turtledove

Winner: "The River Has Roots" by Amal El-Mohtar (Tordotcom; Arcadia UK). I had this as my third choice. My first choice was "The Summer War" by Naomi Novik.

Best Novelette presented by Mary Robinette Kowal

Winner: "Never Eaten Vegetables" by H.H. Pak (*Clarkesworld*, Issue 220). This was my first choice too.

Best Short Story presented by Larry Niven

Winner: "In My Country" by Thomas Ha (*Clarkesworld*, Issue 223). I had this as sixth. My first choice was "Wire Mother" by Isabel J. Kim.

Best Series presented by Barbara Hambly

Winner: *Old Man's War* by John Scalzi (Tor US; Tor UK). I had this as second. My first choice was *White Space* by Elizabeth

Bear.

Best Graphic Story or Comic presented by Stan Sakai

Winner: *A Wizard of Earthsea: A Graphic Novel*, written by Ursula K. Le Guin, adapted and art by Fred Fordham (Clarion Books; Walker UK). I had this as my second choice. My first choice was *Absolute Wonder Woman Vol. 1: The Last Amazon*,

Best Related Work presented by Charlie Jane Anders

Winner: *Inventing the Renaissance* by Ada Palmer (University of Chicago Press US, Head of Zeus UK). This was my first choice too. I did not nominate it because it never occurred to me that a work of history by history professor would qualify for the Hugo even though she also wrote science fiction books.

Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form presented by David Gerrold

Winner: *Sinners*, screenplay by Ryan Coogler, directed by Ryan Coogler (Proximity Media, Warner Bros. Pictures). I never saw this. I ranked *Superman* first.

**Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form** presented by Ronald D. Moore

Winner: *Murderbot: "All Systems Red"*, written by Paul Weitz & Chris Weitz, directed by Roseanne Liang, based on the book *All Systems Red* by Martha Wells (Apple TV). This was also my first choice.

Best Game or Interactive Work presented by Tanya DePass

Clair Obscur: Expedition 33, developed by Sandfall Interactive, published by Kepler Interactive. I don't really follow computer games so I didn't vote in this category.

Best Editor Short Form presented by Patrick Nielsen Hayden

Winner: Neil Clarke. I had Neil seconded. I put Shelia Williams first. Neil's speech had a touching tribute to Shelia Williams who suffered a brain aneurysm in January

Best Editor Long Form presented by Dr. Anita Sengupta

Winner: Diana M. Pho. I did not rank this category as I did not recognize any of the names on it.

Best Professional Artist presented by Colleen Doran

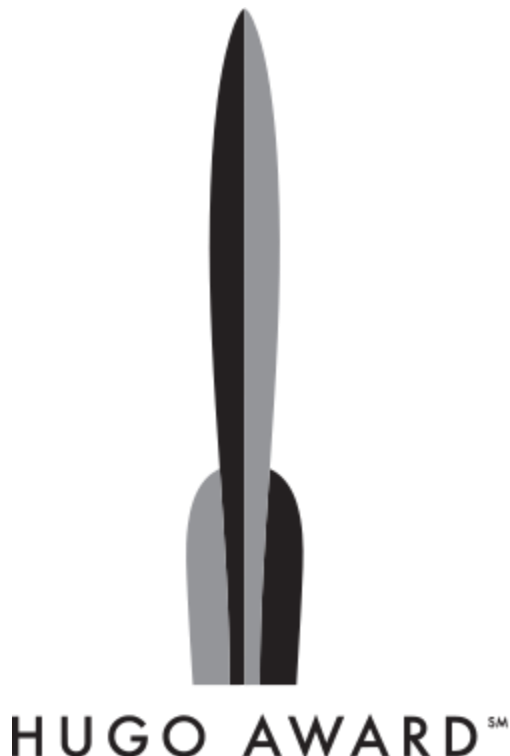
John Picacio. This was also my first choice.

Best Semiprozine presented by Neil Clarke

Uncanny Magazine, publisher and editor-in-chief: Michael Damian Thomas; managing editor Monte Lin; poetry editor Betsy Aoki, podcast producers Erika Ensign and Steven Schapansky. I ranked this third. My first choice was *Strange Horizons*.

Best Fanzine presented by Geri Sullivan

Winner: *nerds of a feather, flock together*, editors Roseanna



Pendlebury, Arturo Serrano, Paul Weimer; senior editors Joe Sherry, G. Brown, Vance Kotrla. I ranked this fourth. My first choice was An Unofficial Hugo Book Club Blog.

***Best Fancast* presented by Tracy Drain**

Winner: *Hugo, Girl!*, presented by Haley Zapal, Amy Salley, Lori Anderson, and Kevin Anderson. I ranked this fourth. My first choice was *Eating the Fantastic*. And Scott Edelman didn't even give me a donut for my vote.

***Best Fan Writer* presented by Mike Glycer**

Winner: Jason Sanford. I had him down as second. My first choice was James Davis Nicoll.

***Best Fan Artist* presented by Tim Kirk**

Winner: Yuumei. I did not rank this category.

***Best Poem* presented by Terese Mason Pierre**

"Hex Supply Customer Support Log" by Elis Montgomery (*Strange Horizons*, Issue 25 August 2025). I ranked this fifth. My first choice was "How to Become a Sea Witch".

***Lodestar Award for Best YA Book* presented by Tracey Baptiste**

Coffeeshop in an Alternate Universe by C.B. Lee (Feiwei & Friends). I had this fifth. My first choice was *They Bloom at Night* by Trang Thanh Tran

***Astounding Award for Best New Writer* (sponsored by Must Read Books Publishing) presented by Emily Hockaday**

Antonia Hodgson (1st year of eligibility). I had her as sixth, because she's not really a new author, just new to SF/Fantasy. I ranked Jared Pečaček first.

I matched the Hugo vote in four categories and lost in all the others. But I insist that I'm right and everyone else is wrong. So, hah!



...Disney and Stratification



After Worldcon, I visited Disneyland. Of course I went to Star Wars Galaxy Edge and rode on Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance and Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run. Both were interactive and well done. I saw the Haunted Mansion (disappointing since all the Grim Grinning Ghosts had been replaced by Nightmare Before Christmas content), and the Pirates of the Caribbean in

New Orleans Square, The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh in Bayou Country (skipping Tiana's

Bayou Adventure). In Frontierland, I went on the Mark Twain Riverboat, skipping the Big Thunder Mountain. In Adventureland, I went to the Tiki Room, on the Jungle Cruise, and the Indiana Jones Adventure. In Tomorrowland I rode the Finding Nemo Submarine Voyage (which looks like they relabeled the 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea submarine), the monorail, the Astro Orbiter, Star Tours, and my favorite ride, Buzz Lightyear Astro Blasters (part ride, part arcade shooting game).

In Fantasyland, I went on the Pinocchio, Alice in Wonderland, Snow White, Dumbo, Mr. Toad, and the Peter Pan rides. I also did It's a Small World, the Carousel, Storybook Land boat, and (in Toon Town) Roger Rabbit's Car Toon Spin. I had fun even though the Peter Pan ride broke down when I was almost near the end of the line and I had wait another 20 minutes or so. Fortunately, I brought a book with me.

It is worth noting that regular admission (despite costing over \$100) only gets you "Standby" admission to the rides as people who pay another \$32 for a Lightning Lane pass can bypass the line completely for most rides and "standby" people only get in when there are no more LL people waiting. Getting a Premier Pass to use the Lightning Lane on all available rides can cost over \$100 (on top of admissions).



This is part of a pattern that allows rich people to pay extra to bypass lines and waiting throughout society. At the airport, people can pay extra for better seats, to enter the plane first, and to bypass the line at TSA screening (through TSA Precheck). This is somewhat alarming as it adds to our stratified society. Increasingly, the rich are able to use their money to bypass the petty annoyances of ordinary life. This makes the country less democratic in many ways.

...Author Showcase: Nancy Kress

On Friday, August 26, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America named Nancy Kress its 43rd Grand Master. She earned the Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master Award for her lifetime of work in science fiction and fantasy. Kress has written 30 novels, four story collections, and three books on writing. This award caps an impressive shelf of honors, including six Nebulas, two Hugos, a Sturgeon, and the John W. Campbell Memorial Award.

Kress, born Nancy Anne Koningisor on January 20th, 1948, taught fourth grade and college (English) and worked in advertising. She has married four times including to SF authors Charles Sheffield and Jack Skillingstead (her current spouse since 2011).

Her first published short story, "The Earth Dwellers," appeared in the December 1976 issue of *Galaxy*. Her first novel, *The Prince of Morning Bells*, came out from Timescape / Pocket in October 1981. She originally wrote fantasy, shifting to SF with her fourth novel, *An Alien Light* (1988). She has said that she is working on a new fantasy novel.

Kress is probably best known for "Beggars in Spain," a Hugo and Nebula winning novella (1991) that became a novel (1993) and then a full trilogy titled *Sleepless*. Other popular works include her *Probability* series, *Yesterday's Kin* series, "After the Fall, Before the Fall, During the Fall", and "The Flowers of Aulit Prison." Her most recent novel is *Observer* (January 2023) written with Robert Lanza.



Readers new to Kress should start with *Beggars in Spain*, although many people say the novella version is better than the novel. Follow that up with *Probability Moon* and *After the Fall, Before the Fall, During the Fall*. She has a Best of Nancy Kress collection from Subterranean Press which is out of print in paper but still available in ebook (a bargain at \$5).

Photo by Catriona Sparks - originally posted to Flickr as Delia, Nancy & Ellen, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=50412632>

...Letters of Comment on N'APA 283

Nice castle picture.

Intermission #167 - Good news from Russia. I didn't hear of these stories so thank you. I'm worried about AI drones without Asimov's Three Laws. This is how we get Terminators. I like your article on thinking machines, contrasting SF with real life machines. You have a very interesting article on Fantasy. These days science fiction is used for science fiction and fantasy. I didn't know it used to be the other way around. Urban fantasy is different from science fantasy in that it is normally set in the real world, just with magic added. But your views on fantasy are at least 25 years out of date. Fantasy does not have to be based on medieval values and most urban fantasy does not have nobility, slaves, kings, etc. Many writers of fantasy have magic system with rules. Sanderson especially is known for very rigid systems of magic that rival science in having strict rules. And there are plenty of fantasy novels not based on European Middle Ages. There are plenty of books using magic and stories from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. And don't forget magical realism from South America. I agree that the eight plots you cite were very common, but in the last 25 years fantasy has broadened beyond these plots to include fantasy-mysteries, fantasy cozies (such as opening up a coffee shop in a magical world), and fantasy romances. I've been using AI at work to routinize some repetitive tasks and doing some data analysis. But I'm careful to check the AI's results. History does not slow down, but the closer history gets to the present day, the harder it is for people to see trends and determine what is important. I disagree with you on awards since awards are not distributed randomly. America had over a million COVID deaths even with our closing schools and having people work from



home. I would hate to see what the numbers would have been like without that. Interesting idea that online discussions used to be better because technology users were self-selected. AI violates copyright because it can do things like create a new picture in an artist's style or write a new Harry Potter story in J K Rowling's voice.

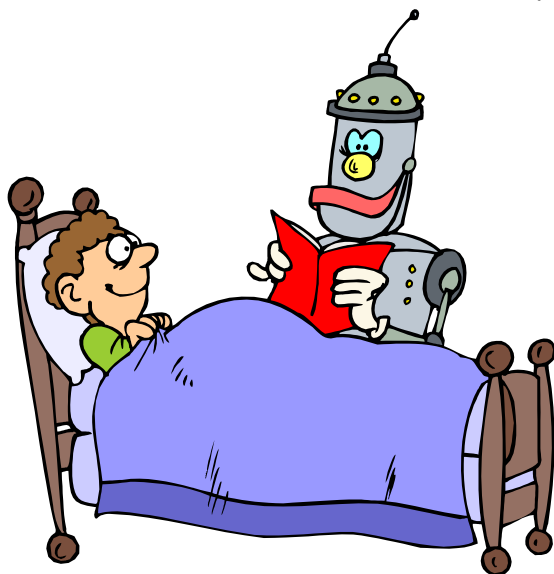
Archive Midwinter for NAPA 283 - Trump won't use nuclear weapons to stay in power, but he might use the threat of someone else have nukes to claim a national emergency requiring him to stay in office (even though we had elections during the Civil War and WWII without problems). I need to add Patrick O'Brian to my list of books to read. Yes, pop culture is pervasive even if you don't watch TV and movies; you get the references second hand. My new job is exactly the same as my old job (the one that

RIFed me), except that I am working for a contractor and not directly as a GS employee. It is the same work (some of the same projects) for the same boss. The Wizard of Earthsea graphic novel just won a Hugo (I was there!).

Murder Master Mage #283 – I’m sure I don’t need to tell you that 122,000 words is rather long for a novel. James Schmitz’s Telzey books were probably half that. It is important to remember that what we call AI isn’t really AI. It just predicts what the text should say based on what other texts say. So, it can hallucinate and make things up without any malice forethought. It’s always good to see more Telzey.

Brownian Motion #20 – While there’s no evidence of aliens science has progressed to the point that we know there are billions of planets in the universe. We also know there is at least one planet (our Earth) with life. It follows then that there are two options, one, somewhere in the universe there is at least one and probably a lot more than one planet with life or there is something magical about Earth that made it the only spot in the entire universe, among all the billions of planet, where life emerged. I know which of the two sounds more scientific. But, again, there is no evidence as yet. Good luck with your site. One suggestion, use a link shortener or renamer to change <https://www.vcn.bc.ca/~garth2> to something that says SFGuide or SFInfo or something similar. I assume you already know about the fan encyclopedia https://fancyclopedia.org/wiki/Fancyclopedia_3 It might be easier to see if you could help contribute to that publication rather than start your own. Doctor Who has always been bad at continuity. Television SF has had to worry about continuity a lot more since the development of videocassettes and DVDs that allow fans to see old episodes in order rather than syndication which might not preserve the order and requires viewers to wait months if not years for a certain episode to appear so they can check details.

Esmeralda County Line #16 – Hey Kevin, if you will be in the DC area in October, you might be interested in Capclave, the convention where reading is not extinct. It will be the first weekend in October. I do some audiobooks but only while driving or places where I cannot read a book (since as you note I can read a lot faster than the audiobook can speak). On Equal Time, I think we have gone too far in the opposite direction since most media outlets are owned by billionaires, or corporations owned by billionaires. The Washington Post has moved significantly to the right in the last couple of years even though Jeff Bezos had originally promised to stay out of its editorial direction. I have heard predictions that as many as 25% of colleges will close over the next 10 years due to dropping populations and Trump’s restrictions on foreign students. Yes, Hyperion and its sequels are well worth reading. I have Giles Goat Boy but have not read it (I have multiple bookcases full of books I’ve been meaning to read). Thanks for saying I earned the Franson Award. I am honored. R.A. Lafferty is an acquired taste, but well worth the effort to acquire. I



agree that mainstream comics struggle to present the illusion of change while keeping everything the same. They are occasionally able to make permanent change such as the evolution of Batman’s sidekick Robin into the solo hero Nightwing, but too often they just hit the reset button. H-1B visas are for tech workers and are not cheap enough to use for fast food workers. Besides, they are replacing workers with kiosks that don’t work well but save them on salaries. Interesting point about 19th century novels being so different from now that they are like SF. Things fandom found embarrassing were things like nudity and trying to freak out the Mundanes. I’ve been reviewing *Adventures in Time and Space* in the sf/fan history zine *Origins*. I’m doing it in pieces since it is close to a thousand pages of great stories. Nuclear waste storage may be more of a political problem than a scientific one but it is still a problem. No state wants to be

dumping ground for nuclear waste. I need to look for a copy of *The Immortal Storm*. I disagree with you on historians. The job of a historian is not to find some mythical objective truth but to dig into why something happened and use evidence to prove a thesis. Good luck on your writing.

R.A.I.L. #13 - It's great that you are continuing law school. Good luck! Yes, please research who owns the copyright to A.I. produced works. I think it would be like the famous case of a monkey who stole a camera and took a picture. The owner of the equipment owns the work produced, not the AI (or the monkey). The U.S. government is well worth celebrating even for those of us who have concerns about its current caretakers.

MOZIAG #3 - I'm the same way with biting off more than I can chew even though I know this results in my producing less than my best work on some projects. What makes July and August interesting is the way they push the other months off by two. **S**eptember should be the seventh month, not the ninth; **O**ctober the eighth, not the 10th etc. Congrats on finishing a story. Don't forget about N3F's story contest. Yes, the more library cards the better. Put me down for Sisko. DS 9 is my favorite Trek. I'm impressed with all the Trek you've watched. Reading is not passive if you write reviews, participate in book discussions, or vote for awards. I don't think AIs lie because they are essentially text generation based on data and prompts. It cannot tell right from wrong. But they certainly can get things wrong and provide incorrect answers and "hallucinations." If you like *Little Fuzzy*, read Piper's other two Fuzzy books. If you like those than try other books he wrote. Also try John Scalzi's rewrite of *Little Fuzzy*, *Fuzzy Nation*. Actually, a lot of audiobooks, especially early ones, are edited/abridged. And anyone who has ever seen two different performances of the same play, with different actors understands how the performer has a major impact on the performance, even when the words are the same.

Brandy Hall #19 - I played a few games of D & D in middle school but not since then. If we included everyone's zine, regardless of length, then it would be up to each reader to decide how much attention to give to each zine. If we don't include some, we are preventing the reader from making that choice. As you say, no one forces the reader to read everything. I'm fine with people using AI as a spelling and grammar checker. That's different from using it to actually write the content. SF Poetry now has its own Hugo category. I watched Avatar but not its sequels. Thanks for the list of Penguin books. I think you proved your point that Penguin wasn't concerned about publishing public domain books. If there is one only one course preventing a student from graduating and it isn't being offered, most schools will let the student substitute some independent study of the topic. What's wrong with visiting DC? There are lots of museums and monuments and historical sites.

Yes, it is the same job I was doing before being RIFed, just as a government contractor instead of a GS government worker. While doing well in school in any subject requires learning how to learn, the liberal arts specifically teach the student how to do this. Good point about COVID restrictions affecting the outcome which is why the actual death number is lower than predicted. From what I've read, the dodo was not very tasty. Spending time with family is an excellent use of post-retirement time.

Swamp Spot Sentinel #2.2 - I agree about inflation being a major problem. I'm sorry to hear about your medical and other issues. I had not heard of Sergeant Preston. I think the recent anthology of Beatles-based stories had one with super powers. I don't know, the Calvin & Hobbes crossover comics seem worth reading. You gave a very interesting analysis of Ada Palmer's *Inventing the Renaissance*, which just won the Hugo for Best Related book; I was there (at the Hugo ceremony, not the Renaissance). I certainly agree that this is not an easy read but think Ada made a complex historical period understandable and interesting. Sturgeon's law (95% of everything is crap) applies to both detective stories and comics.



I agree that the Supreme Court needs to do a better job restraining Trump (but Congress should also). *Death of an Author* by Nnedi Okorafor is well worth reading. There's a nice twist at the end.

...Author's Note

Samizdat is a production of Samuel Lubell, who is solely responsible for its contents. Nothing here should be taken as the views of any current or former employer, client, or organization to which I belong. Views on political issues are my own and have nothing to do with any government, nonprofit organization, or for profit employment. Graphics are from clip art discs, the Internet, and online AI programs. *Samizdat* is produced for the Fantasy Fan Federation, a long-running science fiction fan group, and is distributed through its National Amateur Press Alliance (N'APA).





Esmeralda County Line #17
August-September 2026
A zine for NAPA 284

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THAT WAS THE SUMMER THAT WAS

As usual, I'm starting this the weekend before the sue date, so I'll probably forget something. We held Son of Silvercon IV with Tim Powers as our Guest of Honor in July, and that went very well despite us being on the same weekend as Writers Cantina in Utah. Nathan, who runs Writers Cantina, and I have coordinated to avoid this next year. SoS IV went very well. Maxwell Drake and Brad Torgersen, our guests of honor from SoS III and II respectively, dropped by, and a good time was had by all despite the hotel goofing up our function space reservation and forcing us to co-locate the consuite in my room. Next year we have Larry Correia lined up as our Guest of Honor, followed by Travis Corcoran in 2028. Also, if you missed Tim this year, he really enjoyed the convention and wants to come back next year.

This month was the last NSSAB meeting of FY 2026, and we got the surprising news that since the cleanup work will be finished this year, the Board will sunset early, at the end of FY 2027. This will cost me about \$2000 in reimbursed hotel bills, mileage, and per diem payments in FY 2028, but I can live with it. Other sites (like, say, Hanford) have another century or so before they can say the same.

The painful effects of the Kia's air conditioning repair back in June continue to afflict my finances, and it looks like I won't be going east to the DC area next month either. Just as well; I should be staying home, not spending money, and writing more books to flog to the public.

BOOKS & OTHER MEDIA

Speaking of books, The Misfit is up on Amazon for a quite reasonable 99 cents, or you can read it through Kindle Unlimited if you prefer that. The Kickstarter for The Hawk, the Fox, and the Princess, is active; this is my fantasy novel that is a one-off, completely lacking in LitRPG tropes, elves, dwarves, orcs, or other such things that infest much of current fantasy.

I picked up Mike Kupari's Her Brother's Keeper, in which an aristocratic privateer captain is hired by her own father to retrieve her brother from his kidnappers on an anarchic frontier planet, and so far I'm liking it. Also acquired Smuggling Spaces, by Julie Frost, which is a short story collection about a tramp freighter and her crew; if you liked *Firefly* or *Serenity*, you'll like this, especially since it has a baby dragon and bioengineered glowing capybaras.

In case I didn't mention it before, I also acquired and read Nick Cole & Jason Anspach's Savage Wars, which has a grim answer to the question of what happens when our Natural Ruling Classes load themselves into generation ships and then get overtaken by FTL ships bearing colonies of the people they thought they were abandoning to their deaths? I also have their Legionnaire, which I haven't started yet but is set in the same universe.

Books I Probably Shouldn't Have Bought But I Can't Find My Copy In All These Furshlugginer Boxes Department: David Drake's Balefires, the collection of all his short horror, which builds on From the Heart of Darkness, which I have a signed paperback copy of *somewhere*.

Finally got around to watching *Oppenheimer*, and I tell you hwut, as low as my opinion of the fellow was before I saw the movie, this flick made me think even less of him. The movie itself was very good, if somewhat surreal at times, and I think the casting director deserves kudos, but I knew people who lost their clearances for a hell of a lot less than J. Robert Oppenheimer, and I came out of the movie thinking he got off easy. My opinions may have been slightly influenced by my Teller number being 2 (and therefore my Oppenheimer number was 3) but still. If Nolan was trying to paint Oppenheimer as a tragic hero, he didn't sell me. Harry Truman had him pegged.

I enjoyed *Coyote vs. Acme* a lot more. This is a movie for all the kids who enjoyed the Roadrunner cartoons, and while I think they did my man Foghorn Leghorn dirty by making him head of the eeeevil Acme Corporation, it was a funny movie with occasional scenes of pathos. Highly recommended.

MUSIC AND OTHER SUCH EVILS

Didn't buy any music this past two months.

THE COMMENTER IN THE HIGH CASTLE: COMMENTS ON N'APA #284

Intermission #167

(Thinking Machines) There is a Keith Laumer story, "Cocoon", which is a darker take on Forster's classic story; not only is the machine breaking down, it's not even aware that Nature is preparing to break it once and for all. 🍷🍷 I'm surprised Brunner's The Shockwave Rider has faded into obscurity as quickly as it has, being supplanted by the cyberpunk genre.

Archive Midwinter

(RYCTo Ahrvid) They didn't put Biden in the Home for the Confused. They won't do it to Trump.

(RYCTo Bob) Idk about adults automatically condemning what the kids like. My parents were very supportive of my reading (and later, watching) SF. They even let me attend the DC Worldcon in 1974, though they drew the line at my attending MidAmericon in 1976.

(RYCTo Joe) I cheerfully admit to using Grok to do spell checking, reading for consistency, outlining, and similar support tasks. The dialogue and other prose is all mine, though.

(RYCTo Mark) 1066 And All That is wonderful fun.

Intermission #168

(History Corner) There are quite a few photos from the 1950s showing people standing on casino roofs to watch the atomic weapons tests at the Nevada Test Site, and I believe the Atomic Museum has a section devoted to atomic tourism. Nowadays it's a lot less fun, but you can still tour the former test site and see historical places like the Sedan Crater. ☛☛ There's no Atom Bomb Cola, but Nuka-Cola from the post-apocalyptic video game Fallout: New Vegas is bottled and sold by Jones Soda. Quantum and Victory flavors also available! ☛☛ Apparently Open Office Writer is just as bad as Word for such things.

The Murder Master Mage #283

(N3F stuff) I keep forgetting to send book & movie reviews to you for the Review of Books.

Brownian Motion #20

(RYCTo Jefferson) There was a limited amount of conscription by states into state units at the beginning of the Civil War, but more recently the practice has been for the Federal government to draft people into the Army of the United States (or Air Force, or Navy) and assign them to National Guard units that have already been federalized. States could draft people into the State Guard or Naval Militia.

I knew I should have started earlier. Guess we'll be having leftover comments in the next ish.