

N'APN 230



The Official Organ

#230

Next deadline: November 15, 2017

The official collator is George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net.

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

Please do **not** submit PDF files of your contributions without prior discussion.

I occasionally send a copy of N'APA to the accessible (email address needed) N3F membership, in the hope that some of them will join N'APA.

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. Publication has always been totally regular, though some readers question my interpretations of "always", "totally", and "regular". N'APA has been in existence since 1959, but has transitioned from being a paper APA to an electronic one.

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The Silver State Age #7
an apazine for N'APA 230
September 14, 2017

Kevin Trainor Jr.
3040 Kishner Drive #205
wombat.soch@gmail.com
Las Vegas, NV 89109

OBLIGATORY NATTER

Probably the most notable thing to happen since lastish is that the charges filed against me by the Nevada Highway Patrol arising from the accident back in April (for driving an unsafe vehicle) were dropped by the county attorney since the NHP didn't provide her with a copy of the accident report. It was worth staying up until 0930 to hear this from the county attorney, even though that's well past my usual bedtime of 0600.

The weather here in Las Vegas has been a lot nicer lately, getting down into the 70s and 80s at night. It's nice to be able to roll the car windows down and not have to have the air conditioning on, and it's also nice not to have to fork out over \$100/month to the electric company.

My daughter and her friends are back from Burning Man, and everything apparently went well for them with the exception of their truck guy not taking care of himself and otherwise being a difficult pain in the butt. I am apparently being considered as his replacement despite my own health issues because apparently none of these young folks know how to drive a truck. They also think a water buffalo is an Asian herbivore instead of a wheeled water trailer. I aim to correct these deficiencies in their education, if nothing else.

I would be remiss not to note the passing of Dr. Jerry Pournelle this last month. He was very influential in a number of fields: SF, computer journalism, space, national defense, wargaming...one could make a legitimate argument that the strategy of technology he conceived along with Stefan Possony won the Cold War. He was one of the founding fathers of modern military SF, with his tales of Falkenberg's Legion, posted one of the first (if not THE first) blogs, and did me a great favor in my youth by talking me out of doing something that was lethally stupid. I wish that I could attend his funeral this weekend, but I can't afford to be away from work.

BOOKS

Speaking of Dr. Pournelle and Falkenberg's Legion, I am currently re-reading The Prince, which is a fix-up novel/anthology that combines "The Mercenary" and "Peace With Honor" with the novels West of Honor, Sword and Scepter, Prince of Mercenaries (itself a fix-up that includes "Silent Leges" and "His Truth Goes Marching On") and the Helot War novels co-written with S.M. Stirling, Go Tell The Spartans and Prince of Sparta. It's not my favorite Pournelle book; that would have to be A Spaceship For The King, which was expanded to the longer King David's Spaceship, but The Prince has the stories that got me interested in Pournelle as an author, spurred my correspondence with him, and had a fair amount of influence on my own life besides. I'm hoping one or another of his children will take it upon themselves to fill in the few remaining gaps in the life of John Christian Falkenberg III, to say nothing of the other unfinished work Jerry left behind.

On a slightly more cheerful (sic) note, I have finally caught up on Charles Stross' Laundry novels now that I have borrowed The Annihilation Score, The Nightmare Stacks, and The Delirium Brief. These are all novels working off the assumption that magic is real (and, in fact, is merely a form of higher mathematics) and rather than being shut down at the end of the Second World War, the Special Operations Executive was preserved to continue fighting Her Majesty's occult and abhuman enemies. The first novels, which focused on a Laundry draftee code named "Bob Howard", were mostly amusing pastiches of British spy novels, but starting with The Rhesus Chart, Stross took the focus off Howard and turned to other members of the Laundry, building toward a climax wherein the Laundry has to face their most serious challenge yet - and not one involving tentacles or mind-shattering horror, either. Very good books, especially since Stross doesn't beat you over the head with his politics.

LAST-MINUTE COMMENTS

Archive Midwinter

(RYCTo Lauren) I can confirm that comic books/graphic novels are much easier to read on the Kindle Fire. It's pretty much all I do read on that tablet, in fact; I prefer to read books on my Kindle Paperwhite if I'm not reading the dead tree editions.

(RYCTo George) May have mentioned this before, but there's an outfit named Qwerkywriter that makes USB keyboards out of old manual typewriters, or at any rate has keyboards that look like manual typewriters, right down to the manual carriage return.

(natter) Bureaucracy as a skill is not to be scorned. As a tax professional, I see dozens of people a year who have come to grief through not having trained the skill sufficiently, or who didn't have the talent to do so. ☒☒ Softkeys - There's a separate program for that? Both Word and WordPerfect have macro commands that insert text strings such as you describe, and you don't have to spend \$30 on them, either.

(RYCTo Meredith) Project Gutenberg is a gold mine. My particular favorites from there are the Mr. Dooley books by Finley Peter Dunne. They are a fine collection of the kind of Irish ethnic humor we don't see much of these days, and wry commentary on the events of the time besides.

The Murdered Master Mage

(natter) Vegetable gardens are a lot more work than most people want to admit. You have to be willing to put in at least an hour a day on the garden, and Ceres help you if you miss a day. From what I recall of the climate and soil there, this is just as true where you live as it was for my family in Minneapolis, where my wife maintained a garden for most of the time we lived there.

(RYCTo Lauren) On the other hand, with digital music, one can keep multiple copies on various devices as well as on the cloud (a/k/a "somebody else's computer), which is pretty convenient.

Synergy

(RYCTo Lorien) It may not be possible to revert to a lower tech level across the board, but every so often (especially in the case of natural disasters) we are reminded that a lot of people don't know how things work or how to cope when they don't work. The reaction to this has been the formation of a "prepper" subculture, where people take steps to prepare for such a societal breakdown, even if it's temporary, including preserving old skills such as blacksmithing, non-mechanized agriculture, herbal medicine, etc. ☒☒ As far as fandom shunning technology goes, I am sad to say that this is perhaps an inevitable result of more fans coming from fantasy and media fandoms where the interest in technology is either nonexistent or actively discouraged. We don't hear much about "appropriate technology" any more (Thank God) but the ongoing technobarbarism that thinks we can just wave our hands and replace our coal and nuclear power generation base with wind and solar is all around us. I blame the education "system".

(RYCTo me) I have become one of those people I used to loathe in fandom, the people who went to SF society meetings and talked about their mundane lives instead of science fiction and fantasy. ☺ Seriously, though, I was never on board with the FIAWOL notion; despite all the time I have spent in various fandoms since 1974, FIJAGH, and always will be. Even if I were to become a filthy pro and publish the three novels I'm diffidently pecking away at, and open a SF bookstore here in Vegas, attending conventions & APAhacking and such would still be a sideline, not the center of my life. "Here I stand, I can do no other." ☒☒ Asimov and Heinlein are famous for writing future histories, but I believe the now-obscure Olaf Stapledon was actually the first to do so with his Last And First Men. Since then, of course, every other SF writer with more than a couple of books to bang together has one, and if they don't have one, people will do their best to try and cobble one together, sometimes posthumously. The ludicrous timeline in the Bolo shared world anthologies, which tries to tape together Keith Laumer's various Bolo stories into a coherent future history comes to mind; it seems obvious that Laumer never intended those stories and the Retief stories, to say nothing of his other SF, to all occupy the same universe, since he never said anything about it while he was alive, nor has anyone come up with correspondence or notes to support this daft notion.

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The Murdered Master Mage #13

for N'APA 230

George Phillies

48 Hancock Hill Drive

Worcester, MA 01609

phillies@4liberty.net

Remarks: Chris Nuttall and I have been working on a novel. I finished a first draft, and sent it off to him. Of course he is busy with his own writing, but that was a major time sink, now brought for the moment to a pause. Expect the N3F to be a bit more active in terms of what I am contributing.

Comments on the last issue: I continue to receive comments from people who have some clever alternative way of handling mailings. With great regularity I hear from someone who would like us to use MailChimp, but who has failed to read the MailChimp directives explaining that MailChimp cannot be used to send PDF attachments, meaning that MailChimp is completely useless for our purposes. I also get people suggesting that we should use AOL or some other mailing arrangement, neglecting to mention that there is then a very primitive set of arrangements for maintaining who is on the mailing list. I gather from our illustrious Treasurer that we may reasonably expect that we are in the process of moving our website and all the other software to Bluehost, at which point the file size limits that have been a bit of an annoyance will go away.

Archive Midwinter: congratulations on finishing another novel. Best of luck with marketing it, whatever path you choose to use. For the second (major rewrite) edition of MinuteGirls I used a prepublication announcement and then let it become available a few weeks later. This actually helped sales, though I am afraid my sales of fiction will not do anything complicated like maintaining my supply of coffee or tea. My textbooks on game design do much better.

Sympathies on the collision. If you do not want to attend the convention with more than fifteen hundred attendees, you will perhaps in particular not want to attend DragonCon, which is up to seventy thousand or eighty thousand. They take over the city center. The people of Atlanta, many of them love them.

Sketches of strange flowers: space and amusing poems to accompany them. That was very clever.

Silver State Age: ah, yes, reading. After months of no time, a week ago I read three novels, namely John Ringo's Live Free or Die, Greg Benford's The Berlin Project, and Colin Gee's Caissa. I will do full reviews of them for Tightbeam. Ringo is extremely fond of writing things that are slightly over the top. We may consider his vampire novels, in which one of the heroines, at age 13 and close to 6 feet, laments significantly on her lack of upper body strength. She then climbs a sixty or 80 foot line, while wearing a hundred or more pounds of body armor and random armaments, to assault a group of zombies. This includes the zombie for whom she expresses significant disapproval, namely picking him up over her head and throwing him over the side of the cruise liner she is in the process of boarding. As I said, Ringo is slightly fond of over-the-top characters. The Benford novel is an alternative history based on World War II and close and intimate familiarity with the details of the American atomic bomb project. In 1940 or so the United States had several alternatives for isotope separation; Benford argues that we chose the wrong one and that if we had chosen the right one using period technology Berlin would've been nuked in June 1944. That's something of an aside to the plot of the book. Caissa is the eighth and last volume of Gee's series of volumes on an alternative history in which World War III started in nineteen forty-five. The rationale for the start is that Churchill had had the British general staff prepare war plan dealing with the possibility that the Russians, having destroyed the German fascists, would now advance against the British and American fascists. The plan was highly hypothetical, rather like the American war plan for war with Canada in 1936. Alas, back in book 1, Stalin got his hands on the British war plan, and assumed it was an actual plan for attacking Russia in the immediate future. Events went downhill from there.

Re Yr Cts Glyer: there seems to be an increasingly deep division between branches of fandom. Note, for example, the fellow who proposed that another SF fan should be banned from all science fiction conventions, because the proposer disagreed with the political opinions of the fan in question.

Mercifully, the fan in question does not attend science fiction conventions, so the discussion is somewhat pointless. On the other hand, some of you will have seen the foofaraw about modern comic books and political correctness. I am reminded of the comic book *America*, complete with Sotomayor University, which at some point I began to realize appeared to be a parody on political correctness. If Supergirl has Lena Luthor on camera and Lex Luthor off-camera in prison, there are some very interesting character challenges to being the good Luthor and not the bad Luthor.

As a general aside, if you encounter people at science fiction conventions who are unsure whether or not they want to join the N3F, see if you can persuade them to become public members. All we need is their name and email address. It costs them nothing, and gets them our publications.

Synergy: I am pleased to report that one of the two needed award documents has finally been converted to a usable form, for which we may thank new member Christopher Flatt. As has been said before, thrust naught thigh spiel Chequers. I can assure you that your finds for zine covers are appreciated by N'APA.

With respect to my own future activity, I am going to be doing publicity for our short story contest and for the next issue of Eldritch Science. I expect to be doing something like one issue a year of that zine, depending on the contribution level. My recollection from the last time I was publishing it was that it was somewhat easier to get contributions, though there were a few erstwhile contributors who simply could not understand that they were submitting material that was completely ineligible to be considered further, so they simply kept submitting more of it. That was a pain in the neck.

The Girl Who Saved the World (continued)

The Speaking Stone eventually reached the American Ambassador. "Mind you," Buncombe said, "I would be remiss in my duties as Ambassador of the American Republic if I did not note that most of our citizens have a complete lack of sympathy with the League's assertion that it has a claim on the Namestone. The American position for centuries has been that the Namestone would belong to he who took it. I agree that many

Americans would also have preferred that Miss Eclipse simply joined the extremely long list of people who bet their lives against the Namestone and lost. We do not wish Miss Eclipse ill for performing her heroic deed, but the Namestone was better left in the Tomb in the hands of the Martyr." Several of Buncombe's colleagues glared in his direction. "Of course, it was two Americans who separately entered the Maze and were the only challengers ever to survive. They both quit while they were ahead." Some of Buncombe's colleagues turned beet red. Four appeared to be struggling to avoid breaking into laughter at his tweaking of the lion's tail. The English and Germans had lost the core of their navies in a prior attempt. The English "world chess champion", close to two centuries back, had declined to emulate his American challenger. First the Englishman had dodged the challenger, when the challenger had visited England. Then the challenger had entered the Maze, won all his games, and dared the Englishman to duplicate his feat. "In any event, my Republic's frugal Congress may well take its own good time about authorizing any part of our very limited incomes to be spent in Miss Eclipse's pursuit, assuming that our Congress in its wisdom does not decide that she is the proper owner. We are a poor and thrifty nation and have better uses for our meager resources." Buncombe silently congratulated himself on saying his final few sentences with a straight face. It was hardly a secret that the American Republic was by a very considerable margin the wealthiest country in the world.

"Last but most important, America is a sovereign nation. Foreign attacks on our citizens and residents, including in particular attacks on the hypothetical Miss Eclipse if she is an American, would seemingly be acts of war and will be treated as such. We have no intent of sending our armed forces abroad in pursuits of willow-the-wisps. We will, however, consider favorably requests for assistance from countries in the Americas. Furthermore, President Daniel Oliver Webster has indicated that if the Governors-General of any of the Canadian Dominions requests emergency aid, then, so long as the Queen-Empress and her Ministers do not object, arrangements might perhaps be made. After all, if your neighbor's house is on fire, you break out the hoses first, and consider your minor historical disagreements with

your neighbor after the fire is extinguished.” From the looks on various faces, Buncombe had indeed set several foxes loose in neighboring chicken coops. American foreign policy had for centuries been based on total noninvolvement in foreign affairs. Protecting southern neighbors from the IncoAztec Empire was viewed as a domestic matter, given the series of wars that had been fought between America and the Aztecs. And now, Buncombe thought, he had announced a minor change in American foreign policy. Buncombe handed the Speaking Stone to Ambassador Featherstonehaugh.

“Curiously,” Featherstonehaugh said, “the position of Queen Victoria, the Third of her Name, and her Ministers is in many respects similar to that of the American Republic. I realize this circumstance may sound surprising to some. In particular, Her Majesty’s government is disenthused with the notion that foreigners are entitled to appear in our country uninvited with the intent of using our lochs and rills to fight a war. Her Majesty and Her Government must categorically and absolutely refuse to be responsible for the consequences to the invaders and their nations if such an event were to occur. While I could go on at greater length, I am in the common position of Final Opening Speaker, namely I believe that we might all find it useful to consult with our governments about your preliminary remarks, some of which were not what official positions would have led us to expect. Naturally, we are all gentlemen and ladies, and do not employ spies,” the room burst into giggles, “so none of us have any non-official knowledge before the meeting of what was about to be said. If any of you are curious, my actual prepared introductory remarks are in the meeting packet. I will be happy to meet privately with any of you who have questions on it. I therefore propose a pleasant recess.”

“Does anyone else want to be heard on this matter?” Holmgren asked.

“Manjukuo pledges one hundred tons of gold to the persons who locate and catch Eclipse, and gain for us the Namestone,” Manjukuoan Legate Hong Sangu interrupted. Holmgren smiled and applauded. His audience might need a little while to realize that this interruption was pre-rehearsed.

“In that case,” Holmgren continued, “I propose that we recess until after dinner, so that we may receive instructions. I see several objection pyramids on the table. Those might perhaps be the first order of business this evening. Is there objection to a recess? Hearing none, we are recessed.” Holmgren wished he had not seen Buncombe and Featherstonehaugh exchange knowing glances. What might that unlikely duo be planning? A lack of world peace would be an incredible disaster, and that lack might appear rather quickly. He took another deep sip from one of his vest flasks. This meeting had gone no farther than preliminary remarks, and already the latent hostilities between the Great Powers were coming to the surface.

Chapter Seven

The High Chamber

The House That Is Forever

January 14, 2018

Around a gold-inlaid teak table waited the Lords of Eternity. An empty chair marked Solara’s daughter Corinne, she who lies sleeping until her death may die. Prince Mong-ku sat at the table’s head. It was one of those centuries, he thought. As had been true for far longer than normal mortals suspected, it was again his turn to maintain civility. Of the twelve at the table, only the Screaming Skull wore formal garb. Solara had donned a white silk tabard. Starsmasher was in another of his seemingly infinite supply of vest-and-cardigan sweater combinations. Plasmatrix, she who was indeed Plasmatrix-The-Desolation-Of-The-Goddess, was for a change wearing real clothing, not her usual strategically-placed bits of incandescent plasma, plasma carefully locked behind force screens so it would not burn down whichever building she approached. If the Prince’s ruby and bronze silk robe and layered garments underneath somewhat resembled garb, it was that his breakfast hour was yet approaching, and a housecoat seemed highly appropriate, given the hour in his normal time zone.

“Having managed to sleep through the whole thing,” Prince Mong-ku observed querulously, “it is nonetheless my duty to describe the situation that required summoning this meeting. Why shouldn’t I have slept through it? After all, surely no one in their right mind expected this unknown nonentity to solve the Maze. It’s absurd. Nonetheless, this Eclipse person managed to walk the paths of the

Maze, beat down every obstacle, and remembered that she wanted the Martyr to give her the expletive-deleted Namestone. Then she just stood there while the Europa Elite Team hit her with dear me, a truly great deal, not to mention that one of us expressed his disapproval of her continued life.”

“Worse,” the Screaming Skull said, “after I expressed my extreme disapproval of her basal metabolism, she was still standing, seemingly unharmed. And now she has disappeared without a trace.”

“Berndt,” Prince Mong-ku addressed Starsmasher, “don’t our files show anything? After all, the whole world only has a billion people, of whom perhaps five or so million are personas of any significance. Surely a list of the personas with her gifts -- starting with starcore class force fields and second order shields -- ought to be limited.” My dear colleagues, the Prince thought, are supposed to be contributing part of their efforts to completing the Great Plan. For once, I have a path to making them give the Plan the attention it is owed. Besides, Berndt is one of the really intelligent people here; he may have a solution.

“The new Bearer is clearly none of the Eclipses whose persona names are widely known,” Starsmasher answered calmly. “Actually, there are a good twenty of them, of whom ten are astronomers, space travellers and teleporters who can move satellite telescopes to useful locations. Not one is a young woman. Nor is any a shapeshifter who could disguise themselves as a young woman. Having said that, you are the persona you choose to be. Someone could have assumed this Eclipse persona, garb and all, just for a day.”

“We can rule that one out,” Solara announced. “Niederhof’s has revealed that Eclipse is a customer. She’s one of the ‘reduced rate if you let us display replicas of your garb when you become famous’ people. In a few days, replicas of all of her garbs will be on display.”

“Speaking of useless information,” the Screaming Skull commented. Now, Mong-Ku thought, the Screaming Skull will spend the next century, unless he kills Eclipse first, inflicting on us his annoyance that she declined to die.

“That is actually significant,” Plasmatrix said.

“How?” Starsmasher asked. “For reasons we all know, absolutely no one can penetrate Niederhof’s security. Niederhof might know who she is, but he will not talk. And boasting that they made her garb is good for their business.”

“She paid cash,” Solara answered. “Gold coins, melted down at once. That I got from one of my European friends.” Featherstonehaugh, she considered, was in his tastes remarkably like his great-grandfather, if slightly taller and stronger. But this time the Silver General had disappeared from sight.

“Ah,” Prince Mong-ku answered, his face wrinkled with smiles. Now, he thought, he would get to explain the obvious. What game was Starsmasher playing? He surely saw the issue. “Niederhof’s does not make that offer to the hoi polloi. It would reduce their profits. And, obviously, they did not make that deal after she did the Maze: She already had the garb. No, whoever she is, they figured out in advance that she might be a person of adequate importance, even though she was completely unknown at the time.”

“Niederhof is a clever fellow, not a clairvoyant,” the Screaming Skull objected. “He would have had to have had evidence that she might become important. What could that have been?”

“Eclipse. Not well known.” Plasmatrix ticked choices off on her fingers, hoping as she did that her fellows would see her point. “Not a known protégé. Actually, except screens and teleportation, not a lot of power that we have seen. Teleporters aren’t quite a dime a dozen, especially ones who risk the Dark Side of the Moon in one jump.” Mong-ku nodded politely. For all her eccentric taste in garb, Plasmatrix had a real brain and did not hesitate to use it.

“That, by the way, is where she lost me,” Dark Shadow said. “What’s left?”

“Rare and subtle gifts,” Prince Mong-ku said. “She did have second-order screens, good ones; few indeed are the people outside the room with those. Her rhetoric was training, not something engifted.” He paused.



Synergy 8

**N'apa mailing #230, September 2017-
National Fantasy Fan Federation**

**Editor is John Thiel, 30 N. 19th Street,
Lafayette, Indiana 47904**

kinethiel@comcast.net



EDITORIAL CHAIR

People looking at my email address might wonder why it says “Kine Thiel” on it by way of identification. Originally this was “kein”, the German term for “none” or “nothing” which came to mean among GIs of my acquaintance autonomy or independence, so that several people were referring to themselves as “the kein”. Then after awhile they called one another “the kein”, or “kein such and such”, including me, so that I was called “Kein Thiel” from time to time. The thing was friendly enough. But I brought up the word “kine”, which meant part of a flock or herd, much to their dismay as this was not autonomy but the word sounded like the other word. They

remarked on how dispirited would be the sound of calling someone “the Kine” instead of “The Kein”. They tried it out and I said I didn’t care if it came around to me, I knew well enough whether I was cattle or not and if someone else didn’t, at least they wouldn’t attack me after using that name. But there was a call for peace from someone who wanted to change that word “kein” to “kind”. So they tried that one out on me. “Kind Thiel”. I said, “That’s better than kine, because it could also mean one of the kind, a kindred person.” If I was kind, well enough, and if not, the use of the term was seduction. Now I use this term on my email address meaning I am one of many of the users of the email and the computer. But if I called myself “The Kind” it would be disputed.

The first thing that comes to mind about N’APA 229 is that I sent George Phillies the same art for the back page or “cover” that I was using on Synergy—an appalling mistake. Well, who’s to notice but us people here, and we can all understand a thing like that coming to pass. My apologies anyway for the discrepancy this has effected in our normally smoother run.

I was talking about N’APA with Tom McGovern, a person recently returned to the N3F who had formerly been the OE of N’APA (during my own last stint in the N3F), and was surprised to find that he had absolutely no interest in returning to the apa he had once governed. Apparently he had lost interest entirely in the apa while having regained his interest in the N3F. (Talking? Not exactly, we were “conversing” by ground mail.)

My overall impression of the NFFF this time is that it is moving into a stable orbit and then work could begin on recovering things the NFFF has had, just as NASA might set up a space lab once in.



A LOOK AT THE LINEUP

ARCHIVE MIDWINTER: I was able to understand the warning about not sending Pdf files, but have not been secure about what a Pdf file is. I was told, in doing an exclusive zine for efanazines (the efanazines site) that Bill Burns would happily transform what I sent into Pdf format, making it displayable, and to ensure that he did this or gave me further information about it, I named the zine THE PDF DRAGON.. I am not even certain what a file is, as the computer lingo is inexact in standard definatory terms, and “file” seems to have a somewhat abstruse meaning, there being no file cabinets involved. Seeing your comment, I am now also wondering what a docx is.

Sizing is always a problem for me, I don't need a Kindle (which everyone seems to have, and dote on) to give me trouble. I can only hope that what I've got on the screen looks the same way to others as I have gotten it to look for me. Of the small amount of

feedback I've gotten on SURPRISING STORIES, a good part of it is complaints of difficulty in reading, which I don't find to be the case with what I've put on my own screen and presented online.

I'm glad you enjoyed DARK SECRET. What most struck me about the book was the virtual wipe-out of the human race in its entirety. Those escaping to carry on the human seed seemed like an eccentric group in terms of being, as it were, chosen as survivors. If they hadn't had all those embryos with them their survival wouldn't have amounted to much. Also I am wondering if the drive to carry on the human species really exists among the doomed. Their flight was described as being of magnum importance among people who were awaiting extinction.

Morris Scott Dollens first advertised in Ron Smith's fanzine INSIDE & SCIENCE FICTION ADVERTISER saying he would do fantasy art for fanzines for a small price. There was a small sample of his art along with the ad. It looked good and I said I wanted a large piece of art for a cover for my fanzine which I could photo-reproduce, unlike the rest of the zine. He sent me a sample booklet of photographic art and I found several I wanted to use in it. I started corresponding with him about art. Some time thereafter he was with semi-pro magazines and then was doing a wide variety of work, but he didn't appear in any professional science fiction magazines that I ever saw. Nonetheless he had a considerable influence on science fiction art via the fanzines.

I'd have to get George Phillies to consider the idea of additional text material and make recommendations about it to get any further with my idea. I'm just holding it out now over the open fire to see if it cooks.

Will Mayo is generally ambiguous in what he writes; he's that

way about things. I got him to send a poem to George for Eldritch Science; I hope he will use it. The poem seemed to me right online for Eldritch Science.

I used to have THE HOUSE OF A THOUSAND CANDLES in my house, acquired at a library sale of books being discarded. I only scanned my way through the book, as it didn't have precisely what I wanted in reading material, but I used the book with its title for black magic and eventually gave the book to someone. So I got some effect out of the book. It has a sense of nostalgia about it.

THE SILVER STATE AGE: I was happy to see that you're re-activating in the recruiting department. I pointed out in TNFF that you would be the one who would check on the recruitments to see if anyone had received an award, whereas all I am doing is talking about recruitments. We want to find a way to function together, and I think that defines it—myself, publicity, yourself, business activity, with whatever overlaps may occur. Let me know if that's the correct adjustments. I became a part of the recruiting team without much information on what to do.

Isn't that just like disassembling something?—when you reassemble it, something won't fit in place. The specialists have to get it done, so they manage it by hook or crook. Don't ask Jefferson Swycaffer for that Kindle Edition, if he does have Kindle copies they might not transfer in the right sizes.

At first your type was difficult to read, being smaller than the others, but I clicked "open" on the left side of my screen, and got a larger view, but not really enough larger to be comfortable with, so I clicked "view" and then located and clicked "read mode" and got good reading, so I'd suggest "read mode" for any with this

problem, but maybe others don't have "open", "view", and "read mode" on their options, so the advice would be specious, and all I could advise is to fool around with what they do have and see if anything works without shifting you to a different program or something. With SYNERGY I'm doing it in large type even for a small edition and I suppose it might look ghastly if enlarged, or if it already appears on someone else's screen in a larger form. In this issue I've used smaller type matching Swycaffer's for size.

You say RYC where Jefferson says RCT, it seems like. I don't know either abbreviation.

I don't know where complaints are accepted about the old-age speedup, but I've heard the complaint a lot.

I recall being on President Koch's publicity committee (Laurraine Tutihasi was also on it) and we worked to set up an N3F booth or room at a convention but I wasn't able to get information about how successful or unsuccessful we had been. At one time the N3F was well set up at conventions.

MASTER MAGE: As I was telling you on the Round Robin, that collaboration with Mr. Nuttall seems well worth seeing. Every Neffer should want a copy.

I'd also describe leaf removal as a problem to be gotten through. The leaf pickup here is somewhat in shambles, the no dumping ordinance exists everywhere, and no burning leaves at home is enforced. I imagine some fans would be pleased to drop by and look at all your flowers, saying "This is the house, all right" while looking at the various blooms. But you say they've actually seen some of them.

HMM: Looking around for the other member's zine, don't see it.



art, Dollens

Yes, folks, this is the bacover.

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 230

by Jefferson P. Swycaffer
P.O. Box 15373
San Diego CA 92175

(619) 303-1855
abontides@gmail.com
jpswycaffer.com

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Mailing Comments:

Cover: Futuristic "City" art! I love it! I want to live in cities where the architecture is as cool as that. (And...y'know...truth to tell...I do!)

Kevin Trainor Jr.: Aye! Reading is more than just a joy, it really is a "way of life." It astonishes me (and rather frightens me) to realize how many people do not read. Many don't read at all, but far more don't read for joy. One of my best friends is a frustrated writer, who has finished four novels and is working on a fifth...and her husband does not read books for fun. It just isn't part of his life.

There are aliens among us!

Speaking of Audacity and converting cassettes, I'm still doing that, as my sister likes to record books on tape, and I turn the cassettes into CDs.

re "storytelling" role-playing-games, those really are close to my ideal. I'm not really comfortable with "nuts and bolts" systems, like GURPS, which govern everything in painstaking (or merely painful) detail. I'd much rather have a more loosey-goosey system



that allows for improvisation. But -- and this is absolutely key -- you have to have a referee and other players who all can trust each other. You have to have the respect and the integrity that make "pure" storytelling fun. Some people are simply not capable of engaging in the balancing that is required.

It takes a particularly ethical kind of gamer to walk into a trap that the player knows is a trap, but his character doesn't know is a trap. I have, alas, seen players bend the boundaries, and direct their characters to perform actions that weren't justified on the basis of character knowledge. It makes me sad, and, by and large, I try not to game with that sort of player.

Also...power-gamers don't get to realize the dramatic potential inherent in "bad things." As one fellow-gamer of mine once said, regarding his character, "In debt, blind, and addicted to laudanum? Cool!" For the character, it's not much fun at all...but for a true story-teller, wow, the possibilities!

George Phillies: Gardening is a pastime totally alien to me, alas. But my sister and brother-in-law are gardening fiends! He is currently developing a dry-gulch out on their ranch, which was hit very hard by erosion in the recent rains. He's planting ornamental stuff, but with an eye toward erosion control. (That, and laying out long lines of sand-bags!) I couldn't tell you the names of a single

one of their shrubs and flowers; to me, that is terra incognita. But he's building up a lovely little "secret grotto" with drip-lines and moisture-mist nozzles and the like, and the bamboo is already taller than I am!

Interesting section of "The Girl Who Saved the World." I like how you've moved back into the "high" realm -- governments and power politics and diplomatic leverage and the like. The dissonance in your story between the "high" and the "low" is, I think, what makes it particularly effective, almost magical. Also, I love the surrealism engendered by the dissonance between the familiar and the alien. You talk about places we know -- Boston and Germany and the like -- but they aren't our world! You've devised a brave new world that has echoes of ours, but which is almost impossibly alien to us. Fun!

John Thiel: Fun cover! It makes me think, a little, of the quip in a recent "Freefall" (web comic) where an alien was musing on how humans behave. Others look at the cosmos and wonder what their place is, and are awed by the grandeur of the spectacle: humans just reach out and yell, "Mine!"

Ayup! We crossed hawsers indeed, me commenting on "Dark Secret" at the same time you asked what I thought of it. I did enjoy it, perhaps more than my notes made it seem. On the other hand, it had faults and flaws, more, perhaps, than most of what I have been reading lately.

(But more on that anon!)

Back Cover: Another nifty futuristic city-scape! Yay! Maybe I'm just a doggone lefty liberal -- but I prefer to think of myself as a scion of the Enlightenment and the Renaissance -- but I really do like cities and rather distrust "the country." I grew up in a very small town (which, ironically, has grown up to be a mini-city of its own!) It was (in the days of my youth) a nasty, small-minded place, full of

bitterness and bigotry. I remember when the first black family moved in -- and were shunned. They weren't assaulted, but they were given "the cut direct." If they walked into a store, everyone else walked out. That kind of thing happens in big cities too -- but less. Cities have more resources, more tools, more avenues toward social functionality. It's a lot harder to organize a boycott among 40,000 people than it is among 1,500.

Cities are my religion.

H. Rider Haggard

I went on a bit of a Haggard binge lately, and, to be honest, I regret it. It was a waste of my time. The guy simply is not that good. How he ever got to be as famous and well-respected as he is must remain a mystery to me.

1) Long monologues. He will have people give speeches before crowds...that go on for pages and pages. These are extremely uncomfortable to read.

2) Episodic plots. His stories are "strings of pearls," episodes that follow one another, much in the style of the picaresque novels of an earlier age. In fact, in many ways, Haggard is "behind his time." Other writers of his era -- and many who were earlier than he was -- don't suffer from this kind of naive narrative structure, but he hales to the tradition, and it undermines the dramatic wholeness of his books. His books aren't novels; they're just sequences of adventures.

3) Telegraphy. He gives away FAR too much in advance! He loves telling the reader what is going to happen. His narrators spoil events terribly. "I was never to see him alive again." "If I had known then what I know now, I never would have opened that door." "I would learn, before the end, how wrong I was to trust him." etc. (These are only approximate quotes from memory, and not exact attributions. To be honest, I'm simply damned if I'm going to waste the time it

would take me to research these properly!) I consider judicious foreshadowing to be a valuable literary tool. But telling the ending of the story, well before the midpoint of the book, is shabby. It makes the reading experience into an exercise in futility.

I found myself skimming, more and more, and reading with my full focus and attention, less and less. Ultimately, about halfway through "Montezuma's Daughter," I gave up and took to speed-skimming. The book simply had lost all possible interest for me.

Another Failure:

I took a run at the "Arsene Lupin" novels by Maurice Leblanc. These are famous (in their way) for glorifying a "gentleman thief," quite similar to E.W. Hornung's gentleman safecracker, A.J. Raffles. (I do not know which came first!) I was looking forward to some suavity, to some "drawing room drama-of-manners," to something a bit sophisticated.

Rather disappointed. The two and a half Lupin novels I read were dreary. They share, with the Raffles novels (which I also found disappointing) a serious proclivity on the part of the author to cheat. Leblanc lies to the reader, or otherwise makes insulting simplifications which defy reality. He's fond of having secret passages in walls...which, apparently, no one has the arithmetical skills to discover. He's fond of having his policeman act like fools and cowards -- even after he's spent a great deal of time puffing them up into formidable foes. He's fond of his hero exercising daring escapes...which depend on foreknowledge he could not have obtained.

Basically...he's too much in love with his own hero, and thus we suffer from a severe dramatic imbalance.

If that weren't enough, he spills ink over hagiography, making his thief into a "good guy" by absurd twists of logic (illogic!) and, if that

weren't sickening enough, he also gives Lupin an element of pathos, emphasizing his deep emotional suffering. The fatuity was stultifying.

The novel I couldn't even finish was the big showdown between Lupin and "Herlock Sholmes." This begins badly, as "Wilson," Sholmes' companion, is of the Nigel Bruce variety: a lumping, inane, shallow, bone-headed bumpkin. But it is not at all long before the reader sees that Leblanc is painting Sholmes as a dunce, taking away any conceivable anticipation the reader might have of an epic battle of wits. Leblanc is one of those insecure writers who must have all the plot elements favor his hero, and none of them turn to his hero's disadvantage.

This is really rotten writing.

Meredith Nicholson and A.E.W. Mason

These writers, on the other hand, continue to make me very happy. Their little romances are shallow, and filled with slightly hackneyed dramatic contrivances, but the characters have depth and significance, and the emotions are real and valid. Mason is fond of extremely elaborate plots, highly intricate and involute. Nicholson is more straight-forward, and engages in fewer experimental tonalities. Mason likes to showcase sudden reversals of fortune and other plot-twists, while Nicholson's story-lines are less theatrical and a bit more realistic (or naturalistic.)

I like their heroes....and they don't write "villains!" They depict antagonists, to be sure, but not "bad guys" of the cartoon "Snidely Whiplash" model. ("Dishonest John, you bad guy!") I have always had the greatest respect for writers who can give their heroes well-fleshed-out opposition, instead of "cardboard villains."



*That's All,
Folks*