



N'APN 231

# The Official Organ

## #231

**Next deadline: January 15, 2017**

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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](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net); 508 754 1859; and on facebook.

To join this APA, contact the Editor, George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609.

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 is always totally regular, though some readers question my interpretations of "is", "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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In this issue:

**Front Cover .... Found by John Thiel**

**The Official Organ #231**

**Notes from a Galaxy Far, Far Away #10** Lorien Rivendell – 6 Pages

**The Murdered Master Mage #14** George Phillies – 4 Pages

**Synergy #9** John Thiel - 7 pages

**Archive Midwinter for #231** Jefferson Swycaffer – 2 pages

**The Silver State Age #8** Kevin Trainor – 6 pages

**Back Cover .... Found by John Thiel**

## NOTES FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY #10

November 2017

For N'APA 231

Lorien Rivendell

(Lauren Clough)

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Hmmm...it seems I misnumbered my last NFAGFFA. I ended up with 2 #8 issues, but the file name for the second one did say it was #9, but I didn't change the number on the header of the zine. I'm sure I'm the only one keeping track, but it bothers me. I appear to be back on track, though.

I even went through and made an index of sorts of all the issues of N'APA that I have. It seems I'm missing N'APA #220. Or, more accurately, it wouldn't open when I went to re-read it recently. I'm using a new laptop. Maybe I should have checked it on the old Chromebook before deleting it from Google Drive. Maybe it doesn't really matter. It was from January 2016, so nearly 2 years ago at this point. It's the issue that contained NFAGFFA #2.

Gosh, it's all my fault that we can no longer submit .pdf documents. It seems when I convert documents from Google Docs to .pdf, instead of getting smaller (or at least staying the same size), they get larger. A lot larger, in fact. It does this both on my Chromebook and my phone. In fact, it doesn't seem to matter what program I use on my phone, because when I use a scanner app on my phone, anything larger than two pages is too large to email, and I get a message asking if I want to make it smaller. Making the file the smallest size doesn't seem to affect the quality of the document, so I don't understand why there is even a choice of size. Why can't the app just make it small? It's less than ideal not being able to convert to .pdf, because I take care to make sure page breaks are in a place I find aesthetically pleasing. In reality, it doesn't really matter, and no one will care 100 years from now. Probably. Then again, some N3F archivist in 2117 may compile old issues of N'APA into a book and format will matter.

I'm pretty much settled in my new place. I've been here for 9 months now. Work is still going well. My immediate supervisor resigned in late spring. I was offered the position of supervisor back. I gave it some thought before saying, "thanks, but no thanks." We subsequently got a new supervisor who, so far, seems decent enough.

This is interesting, at least to me: Verizon got out of the email business and I had the option to migrate my Verizon email over to AOL or to some other email server. Now it

seems Yahoo has been purchased by Verizon. No word yet on what will happen to my Yahoo email. The change apparently happened some time in June (I was behind in reading my Yahoo email and read it in July) and clearly, my Yahoo email is still functional in October. (Whether Yahoo is safe or not remains to be seen. I change my password periodically.)

My cat of 10 years passed away rather suddenly in September. We were on the way to the emergency vet at midnight when she passed *en route*. RIP, Precious. Her assumed birthday would have been on Halloween.

I finally broke down and purchased a new laptop. It's an HP and runs on Windows 10. I'm not loving it, but it beats the Chromebook. I can actually download and use programs again. It has a battery life of 20 minutes. Or it seems that short. It claims, of course, to have a battery life of up to 8 hours. 2 hours certainly doesn't *exceed* 8 hours, so I guess they are technically correct.

I'm writing this in October, because November will be consumed by National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo), where I write a novel of 50,000 words entirely within the month of November. I've succeeded in getting 50,000 words several times (and have fallen short several times), but by the end, nothing has particularly resembled a novel. If I put off my zine until November, I know it would have just been shoved aside, as it has for the past 6 months.

### **COMMENTS ON N'APA #228**

Jefferson Swycaffer, Archive Midwinter: When I was a kid, things I ordered took 6-8 weeks to arrive. Now I get distressed when Amazon Prime's two-day shipping actually takes three days. But time does move much faster now than it ever did before. I'm sure it's a matter of perspective, but ... maybe it really does move faster.

I realize there already are driverless vehicles in certain places. It's scary to think they might be coming to a road near me, though. We have hills and curves and all sorts of bad drivers to negotiate. Flat, open road might be better. On tracks would be even better. Anywhere that's not here is better. At least, I won't have to deal with them if they are elsewhere.

Kevin Trainor, The Silver State Age #5: I hope you have long since recovered from your automobile accident. They can be quite the pain physically and emotionally. I'm glad you got to upgrade your car in the process.

George Phillis, The Murdered Master Mage #11: Dysfunctional families are certainly more interesting than perfect families in fiction (they are also more interesting in real life, at least from a voyeuristic point of view).

Human drivers ... they don't stop at stop signs or red lights, they drift into my lane on the highway, they don't yield to cars already in the rotary ....

10,000 words? *A day?* I'm doing very well if I can manage 50,000 words in a month. And those aren't *good* words. Not by a long shot.

On the other hand, I had to Google Chris Nuttall, because I had never heard of him, 50 books notwithstanding. I'll have to check out one of his books one of these days. I have an incredible backlog of unread books as it is, though. I'll never get to all the books I have, not even if I retire right this minute and read 24 hours a day for the next 20 years. (Okay, maybe I could do it then. But not if I keep adding books to the pile faster than I can read them.)

Ah, yes, I brake for "mystery objects," also. Blowing leaves is one example of such an object.

John Thiel, Synergy 6: A publication for newcomers - and even veteran members - sounds like a great idea. It sounds like you have something like a directory in mind. It seems like a who's who in N3F would be beneficial to all. Whatever it looks like, with computers, it shouldn't take much to update periodically, when the need arises. In fact, I seem to recall receiving a directory of members at one point back in the 1990s. The idea isn't so very far out there.

I'd personally like to see more online stuff going on. We have a Facebook group, but we are not very active. In fact, I never think to post anything there. I'm also a member of a Star Wars FB group and a Star Trek FB group, but I don't really have much to do with either of those groups, either. Most of the time, FB doesn't show me updates in any of those groups, so I tend to forget they exist until I do get a notification.

Congrats on recruiting so many new members. Well done!

### **COMMENTS ON N'APA #229**

Jefferson Swycaffer, Archive Midwinter: I'm sure the no pdf rule is all because of me. Or me and my possessed electronics.

It *is* a bit of a pain to read pdf documents on a kindle, because of the problems you describe. For a short while, that was the only way I could read N'APA. Fortunately, my electronics got beyond that and I can now read on my laptop. I've got a Kindle Fire, so it's more of a tablet. It's not really all that wonderful, as it turns out, at least not as a tablet. It's just fine as a reader.

Regarding the guy who made a Flintstones laptop and piano computer desk: some people are awesomely clever.

I'm sorry to hear about the loss of one job, yet happy to hear that you found something that seems much more suitable.

I haven't checked out Project Gutenberg's offerings since I discovered Kindle. I should go back. It might keep me from going broke.

Kevin Trainor, The Silver State Age #6: I'm glad you were able to go to a con and to hang around frugally. I hope you had an opportunity to catch up with your old friend before heading back west.

Do you build your own computers? My brother built himself a laptop of sorts. It's Raspberry Pi (I think that's the spelling). His isn't battery operated, but I think he said he could purchase a battery pack if he wants. It looks a little cobbled together, but it does the job and makes him happy, so what can I say? Plus, he's a big computer geek, so he understands all that stuff.

I got rid of a whole lot of stuff I'd forgotten I owned. I figured, if I forgot I even had it, how can I possibly miss it when it's gone?

I now have Windows 10, and I have to wonder what's next. I asked my brother, and he said that they were planning on just keeping making 10 better. Or tampering with 10 and vexing customers might be more like it. I don't think he thinks for one minute that Windows will ever get better.

George Phillies, The Murdered Master Mage #11: I found your YouTube conference videos. I had pictured science fiction, not politics. Regardless the theme, running a national conference must be quite challenging at times.

A garden is something else I find considerably challenging. I manage to kill everything I walk by. I do enjoy other people's gardens. My housemate enjoys growing flowers, and

she entered some arrangements into the county fair. She didn't expect to win anything and walked away with three ribbons.

I'd like eventually to move to a tiny house, a phenomenon that has gained momentum in the past few years. I definitely do not look forward to going through my mother's house when she passes. I do plan on her being around for another 20 or so years, so I don't plan on having to deal with it for a while. I may just solve the problem by donating it to the local fire department for a controlled burn.

John Thiel, Synergy 7: Congrats on the Kaymar Award!

I like stories in which modern people are dependent on technology which is suddenly taken away in an apocalypse. They must find a way to do without or die. And then there is real life, when the power goes out and all our technology becomes useless. Fortunately, it typically lasts for 5 minutes to an hour, but with the recent wind storm, I have heard that some areas may not get their power back for a few days. (Thankfully, I am not one of those who lost power at all.)

"Tempus tantrum." I like it!

### **COMMENTS ON N'APA #230**

Kevin Trainor, The Silver State Age #7: That must have been a huge relief to have all charges regarding the accident dropped.

Sadly, I'm afraid it will be more the younger generation who will have the hardest time coping if technology ever goes away. Then again, even though I'm now older, I did grow up with a fair amount of technology. It *would* be a bit of an adjustment. I have told people that I spin, knit, and crochet in the event of a zombie apocalypse.

George Phillies, The Murdered Master Mage #13: I have *no clue* how mailing lists work, so I have no useful suggestions or opinions. When I sent out mass mailings to community band members, I just had a group set up in my email server. That worked well for about 50-75 people (not all of those people were active members, mind you, but I kept former and sometimes members in the loop just in case they wanted to return at any point).

John Thiel, Synergy 8: Interesting about "kine" and "kein," since I am unfamiliar with either word.

Sometimes I say “talking” when I mean conversing by text or Facebook or some other written medium. It’s all good, as they say. I find it quite interesting that a lot of our language today is a holdover from an earlier time. “Files,” as mentioned by you is one of those. How many of us actually dial a phone these days?

I have noticed that the various zines in this edition have different sizes of font. Since I am viewing on a laptop, I click “ctrl” and “+” to increase the size and “ctrl” and “-” to decrease it again. (My mother uses a magnifying glass to view her own laptop screen, and I’ve told her about how to enlarge the type multiple times.)

I’m pretty sure “RYC” is “regarding your comment” and “RCT” is “regarding comment to.” These make sense to me in context, at any rate, rather the way misheard song lyrics make sense to me.

Jefferson Swycaffer, Archive Midwinter: I just can’t imagine not reading ever. I may not read as often as I would like these days, but I do enjoy it when I do get the chance.

I don’t know the names of too many plants. I typically call them “the orange flower” or “that pink thing over there.”

## **The Murdered Master Mage #13**

**for N'APA 230**

**George Phillis**

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Remarks: The novel went off to Chris Nuttall for his half of the work. Chris is momentarily distracted because he is about to become a father again. Someday the novel will see the light of day.

**Silver State Age:** We are happy to hear that your interaction with the Nevada authorities turned out in a reasonably satisfactory manner. My own weather has been early fall, with temperatures in the 50s or 60s, until yesterday, when I got to rake leaves and the temperature was 28. I did find my nice wool cap to keep my ears warm. On the other hand, I have one day of hauling all of the flower leaves, hosta and aster and daylily leaves being large and clumsy, from where they are dumped in the backyard out to the street so that the city will pick them up, and then I have at least one more day of raking, if not 2 or 3. For some reason, even though my land is not significantly larger than my neighbors, I end up with vastly more leaves to pick up. Perhaps, as in that strange science-fiction novel of some decades back, complete with the Dean Drive powered submarine, someone is sneaking around in the darkness and spreading their leaves across my lawn so I will have work to do. In that case, I should be entirely grateful for their generosity, for surely generosity is always a virtue. My most recent novel read is the latest of SM Stirling's Emberverser series, complete with a dream quest through several very strange alternative realities. The short pass through the place where the President of the United States is appealing to the citizenry to protect the country by sacrificing their firstborn to the or self-immolate themselves was particularly noteworthy.

Yes, I agree that doing taxes is a great nuisance. Until last year, I had an accountant to handle things, but she discovered that the cost of all of the now legally-required training and other good stuff had gone up to the point that she couldn't afford to continue. I now rely on TurboTax, though perhaps this year I will telephone them and ask them to tell me how to handle one of the peculiar quirks in the system. It refuses to submit unless it is given an employer identification number for everyone who

paid me. I am paid by several foreign places for book royalties and the foreign places have absolutely no interest in dealing with our Internal Revenue Service, as by acquiring an EIN that I can supply. I therefore printed my returns and shipped them off to wherever, eventually receiving a refund check based on having overestimated a bit in January.

There are points where one would usefully revert to a lower tech level, and there are points where knowing how to persuade this that or the other living creature to synthesize antibiotics would be a good deal.

**Synergy:** I think we are all entirely grateful to you for supplying us with interesting artwork. The cover of the last issue, the fellow in the robes clutching the book with the strange background was particularly impressive. With respect to sending me your zine electronically your software presumably will generate some sort of a text file, an RTF or DOC or the like. Several of these will allow you to insert pictures where you want them to appear. If you or anyone else wants to send me a PDF file, please see that the file size is hundreds of KB, not tens of thousands of KB. Actually, if you try to email me the latter, it simply won't get here. The file you sent me last time was just fine.

I do not myself own a Kindle. I occasionally have interesting interactions with electronic enthusiasts. When asked about my telephone, I inquire if they want to talk about the ones with the pushbuttons, or the one with the rotary dial. On one occasion I had someone show up from the local network provider who also handles television. He stood in front of my house waving his gadget and announced that he was unable to find my router. Fortunately, I realize by router he did not mean a woodworking tool, but an electronic gadget, and had some difficulty explaining to him that if he wanted to communicate with the router he needed to run a cable from this gadget he was waving to one of the ethernet ports in my house. He did not have a cable with him, and it was not clear to me that his gadget actually had a socket into which you could plug the cable. A workaround was found.

I agree with you that the N3F is gradually trending in an upwards direction. That trend surely began when David Speakman became president. Before

then we had some wonderful people who did keep the group together over a long period of time and we should be extremely grateful to them.

**Archive Midwinter** I'm glad you liked the last section of *The Girl Who Saved the World*. You are going to be seeing some more politics for a few episodes yet. As I have somewhat said, there are some good parts of gardening and some bad parts of gardening, but it does keep you busy outside at least a fair number of days a week. Another week, though, and all that should be done until next spring. I did start rebuilding the stone borders in hither and thither. The difficulty is that rocks are sitting on soil and tend to sink in so you have to dig the rocks out, put stuff underneath, and put the rocks back down. Also, the rocks tend to be disturbed by raking processes if you are not careful, and things get out of order a bit.

You gave us an interesting critique of H Rider Haggard. There is a point at which I simply quit reading a book, stare at the end to see if anything interesting is happened, and put the book on a shelf.

I have never heard of Maurice LeBlanc before, but now know that I should avoid him. Wilson and Mason sounded a bit more interesting, but perhaps a book title or two would've been useful in your analysis. Perhaps not.

## The Girl Who Saved the World

Next Part

"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. "Oh, of course. If one of us showed up at Niederhof's and announced 'This is my daughter Eclipse, would you please put together quality garb for her', the daughter would get the special rate. There was promise of greatness, not because Niederhof is impressed by a mere Emperor or Lord of Eternity, but because we can engift our progeny with all our powers. Did one of us do that?"

"I think I would remember having had a child recently," Plasmatrix said. She sent a smile toward Mong-Ku, who returned the smile. She had made clear to him and Starsmasher that she would like a child by each of them, one century or another; they

had not refused the invitation. "There's something about it you don't forget. I think I'd know if anyone else here had had a child recently. How many persona are so good that their kids will get the Niederhof special treatment?"

"I'll do a search on that," Starsmasher said. "Gifts mostly are not inherited. Go down the list of current elite-class persona. You've never heard of their parents, let alone their children. Promise only works with those of us who can engift our descendants."

"Perhaps she's a construct," the Screaming Skull said. "They're hard to kill. Did the League of Terran Justice do this?"

"Eclipse was clearly a persona," Plasmatrix said, "Someone with at least a few first-rate gifts. The League builds combat androids. Perhaps even smart androids. Controlled engifting is our monopoly."

"Not quite," Starsmasher reminded. "For starters, our dear friend the Silver General engifts people." Solara grated her teeth. She had never forgiven the Silver General for seducing Featherstonehaugh's great-grandfather away from her.

"Returning to topic," Prince Mong-ku said, "Whoever has her hands on the Namestone may be able to use it to engift people. What if the Terran Justice people start cranking out agents who are high-level personas?"

"The *Copper Book* speaks to that," Starsmasher answered. "The Namestone lends gifts, but does not give them away. We could face one persona as powerful as the Namestone itself, but that's it."

"The Namestone is a foamspace tap," Solara said. "But it has an aperture, one whose size we know. Even without the Ambihelicon, most of us in a pinch could match it. Therefore, it is an annoyance, not something that can prevent the Great Plan from completing."

"Solara, Starsmasher," Plasmatrix said, "I know you are very fond of your Namestone Standard Model. But there are still these little gaps in your reasoning." Solara did not quite roll her eyes. "First, the *Copper Book* may be fibbing about Namestone's powers. Second, this Eclipse person may be able to use her own gifts to drive the Namestone. She's obviously not a complete

weakling. Third, and I only finished the translation a century ago, the *Goetica Arcana Stella Magnus* clearly claims that the Knights found occult ties between the Namestone and the Solar Deep Structures, ties implying that the Namestone's powers are vastly greater than you propose."

"I read your translations," Solara said dismissively. "At those power levels, the bearer will fry herself toot sweet."

"The Namestone, yes," the Screaming Skull said. "It would be a useful tool for us. But Eclipse? When she escaped Atlantis, it was too soon for her to have the Namestone's power. She used her own gifts to survive and escape. She is no weakling. Perhaps she can't use Namestone's full power yet, but she may still wreak havoc. On the great chess board, it seems there is a new formidable piece. It must be found and taken."

"We should," Starsmasher agreed, "except for the minor detail of finding her. Assuming it is actually a *her* and not a cleverly disguised *him*. The resources of most of the League, though less than that guiding genius Dreikirch thinks, are behind this search. Surely it will by and by succeed? My resources are devoted to this issue, though I have another so-to-speak problem. Have any of you been following the screaming and raving between Argentina and Brazil over the giant sky octopi?"

"Giant sky octopi?" Prince Mong-ku asked. He perched his chin on his long fingers. "Did I sleep through those, too? I have been elsewhere occupied, casting the runes for the return of the three whose names are not to be spoken. They are indeed drawing closer, but not so close I can forecast their arrivals."

"Do tell," Plasmatrix said. "I've been busy with other matters, too."

Starsmasher forced a smile. His fellow Lords of Eternity, he thought, were undoubtedly the most powerful personae in the world, not to mention having access to technologies and libraries undreamt of by normal men, but sometimes they seemed a bit distracted from reality.

"I've seen press reports," Colonel Pi said. Starsmasher bit his tongue. Pi resented meetings as events that took him away from his important tasks,

notably advancing the security of the House That Is Forever. If he was also perpetually trying to gain a deeper understanding of gifts and their mechanisms, one could either say that he knew more than anyone else, or that he had made almost no progress. "The photographs are very strange indeed. Shall I try reassembling them?"

"Reassemble?" Plasmatrix asked. "Aren't honest photographs good enough, well, up to image enhancement?"

"The images don't make sense," Starsmasher said. "Solid bodies can't do those things, and holograms can't bite holes in buildings. The concern is that the Argentines claim the octopi are some Brazilian construct, and are lapsing toward war."

"We are too close to the next polar conjunction," Prince Mong-Ku responded. "The runes are very clear. We cannot afford to have a major commotion ongoing when one of those who are not to be named return!"

"The Argentines are not alone," Starsmasher said. "They have solid American backing. After centuries of isolationism, the American Republic is emerging from its tortoise shell, not at the most helpful possible moment. The Brazilians have Portuguese and hence English backing, and the IncoAztec Empire may well see an opportunity to improve its northern and eastern borders, so soon as the Americans appear to have entangled themselves in a foreign altercation."

"How convenient," Plasmatrix said. She sounded unconvinced.

"I glanced at the photos," Colonel Pi said. His beard ruffled the uppermost corners of his laboratory coat. The garment was royal blue, with rows of arcane symbols stitched into every seam. His seal, the variant pi character in dark blue on a light blue circle, was emblazoned on his lapels. "If they are real, the object -- sky octopus or whatever -- is clearly at least quadridimensional. That's assuming that the images are not a clever fake."

"If you want fake evidence to start a war," Solara said, "why fake evidence of something completely crazy? Why not fake evidence of the other side's Persona Corps conducting atrocities?"

“See?” Plasmatrix shrugged dismissively. “The evidence has been planned to be so crazy that people conclude that the photographs must be real, because no one would fake something so ridiculous.”

Prince Mong-Ku buried his face in his hands. “Plasmatrix? You have another one of those espionage schemes, one in which absolutely anything might be true and facts lose all meaning? Yes, I know you solve these puzzles. Still!”

“There are also the combat troops that appear with the sky octopi,” Starsmasher said. “They appear to have very strange gifts, ones that do not match anything we routinely distribute to the hoi polloi. Indeed, some of the apparent gifts don’t resemble anything that I can identify.”

Prince Mong-Ku tried to sound patient. The three who were not to be named had to be dealt with before the next Polar Conjunction, which was not so many millennia away. Obliterating and replacing world civilizations, as would need to be done thrice, could not be done overnight. There was still enough time to complete the Great Plan, but there was not much time to waste. “Colonel Pi might usefully try to reassemble the images of the sky octopi, and someone might stand ready to be teleported to the scene of the next event, to capture a few of the perpetrators, so that they may be invited to explain their misdeeds. Are we good with this?” Heads nodded. “Is there anything else on our plate? Anything that can’t wait until the next meeting?” Heads shook. “In that case, I believe that we have reached my breakfast time, so we must be adjourned.”

## Chapter Eight

Secure Chamber Alpha  
The Palace of Peace  
Geneva, Switzerland  
Early Evening  
January 14, 2018

Holmgren stood at the head of the table, waiting for the ambassadors of the Great Powers to be seated. They had arrived; now all they had to do was to take their places. He leaned into his chair and tapped his gavel once. “Our recess is over. We are again in session. I hope you all had pleasant lunches and dinners. The ambassadors who had placed

objection markers at the last meeting have all indicated to me that they insist on raising their objections before we advance to Brigade Leader Valkyria and her report on the events at the Maze. I therefore recognize Ambassador Buncombe.”

“Mr. Chancellor,” Buncombe said, “during the earlier part of the meeting this morning several ambassadors indicated that it was the intent or position of their government that in the hypothetical case that the Bearer was found, within a country other than their own, that their governments would be entitled to send persona teams or even military units to the location of the Bearer to seize the Namestone. For example, if the bearer were to be found in scenic Buffalo, North York, Buffalonians might find themselves visited by the persona teams and armed hosts of a series of countries I will not embarrass by naming.” Buncombe had not incidentally named one of America’s wealthiest and most significant industrial cities.

“The President and Speaker of the American Republic are in complete agreement that such a visitation, made without the invitation of the American Republic, which assuredly will not be forthcoming, would be viewed as a declaration of war. The American Elite Persona Team would be ordered to the scene to dispose of the invaders. Furthermore, Speaker Ming has called upon the Governors of the seventy states to place in readiness their State Persona Guards to advance to the assistance of the American Elite Persona Team. The American team is under direct and explicit orders from the President that such an invasion is to be put down without quarter being offered, unless the invaders immediately and without offering resistance surrender themselves.

“In addition, the American Republic would view it to be an act of war for any foreign power to insert their persona teams into the territory of any of the Canadian Dominions, unless Her Majesty’s government had invited them, in which case the situation would be taken under advisement. As an exception, any effort of the IncoAztec government...

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**N'APA Mailing 231**  
**National Fantasy Fan Federation**

*Cover by Shutterstock*

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## **Editorial Maneuverings and Maraudings**

(Just kidding, how would it be if I were doing that?)

I've been through a lot of old stuff I have around me and at last located two issues of ROCKET FUEL, my N'APA zine when I was in N'APA back in 1983. Alas, I couldn't find any of the official OE's zine, with the roster and contents of the mailings and everything, and I wonder what happened to it. I don't suppose I'd throw it away. Back when I went to the Inconjunction, some people got into my house while I was at it and threw acid on a bunch of my lp records and some books and magazines and paperwork, and it may be that's when it disappeared, or it may have disappeared during some earlier incident. So I can't tell you anything more than that the OE at that time was Tom McGovern, well suited by his name to be an OE, as I remember saying, though I have no printed verification of the memory. Anyway, I'd like to quote from my zine and evoke some memories of this earlier Napa (I recall also stating in RF that a whole lot of wine came from the Napa Valley in California). I find in #6, March 1983, the 97<sup>th</sup> Mailing, that I said to the editor of something called "Glimmers", "Did ye find the layout overran? I am trying this out, I have a carpenter's balance and I'm lining this one up with the bubble." To the editor of "City of Darkness" I said "Would you describe the process by which you were appointed head of the tape bureau, or is it personal details?" I recall I had pointed out to him in a

previous issue that his title recollected "City of Night" by John Rechy. You can see from this that the N3F had a tape bureau back then. I asked the editor of "Quire" "Why is FOUNDATION 'sf's most honored series'?" "Back Roads" I think may have been the title of the OE's zine. Harry Andruschak was in there and recommending NASA space covers be used for apazine covers, but I was telling him that would cost too much. Now that it doesn't cost, I'm taking his suggestion on the present mailing, or some similitude of it, anyway. That cover is more like SETI than NASA. Joe Napolitano says in RF's letters section that the space program speeded up the commercial development of transistors. He and David Thiry both were discussing space travel and technology in my letter column. Thiry says he appreciated my publishing his poems in RF but hadn't gotten a contributor's copy of one of the issues in which I'd done so, and I see my answer was, "By the way, whatever happened to your N3F membership, Dave?" He'd recently gone off the roster. I wish I had the next issue of this to see what the problem was. A letter from Robert Newsom said he'd just received word that he'd won first prize in the N3F short story contest. He got a check for \$25 for his story. I guess the N3F thereby bought the rights to it, but I'm not sure a list of previous winners has been maintained. In my answer to his entire letter I said "The whole round robin department shut down for quite a spell, and Sharron is saying she has other things to do". The RRs were having trouble back then too. A comment says that one of the members, Rob Rose, had a position in the US government.

There's a cover by David Heath, then head of the art department, on #8, July 1983, 99<sup>th</sup> mailing. It's a very effective piece of art and had those cryptic notations Heath used to put here and there on all of his art.

Were there crises back then? "Tom has pulled this apa through a major crisis and a few minor ones." It says I nominated him for a Kaymar Award on the basis of this. I don't recall if he won it or not—if the other Napans

had voted for him he had a good chance. I recall thinking that, and it seems to me if I followed up that recollection I could remember if he got it—I just have a vague memory of some kind of upset and hassle about it that explains why I have some trouble recalling it. I'm also criticizing the NFFF treasury in that issue, and complaining about there being dues to be in Napa to add to the treasury, and the Napa dues were being increased. I said I might want to be out of Napa rather than watching them increase it. In fact, that's why I don't remember much about it—I did drop out of NAPA after the 100<sup>th</sup> mailing. So there was some of the interference I remember in talking about whether Tom would get that award.

There were two Round Robins going, one on SF Films and one on Computer Intelligence, I know from my column "what the RRs are saying". There's an interview with Jim Allen, my new contacts man for the Fan-Pro Bureau of that time. He was new then, I mean, he's not still around now. I've just got a new fellow in the present Fan-Pro Bureau, John Polselli, I'm looking out here that I'm not inadvertently getting the two confused.

Ah, hmm, the official OE zine for Napa was called The Alliance Amateur. The issue I commented on in my mailing comments had a Soupy Sales cover.

The era is starting to come back to me as I read this issue. It was getting pretty smoky back then. There was a lot of argument about all kinds of things. In fact, it was just half a year later that I didn't bother to renew my NFFF membership. Here it's rather depressing looking at these old zines, but it may be of some interest to the members here to see some recollections of the earlier NAPA. For instance, if you thought they didn't have problems back then, WOW!

Wow, that was thirty-five years ago. No wonder it seems hazy...over a third of a lifetime. Yet it seems only a while back in terms of events.

## COMMENTS ON THE MAILING

Kevin Trainor, THE SILVER STATE AGE: The first story I ever saw by Jerry Pournelle was "Bind Your Sons to Exile" in Roger Elwood's magazine ODYSSEY. Though he was a new writer to me, it seemed obvious that he had an impressive background. I've read nothing by him since then, as the magazines I got didn't have the coincidence of there being anything by him in them. I noticed on the Dell Forums that he had quite a large and enthusiastic following. I had the impression that he seemed to be, viewed from where I was at, in a form of exile himself from the mainstream SF field, and his presence on the internet was difficult to reach and relate to.

Odyssey magazine, I noticed, had a title resembling the earlier magazine title ARGOSY, which was not SF, but I read in a discussion of it in KAYMAR TRADER, a NFFF Traders' Bureau fan publication, that they had published some SF from time to time. Perhaps this NFFF attention led to the commencement of ODYSSEY.

I thought when I read his story that Pournelle had quite a future ahead of him; he seemed a very ambitious writer. But I didn't see much of it as I was only aware of the SF books *via* the SF Book Club. I feel mournful to hear of his death, but it seems his reputation will endure.

According to what I read in a discussion in the Cult, the Future History notion originates with Asimov's FOUNDATION, though things like it had been written without being called Future Histories. THE STARS, LIKE DUST (which I've just finished reading) was not described as an Empire novel when it was first published.

I've noticed a lot of fans addressing themselves from Las Vegas—it makes me wonder what Vegas fandom is like.

Your "this page left blank intentionally" gives me the idea you have the same problem I have, that of having an extra page appear sometimes at the end of my zine when I am creating one on Microsoft Word. I found no way

to get rid of it, and it's a discouraging thing to have swinging at the end of my zine. It seems to happen when there are art inserts. I've found various ways since the time I just had to leave it there to keep it from happening, by adroit placement of my textual matter.

George Phillies, THE MURDERED MASTER MAGE: I think I can recall discussions of atomics from the Benfords' fanzine VOID. They were both familiar with the bomb *via* the military; they came from a military family.

Jefferson Swycaffer, ARCHIVE MIDWINTER: I was in San Diego once—the people there all seemed to like and to be talking about "Live Modern".

Haggard chose big themes, ones that others were not keen to touch upon. I think that's where the great respect for him comes from. Yes, that's the only writer I've ever seen who puts spoilers in his work. This was quite annoying when I was reading his stories, too. Of course he's not the only writer who does it, but he has more snap about doing it than the others. Police who came out as inept fools have been seen in other writing too—what is supposed to have happened to their fearsomeness is having encountered things beyond their comprehension, and it makes their menacing qualities somewhat inert.

Well, that concludes the mailing comments and that brings about the conclusion of my zine, as I can think of little to add, though I used to have fiction, poetry and art in ROCKET FUEL, but here it seems it might overload to have that. Though surely our use of space could not be a net complaint. I've been trying to get people who have been in Napa before to come back in; just a few days back I suggested Lorraine Tutihasi return to Napa, but she said she was too busy with other things. Carol Klees-Starke used to be in Napa too, but I haven't tried asking her about it. She'd remember those old arguments, though.



*Goodbye for now,  
until the next ish.*

Archive Midwinter  
a zine for N'APA 231

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### Comments:

**Cover:** Lovely! Fantasy and Science Fiction! Who says the two can't go together?

**Kevin Trainor Jr.:** Jerry Pournelle will be missed. He was a regular at southern California SF conventions, even the small ones like ConDor, here in San Diego. He was a stormy fellow, and I, like many others, have been "Pournelled." But not ten minutes later he was all jovial again, as if nothing had happened at all. He was like the proverbial patch of Irish Weather: changeable! Of the books he wrote by himself, as opposed to co-writing with others, I think I like King David's Spaceship the most. He was an irascible soul, but, like many cynics, he had a heart of gold deep within himself, and he didn't like to show it off too often.

I'd never encountered efforts to put all of Keither Laumer's stories and books into a single time-line! Seems, as you say, daft. He did hint, now and then, that there was a coherent larger world behind the Retief stories, but, really, those stories are light humor, and shouldn't be shoe-horned into a "coherent" unified reality. His stories often allude to a Terran Concordiat, but he never really gave any concrete information. So, yeah, that's too much work, for far too



little justification. (I never had any respect for the "League of Extraordinary Gentleman" game, and I positively despised Philip Jose Farmer's make-pretend over-arching reality where everybody was related to everybody. On the other hand, that said, I did kinda like Farmer's "The Other Log of Phileas Fogg." Also "A Barnstormer of Oz." He could stick his finger in other people's fiction without ruing it!)

re SoftKeys, while Word macros are wonderful, and save a whole lot of work, they only work within Word. SoftKeys works at the keyboard level, and so it works in (nearly) any software environment. It's a good place, for instance, to keep frequently-used passwords. I use it at work to store "boilerplate" that I have to insert in interactive applications where Word macros wouldn't work at all. For me, it's a total joy!

**George Phillies:** San Diego fandom is politically diverse enough that blackballing on the basis of ideology and opinion wouldn't work. Yeah, we tend liberal, but there is no shortage of conservatives -- and others! -- and a guarded kind of tolerance is pretty much the "San Diego Way." The idea of banning someone from our conventions for their political beliefs would never fly here.

(Banning someone because he never bathes...okay, that's a thing here. We have two -- count 'em 2 -- really noteworthy regulars who never bathe. You can smell 'em yards away. They are generally shunned. But we have never formally banned even them!)

Thank you for doing publicity for the Short Story Contest! You've brought it back from the edge of extinction, and that is a wonderful, wonderful thing!

re this segment of "The Girl Who Saved The World," I enjoyed and admired the seque from the political hoi aristoi to the council of super-powered individuals. The contrast was elegant: between those who think they have power...and those who damn well know they do.

**John Thiel:** A couple of nifty pieces of spot art!

re pdf and docx and the like -- well, now it gets complicated! I deal with this sort of thing professionally (and I still get confused now and then...) However, one thing: we really do not want material on Kindle to look exactly the same for every reader. The great joy of Kindle readers is that you can increase or decrease the font-size, for personal reading comfort. My little local writing group is putting together an anthology to put up on Amazon, and one of our techies wanted to use publishing software to hard-code the work, so it would have a fixed and defined appearance. I had to explain that this is exactly the opposite of the best approach, which is to strip away as much of the formatting as possible, and to let the Kindle handle the presentation.

(I recently downloaded and read Kipling's "The Jungle Book" from Project Gutenberg, and was chuffed that the file was prepared in hard-coded large type. I couldn't reset it to a more comfortable font-size for reading. This irritated me so much, I put it into a text file, stripped all formatting, and re-imported it to my Kindle that way.)

Ryc and rct mean the same thing: "regarding your comment." Old, old APA-talk!

### **Benjamin Disraeli**

I had no idea that ol' Ben -- one of Great Britain's most famous Prime Ministers -- was also a novelist! I read "The Rise of Iskander" and thought it was spiffing! It's an historical drama, about a 17th century Greek uprising against Turkish domination. But, my goodness, it's a swashbuckler! It's truly worthy of Robert E. Howard! There are sword-fights against impossible odds, and a rescue of a Christian princess from the Turkish seraglio, and all sorts of derring-do!

I'm only halfway through another of his novels, "Endymion," which is a British "society" novel, all about the upper crust and their politics, their parties, their comings out, their arranged marriages, their fancy balls and big dinners, and so on. It's rather dull, I have to confess, but it's still a page-turner.

Score another hit for Project Gutenberg!

### **My Current Novel**

Another "Urban Fantasy," set in the "real world" (laughingly so-called) with an intrusion of magical stuff. (My model is the old "Beauty and the Beast" TV series. New York City...with magic.)

I find the two big problems with this genre are: too much magic...and too much realism! The magic can run away, ruining the believability, but the magic has to be profound enough to serve as the basis for the "sense of wonder" and to drive the plot. It's a very difficult tight-rope to walk along!

The Silver State Age #8  
an apazine for N'APA 231  
October 29, 2017

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## **OBLIGATORY NATTER**

For some reason it had escaped my notice that N'APA and I were both unleashed upon an unwary world in 1959, and so we are both 58 years old this year. I celebrated by going down to the local Fogo de Chao, which (for those of you unfamiliar with it) is a chain of Brazilian barbecue restaurants where the meats are brought to you on swords, and one can choose how well the various beef and lamb cuts are cooked. It is a tad pricy, but considering they bring you all the meat you can eat, and I prefer to get my calories that way since I'm diabetic, I think it's a great place to eat once or twice a year. Perhaps we should consider doing something celebratory for N'APA's sixtieth birthday – probably not involving barbecued meats, but I for one am certainly open to this possibility.

Other things that have happened since lastish: I have been accepted for the spring (winter?) term at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, so I am officially a Rebel. I would wear my blue shirt and red beret, but I doubt any of the other undergraduates would get the reference. Anyhow, I am waiting to see my advisor so I can see what UNLV thinks of my transcripts from Metro State University (St. Paul, MN) and Northern Virginia Community College (Annandale, VA) and hoping I can take some relatively easy classes during tax season.

I have also, unfortunately, been forced to upgrade my phone, since my old reliable Galaxy Note 4 that Best Buy paid me to take a little over two has succumbed to being dropped once too often. The new phone is a Galaxy Note 8, whose ads make it sound like one of the fabled Silicon Graphics workstations of yore, and tout the “innovation” of wireless charging, which I seem to remember having on my old Palm Pixi back in the first term of Bush the Younger a decade ago. Among the minor annoyances attendant on the new phone: I was talked into buying a case and screen protector without much difficulty since the phone costs nearly \$1000, and it uses the new miniUSB-C connectors instead of the plain vanilla miniUSB plugs on the Note 4. Fortunately, Samsung helpfully supplied a pair of conversion plugs so that one can adapt USB or miniUSB plugs to the new miniUSB-C sockets. I also got a free vehicle recharger thanks to Uber, and it, too, has the new cords. I guess I'll keep the old cords (I have one miniUSB for older Androids and one Lightning cable for Apple products) in the center console for when passengers need them.

At any rate, the Note 8 handles the Uber driver and Ingress apps quickly and smoothly enough, to say nothing of the dozen or so other apps I find useful. In fact, it does a few things faster than the Toshiba laptop I am using as an expedient home computer, which I suppose is reasonable since it is costing me twice as much as the laptop did when I bought it three years ago, has more RAM, etc.

## BOOKS

I've been doing a lot of rereading since the last disty – old favorites like Michael Flynn's Spiral Arm series (Up Jim River, *et seq.*), Robert Frezza's Suid-Afrika trilogy (A Small Colonial War, Fire In A Faraway Place, and Cain's Land), Tom Kratman's Carreraverse (A Desert Called Peace and its four sequels), Larry Correia's Monster Hunter International series, and the recently republished There Will Be War Volume VII, edited by the late Jerry Pournelle. Most of the rereading has been due to the shortage of cash available to buy new books, though I admit to spending a few shekels on the Pournelle anthology out of impatience – I'm pretty sure I have a paperback copy *somewhere*, but I wanted to read it *now*.

Thanks to the Kindle Owners' Lending Library, I was able to look at the new milSF series by Mark Wandrey and Chris Kennedy about "The Four Horsemen", the legendary mercenary companies that carved out a place for Terrans in a big and largely hostile universe. Wandrey's Cartwright's Cavaliers is fairly representative of the series; it's a coming of age novel wherein our hero, despite being judged not up to standard as someone worth hiring by a mercenary company, is the heir to one of the "Four Horsemen" – which, unfortunately, his mother has just finished running into the ground. They're all fun books, and I recommend them, especially for readers who prefer their SF without any superfluous sex scenes.

I also picked up the Classic Illustrated edition of The Prisoner Of Zenda, which shares a plot with Heinlein's classic Double Star. I was expecting a comic book, but instead it's the original book with some really classy art illustrating the adventures of Rupert Rassendyll, and it's a fun read. Not sure if I want to read the sequel, which apparently doesn't have a happy ending, and I am at a point in my life where I don't care to read books that don't.

## OTHER MEDIA

Despite my best intentions, I have not been out to see any of the movies I was interested in this fall. I understand *Blade Runner 2049* is actually quite good, despite the poor ticket sales, and hopefully I'll catch that before it disappears from theaters. I had mixed feelings about *The Dark Tower*, which doesn't seem to have impressed too many people, and now I see it's available for sale on DVD or through Amazon Video, but I don't want to spend \$15 on something I may not finish.

Bought a broadcast TV antenna, but I can only pick up two of the local TV stations, and (perhaps predictably) neither of them is showing anything I particularly want to see.

Meanwhile, *The Man in the High Castle* has been approved for a third season, if I understood that tweet from Alexa Davalos correctly.

I have picked up a couple more Tangerine Dream albums, *Force Majeure* and *Sorcerer*, via Amazon digital downloads, and a third (*Thief*) in CD format. I've also discovered the Liquid Mind "station" on Amazon Music, which has been improving the quality of my sleep.

Interestingly, while you can watch both movie versions of The Wages of Fear, (the original and the remake *Sorcerer*, for which Tangerine Dream did the soundtrack) the book itself is out of print. Odd.

## FANNISH CONTROVERSIES/CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Apparently there is a movement afoot to "rehabilitate" the pulp writers of the pre-Campbell era, the so-called #PulpRevolution (#PulpRev for short). As a former member of the Sad Puppy movement, I am of course in favor of SF and fantasy that's entertaining, but #PulpRev seems to come with its own Conspiracy Theory, which seems to go as follows:

1. Pulp fiction magazines and authors were very popular before the 1930s. Many magazines, much sales, very gosh wow sense of wonder!
2. The Evil One, John W. Campbell Jr., becomes editor of ASF and begins a campaign of subversive smack talk against pulp magazines and authors.
3. Deluded/weak-minded fans pay attention to JWC and abandon pulp, which somehow manages to hang on through the 1940s and into the 50s despite JWC. Readership of all F&SF magazines declines precipitously in the 1950s.
4. Campbell, Damon Knight, and other commie pinko literary types conspire to keep pulp authors out of print except for Robert E. Howard, H.P. Lovecraft, and Edgar Rice Burroughs, who are still deprecated as pulp fiction writers.
5. Contemporary fans, sick of the Pink Wave SF being pushed by Tor, discover long-lost manuscripts and magazines containing stories by pulp authors, hidden in secret sub-basements of the Library of Congress, the LASFS Clubhouse, and the Ackermansion.
6. [Vox Day, Castalia House, the Evil League of Evil, grr, grr, argh, etc.]
7. Profit!

Now, points 5-7 are just silliness on my part, and 1. is indisputably true, but I think the #PulpRev partisans are grossly overstating Campbell's influence and committing the classic *post hoc ergo propter hoc* error. I am not as familiar with the history of SF and its fandom as I would like, but I am fairly certain that Campbell's abrasive personality and cheerleading for Dianetics drove a lot of his authors and fans away to other magazines in the early 1950s. He and ASF were still a powerful force in the SF market, but H.L. Gold's *Galaxy* and Boucher's F&SF were equally powerful, Ace was pioneering the SF paperback, and major publishers, not just Arkham House, were bringing anthologies and novels out in hardback. So pinning the decline of pulp on Campbell simply isn't plausible to me. Certainly Knight and Blish deserve some share of the blame for painting pulp writers in general as clumsy oafs with no literary skill. Also not plausible is that the pulp authors were un-personed and blocked from the market, since Campbell picked up a fair number of writers from *Amazing* and other mags by simply paying more and paying promptly, and the ones who didn't fit what Campbell was looking for seemed to do just fine selling to F&SF. For that matter, I remember seeing plenty of obscure pulp authors cropping up in Arkham House's listings as well as some other publishers' catalogs during the 1970s. There was one huckster, as I recall, who published a catalog that was practically tabloid-sized and had all manner of odd books by writers I'd never heard of like A. Merritt.

So, I'm curious what the rest of you think of this conspiracy theory. Is there any truth to this at all, or are we witnessing an outbreak of unfunny silliness reminiscent of the Shaver Mystery?

## COMMENTS ON N'APA 230

### The Murdered Master Mage

I'll be interested to see the fruits of your collaboration with Chris Nuttall. ☒☒  
Condolences on the useless suggestions from the poorly-informed. Hopefully there will be fewer of these in the future. ~~Have you considered MongoDB?~~

RYCTo me: Have to admit I hadn't thought that hard about Ringo's novels. My introduction to his writing was his Posleen War novels, which are full of fairly normal people who are mostly dead by the time the fourth book comes to a conclusion. Speaking of over the top, though, his collaborations with Larry Correia on the Monster Hunter Memoirs novels is definitely an illustration of your point, though Larry points out that the protagonist (Chad) "always had a high opinion of himself" and imply that it's not exactly deserved. ☒☒  
Regarding Mr. Glycer and his ilk (not to be confused with our Supreme Dark Lord and his Dread Ilk), I think those divisions in fandom have been there for quite some time, but it is only in recent years that fans have decided not to go along to get along any more. ☒☒ I do encourage people to sign up as public members whenever possible. I am also trying to encourage Anime Twin Cities (the parent company of Anime Detour) to consider working with us and/or touting us to their members, since I think we have some common goals that would be easier to reach if we worked together. We'll see how that turns out.

### Synergy

Your friend Mr. McGovern is unfortunately far from unique. Denny Lien, a Minneapolis fan who talked me into joining StippleAPA for the first time while he was its OOK, had dropped out of it by the time I rejoined about a decade later (I had fufiated on account of children and work) and he, too, expressed no interest in apahacking again when I asked him about it. This was before the advent of social media like Facebook, so we can't blame that. For once. ☺

RYCTo me: I haven't de-activated myself as Membership & Recruitment Wallah. It's just that some months I am more active at it than others. For the most part, I reach out to people through Facebook and Twitter, in person and through e-mail, and occasionally in local club meetings and conventions. I'm not sure what the mention of awards pertains to; it's entirely possible I am misunderstanding you. Anyhow, I shall keep plugging along with what I am doing as best I can. It's apparently more than anyone had done until we came along.☒☒ I'm sorry you had trouble reading my APAzine. I've increased the font size from 11 to 12; hope that helps.☒☒ Jefferson and I are using different acronyms for the same thing: Re (Your) Comment To. Somewhere in my collection of StippleAPA disties, I have a list of common APAhacking acronyms/abbreviations compiled by the late Judie Cilcain, which I shall try and find and republish here.☒☒ Room parties sound like a good thing to be doing, but without people willing to volunteer their hotel rooms, they're very likely going to be a budget-buster. We're also a bit spread out, aren't we?

## Archive Midwinter

RYC To me: Regarding people who don't read, it is sad that there are people like that (my own brother is one of them) and even sadder that the public "education" systems seem hellbent on creating more of them by forcing kids to read uninteresting stories. ☒☒ Having come to RPGs from wargames, I incline more toward the number-crunching myself, but I can understand the allure of a more story-telling oriented game. Dealing with the character knowledge/player knowledge gap often requires a more hard-nosed game master than most people are willing to be, in my experience.

Re: H.Rider Haggard Do you suppose his style of writing is due to his novels having started out as newspaper/magazine serials, where he was writing to a deadline instead of having a complete work cut up into parts? I'm just theorizing here; I have never read any of his books and don't know anything about him.

Going off on a slight tangent here...is it just me, or are a lot of novels from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries difficult to read? Quite aside from the differences between society then and society now\*, I think the writing styles have changed dramatically since Hemingway's terse style came along and so many authors tried to follow his example. Purple prose and rich descriptions (which I associate with Lovecraft, among others) seems to have fallen out of fashion since the 1930s, especially in our favorite genre; it still persists in horror, to be sure, perhaps as an homage to Lovecraft, who Stephen King credits with creating the horror genre as we know it today.

With few exceptions, all of the "classics" from the 1800s I've tried to read have been absolute clunkers, or at the very least, difficult going. Even Ben-Hur was a tedious slog, doubly disappointing because the movie with Charlton Heston was so excellent. Have I become so used to modern terse, businesslike prose that older styles of writing just make the story too hard to enjoy?

For that matter, is my appreciation of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells based more on reading them in Reader's Digest Condensed editions than on reading the actual books themselves? I recall having to re-read War of the Worlds for a college English course and thinking that it was a lot harder going than I remembered, and I haven't dared go back to read any of Verne's works for fear that I'll find them more work than they're worth.

I'm curious what the rest of you think.

\*I found Anthony Trollope's *Chronicles of Barsetshire* novels almost unreadable because of the vast gap between late 20<sup>th</sup> century America and 19<sup>th</sup> century England, with the latter's established church, class distinctions, etc., sometimes making it seem more like science fiction than contemporary fiction.

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