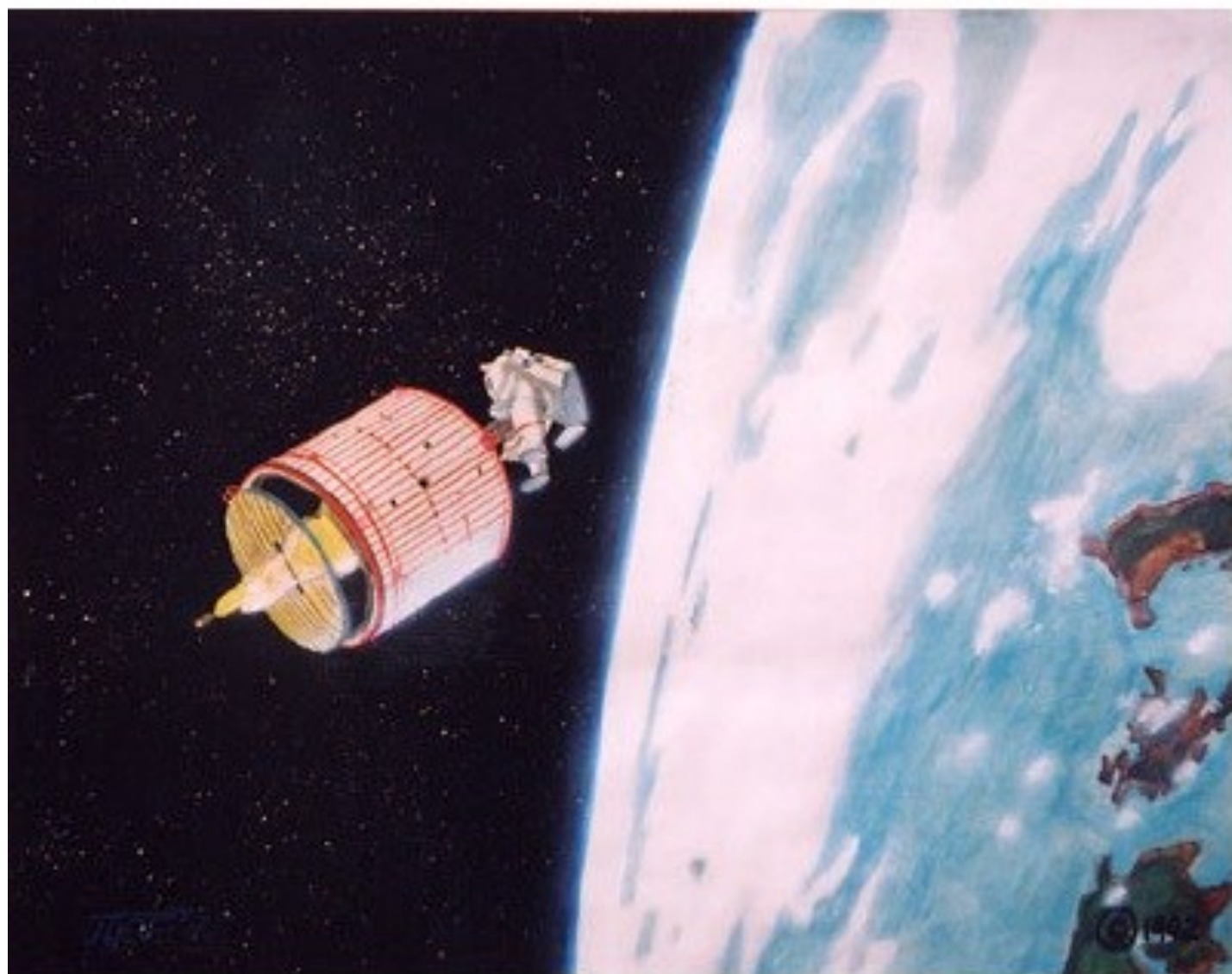


# N'APA 255

November 2021



# The Official Organ

## #255

**Next deadline: January 15, 2022**

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### **Procedure: Please Read:**

George Phillies will collate and mail, but submissions should be sent to the preparer, Jefferson Swycaffer. No harm is done if submissions get sent to George, but the process should be to send them to Jefferson.

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 George.

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

Currently the frequency is every other month, with the deadline being on the fifteenth day of odd-numbered months. The mailing will normally be collated in due time, as the collator is retired and the preparer has a full-time job. 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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We received a memo from Will Mayo: Thanks to you, George, and John Thiel for including me. I appreciate those reports from Switzerland and Sweden as well. It's a happening world.

# INTERMISSION #113

**E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA & other innocent victims. Follow @SFJournalen sf/f/h&fandom newstweets. If the trademark office was dyslectic, world would had been in the spell of BABA®! Watch out for msispellnigs! Late September 2021**

## **Editorially: ABBA AParently Without Sin Down Under**

A mixed bag in thish, possibly the most exciting issue for a long time! First a little plea: this zine is done for two little APAs, but mailed to some outsiders too. Both EAPA and N'APA could *really* use new members. Why not join? Ask eg me for more info. Making a PDF is easy-peasy. Just write something somewhat interesting and go to "save as PDF" in your word processor. More fen should do more to pub more fanzines! Do your duty! You can read and write...or?

So, expect a look at the comeback for the music industry's biggest band since the Beatles. Doing it after 40 years! A really surprising nuclear blast in music. And coming spring ABBA will pay us a visit as digital hi-tech virtual stage clones. The future is here. Some say ABBA was an injection the world needed in a world gone bonkers.

That singing foursome was bigger than anything Down Under. So those pop stars should be needed there to keep spirits up. Aussie politicians have had kangaroo loose in the top paddock and let civil rights be waltzing right off on a walkabout, causing angry demonstrations in major Australian cities. I guess it would be fair to say you look bewildered. Their politicians seems to do anything to shut you down if you care for citizen's rights: house arrests, detention camps, terrorist squad vehicles, rubber bullets and tear gas, officers on horseback, helicopters, checkpoints outside supermarkets, military patrols on beaches, animal shelter dogs being shot...

As for the C-virus here Up Over (as opposed to Down Under) all so called "restrictions" were shelved in Sweden in late September, a few days after Norway and Denmark did the same. "Restrictions" used to be called the *Public Health Agency's general advice*, but politicians re-named it "restrictions" - not a legal term, BTW - to make it sound more threatening. Rate of virus deaths have been quite flat since four (!) months back and 85+ percent are vaccinated. Of the rest most have already natural immunity. I know it's different elsewhere, but here things looks rather calm, except for smaller local outbreaks. One would expect a slight rise as weather gets colder, but nothing drastic.



*Vaccine queue in a September sunny Stockholm.*

Since our government hasn't been too harsh with "restrictions" they haven't pissed people off. Vaccination seems popular, only limited by time and practical measures. Pop-up vaccination spots pop up and folks faithfully line up. I went past one in Stockholm which had a queue of 25-30 people.

I suspect that huge street protests, as in Australia, against vaccination "mandates" (force-jabbing) is an emotional reaction against politicians too hard-handedly pushing citizens around. First you put us under house arrest and now you wave a syringe in our faces! Go suck an egg! Is this China or North Korea? For my part I think vaccines re *just fine*, so take a shot. But injecting something into your body *must* be something fully *voluntary*. Those who worry about the corona virus can protect themselves by being pricked, but don't tread on others. Respect personal integrity.

Meanwhile, let me present the History of Sin...

--Ahrvid Engholm

## **When Sin Was Born**

Nowadays the concept of any special "Swedish sin" is unfair. The Swedes don run around naked, making love in the woods. But two things established this concept in the 1950s, a couple of naughty films and that Swedish schools began with sex education at that time.

The films were "One Summer of Happiness" (1951) and "Summer with Monika" (1953), causing world wide sensation by flashing the breasts of Ulla Jakobsson (the first film) for just a few seconds... You can check it out yourself. The "infamous" scene is ca 1h 19m in:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOh6u-O7BDs>

Unfortunately there're no subtitles, so you might not be able to follow what really is a sensitive drama about summer love, with manuscript by Volodja Semitjov, brother of space reporter Eugen Semitjov (covered in earlier issues). In New York the queues went around the blocks, so the artistic qualities of it was certainly appreciated. Or could it be that they wanted an orgy of lustfulness? Famous director Ingmar Bergman followed in 1953, with more unhinged filthy desire in "Summer with Monika", in the



*This was you saw of Monika. Shock!*

form of Harriet Andersson seen nude from behind a few seconds (I don't find it on Youtube). And for sex education in the schools, it was just for a couple of hours and it was more clinical than explicit.

For the rest of the world, the stork continued to be busy.

The history of how porn and filth took over Sweden is told in a new, heavily illustrated (mostly book covers, posters and pictures of the Monika kind) 400+ pages book by Martin Kristenson, Anna-Lena Lodenius and Fredrik af Trampe, *Frigjorda tider*. (The best translation of the title would be "Libertine Times", so I'll use that.) I should confess that I know the authors, Martin since more than 40 years through fandom (he and buddy David Nettle used to do some of the whackiest, funniest fanzines I've read!), and all three have been regulars of the cult music club Sunkit for 2+ decades, which

this zine often has reported from. I'm also mentioned on the last page as contributor. When I heard of the project I took some hours to ransack my memory and tried my tippy-tappy and to see if the rumour was true that Internet was full of sex, and if I could find some of it for the book. I sent them a few MBs of source texts, URLs and ideas. I don't know what was used, except that the thing about the film "Cosmic Love" may have come from *Intermission* a few issues ago.

My own closest connection to the field of filth was in the 1980s when working for pop-tech mag *Teknikmagasinet*. Our layout guy had earlier worked for the notorious men's mag *FIB Aktuell*, a pioneer in getting porn to penetrate the newsstands. But even more: our editor-in-chief Anders Palm (and oldtime fan!) regularly had material for this raunchy rag, which dared to also have other stuff than sex. He often sent me to deliver his manuscripts to the office of *FIB*. I saw how they worked, got to know some of the guys a bit, and so on. Most where middle-aged men. Picture material usually came from porn-picture agencies on the continent, Germany as I remember. And the "true" sex letters from the readers were often written by the staff themselves... (Except I know that the founder of Swedish APA SFF boosted how he made extra money by also writing such stuff. All stories by him coming closer than a foot to a girl was pure fantasy, of course.)

All three of the Libertine writers are excellent researchers, which this rich book is proof of. Libertine Times is divided into scores of chapters, each covering a certain subject - literature, film, music, comics, theatre, etc - or a more specific event, scandal, prolific author, debate, film, etc. The timespan is from the beginning of the 1950's, until sometime in the late 1980's, when in fact the rest of the world had become *more* sinful than us.

From nudeness in the 1950's and hinted sex, books and films began to become more and more explicit in the 1960's. Though explicit descriptions were formally illegal, the limits of the law were tested and stretched throughout that decade. By the late 1960's there was so much sex around that the ban on porn (the Swedish word is "porr" BTW) became increasingly more difficult to uphold. So the ban of indecent material was formally scrapped in 1971. Sweden was actually later than Denmark where they did that in 1969. (But Danish historians must tell that story, this book leaves it.)





*Porn got a tougher opponent in the 70's, Martin Kristenson explains, in a TV interview.*

The boundaries were stretched to the breaking point in the late 60's leading into the 70's, which became the peak of Swedish porn. Later in the 1970's the left wingers got other things to think about, like promoting crap music and demonstrating against Pinochet in Chile and Franco in Spain, but not so much against Castro in Cuba.

"But in the 1970's the porn liberals got another and more difficult opponent," Martin Kristenson said in a TV interview Sept 13. "And that

was the women's movement." And they could really pick a fight. Martin and co-author Anna-Lena were interviewed in a main culture news program. Anna-Lena added: "What happened was that the material became more raw and commercial. And porn moved from cinemas to home movies", ie video. (And those naughty tapes had a lot to do with popularising VCRs!)

From what I see in their book early sex was rather innocent, even sort of cute. And then came porn with some artsy ambitions and a political message about free speech, like a pin-up posing with a picture of Tricky Dick Nixon to protest against the Vietnam War. But of course what went down best with a sex-starving audience (men, to a huge majority - an attempt to publish a porn mag for women lasted only a few issues) was Basic Level 1A Sex. Artistic ambitions, serious debate and such haver never been the source of horniness. But some formalities were upheld, like the

porno cinema which in desperation outside said on a poster: *"Note! All our films have a plot too!"*

There's no way I could give a complete rundown of the history of sex in Sweden or cover everything in this jam-packed book. But I'll give you a few notes of some things worth mentioning.

The mental atmosphere around porn is perhaps illustrated about the long-debate in the 1960's on if there should be government operated brothels! Some serious politicians actually proposed that. Of course it would be heavily regulated, good working conditions, regular hours, sick-pay, pensions... There was also (though a bit smaller) debate about setting up "intercourse rooms" in high schools. All in an attempt to solve sexual inequality - in the sense some got laid, some didn't, which is unfair and a sign of inequality.

One of the really big shelf-tumblers was the anthology series *Kärlek* ("Love") which came with 14 volumes from the mid 1960's and into the 1970's. A number of very established writers contributed with stories attempting to give us "literary" filth and at least the first volumes sold 100

The campaign against the porn ban had two or three flag bearers. One group was the youth federation of the Swedish Liberal Party, but you should note that "liberal" in Europe usually doesn't mean "left wing". Euro liberals tend to be centre-right and are often in coalition with conservatives, seldom with socialists. Another group were the real left wingers, socialists who as usual wanted to be against anything traditional. Avant garde artists may be seen as a third group, though they have always tended to be left wing anyway. The opponents to porn in the 1960's were religious groups



*In protest against the Vietnam war.*



*"Is there place for sex in school?" Intercourse rooms in high school debated.*



*Johnny Bode recording.*

000's of copies (for a population of 8 million at the time). However, one wonder how "literary" the stories were. In *Libertine Times* we are given examples of commercial porn compared to examples from the peak of literature. And you can't find much difference.

One of the major door-openers for porn was Johnny Bode's "Songs of the Brothel Madame", which sold hundreds of thousands of copies - before ABBA. Songs like "Jerk me off with White Gloves" is today a mainstay on the Sunkit music club. Bode was a fat cat who defrauded hotels, restaurants, friends - everyone with a temperature around 37C - stole antique carpets from film stars and sang for the Nazis during the war. A real scoundrel, when he didn't led the avant garde attack in sex music.

An interesting chapter for me is a visit to and interview with Kjell Genberg, one of our members in *The Short Story Masters* (see last issue!). He is a prolific writer and with 250+ published books has appeared in virtually every genre. He's mostly famous for crime fiction and the long paperback series about Wild West hero Ben Hogan. However he has also written a number of what was called Sexy Westerns. That's westerns with a few sexy encounters squeezed into every story. These kinds of books were earlier available on every newsstand kiosk of what is known as Pressbyrån ("The Press Bureau", a newsstand chain with near monopoly) and were called "kiosk paperbacks". Those have



since disappeared, I'm not sure exactly why, but the kiosk paperbacks are gone from kiosks and other type of paperbacks have now come and moved into eg supermarkets. Anyway, Kjell would back in the days of the 1970s take perhaps a week - record time is one weekend - to write a "sexy western" (see examples above) under the pseudonym Clay Allison. They of course had a strict format for both length and contents. Kjell is a good hack, better than me. My own only attempt at a kiosk paperback failed and had to be stencilled in a fanzine instead.

I must jump back and forth in this well-filled volume. We have for instance the notorious theatre play "Oh! Calcutta!", with an ensemble ripping of all clothes. Leading

daily Dagens Nyheter tongue-in-cheekly reviewed the nude bodies of the cast. One of the gents magazines sent a group of nudists to see the play, but they were thrown out. "Why can't we be naked when they can on stage!" they complained.

When Mr Hefner founded Playboy clubs in the US, someone thought something similar in libertine Sweden would be a sure success. An attempt with a local version of a playboy club (re-designed bunnies, and called the Scala Club) only lasted a few months. Maybe the Swedes had too much sex around them that a club was unnecessary. There were also cafés with topless waitresses, Miss Nude competitions in amusement parks, sex art exhibitions in even respected galleries, topless nightclub bands... But one of the strangest cases is the



"Handball team fixed finances with porn club."

handball club which was down to a handful of members and in desperation started a sex club. They got huge news coverage and suddenly 500 new members!

Political youth associations would organise discussion evenings where sex and freedom of speech would be debated, of course showing some porn films, for educational purposes. They would quickly sell out all tickets, but before the porn ban was lifted the police would take action if someone filed a

# DE VISADE SAMLAG PÅ FILM - SKA DE FÅ FÄNGELSE?

AV TORST HYLÉN

Sex personer — en flicka och fem pojkar — i Liberala studentklubben står nu åtalade för att ha arrangerat den uppmärksamade sexdebatten i Medborgarhuset i Hösna.



"They showed intercourse on film - will they go to jail?" Liberal student politicians' debate ending with a porn film took them to court in 1965. (In the end they were given low fines.)

came in a reprint volume. It was well-drawn by one Leif Rundquist and is of course covered in *Libertine Times*. And so is the 1980's controversy around the comics publisher Horst Schröder, who did artistic new wave comics. A religious anti-porn group reported him for "violent porn" (which was re-banned in the early 1980's) and forced newsstands to remove his production from the shelves.

Though he was freed in a two-day court case (I was there and did a long report in my newszine *SFJ*) his publishing company was hit very badly. Horst is known in fandom, has guested the local SFSF

club and for a time shared his comics bookshop with the SF Bookstore.

Let me quickly cover other sf and/or fandom related stuff in this book.

Space composer Ralph Lundstens film-project "Cosmic Lover" is already mentioned. Another filmmaker is Carl Johan De Geer, also author of some sf novels (you may remember that *Intermission* last autumn was on the release of his apocalyptic *Lord of the Rats!*). As originally a photographer he in the 1960s of course tried nude - artistic, of course - pics of this then wife Marie Louise. But he also appeared in in the famous avant garde poet Åke Hodell's experimental feature film "Du gamla, du fria" ("Thou Old, Thou Free", title of Sweden's national anthem) shot in very chaotic sessions, and despite nudity a total flop at the cinemas. (But I'd love to see it! *SVT, please!*) An unexpected encounter is the story of how a very young fan Johan Tibbelin, friend of Martin, interviewed a centrefold model in an article for his school paper. Nudity was also the issue a satirical photo series (the same girl would



Stockholm student paper's "Student of the Month" series, shot by Pry ed Christer Landergren, was intended as a satire (but soon stopped).

be presented as a *different* student in each issue) in the Stockholm university student paper, photographed by fan Christer Landergren, famous for the fine fanzine *Prry*. We of course learn about Denis Lindbohm, who wrote in famed p-publisher H:son's mag *Piff*. Denis also

wrote serious sf-porn novels like *The Golden Rim* and *Eden Without Adam* (but the book misses that the last later came in an extended version as *A Snake Turned Up in Eden*). Not mentioned is that fen Ulf Westblom and John Ågren also wrote a series of porn stories for *Piff*, but we do hear about other sf porn in the *Piff* mag, like "The Sex Samaritans from Space". And Sven Delblanc - a famous, very respected writer - unexpectedly turned up with the apocalyptic sf theatre play "Robot Base", made much more interesting with much less clothes. At peak in the 1970's Stockholm had around 30 sex clubs, and the most famous one was probably Chat Noir. I knew a fan who was there part-time as entrance host 40 years ago, with the job of convincing guests to buy expensive non-alcoholic cider as "champagne" (they had no booze license). It was just before they had to close as such clubs were banned having explicit sex shows live in the early 1980's when the laws changed again.

We must return to the films. Lots of svenska flickor ficks were made through the 70's. It's a pity they

complaint. Some members of a Liberal Party's Youth Federation were taken to court for such an event, and were fined (rather low amounts, but still). But before 1971, it was difficult to know what degree of sex and nudity that was illegal, since the assessments varied a lot.

An earlier *Intermission* covered the long-running porn comics "James Fång", which now has become cult and a few years ago



"James Fjång" was famous for onomatopoeic words like "Ynf!" and "Isch!"

left out the cult director Bo Arne Vibenius dystopian "Breaking Point" starring a fannish father, not too gloriously, but they do cover astonishing, wonderful Christina Lindberg, [https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0511350/?ref=fn\\_al\\_nm\\_1](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0511350/?ref=fn_al_nm_1). She was the queen of the centrefolds in the 1970s and also the standard nude of the movies. Her "Thriller: A Cruel Picture" (1973) about a woman seeking revenge in a vaguely dystopian world is a classic, said to have inspired Quentin Tarantino. It's worth seeing if you stumble upon it. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0072285/> (Lindberg's latest, "Pandemonic", is an sf move too, but IMDB says it hasn't been finished. Let's hope it comes when the virus gets tired!) Christina has in later years led campaigns to save the Swedish wild wolves. Swedish nude films was once so popular that the Japanese came here and shot half a dozen "Sweden films" in the 1970s. with Swedish actors under Japanese directors - shown only in Japan.



The most well-known sex club.

Even the demon director Ingmar Bergman had plans for a "glad porn" movie, which were scrapped after the Swedish taxmen Gestapo-style assaulted him with tax fraud accusations, which were later dropped. But Ingmar was so upset he stopped all projects and moved to Germany for many years to get away from Gestapo. The script of his porn-picture project has



A long series of films, without any connection at all to old Sweden!

survived and is summarized in the book, a confusing story of conspiracies among historical European royals and rulers.

"Glad porn" was the label used for a long series of Danish porno flicks from the time. They often had some Swedish actors, but are for some reason omitted here, maybe because some things just have to be left out due to lack of space. In "The Sign of Sagittarius" we find the industrious Ole Søltoft hunting secret plans of a space station base, beside Ingmar's daughter Anna Bergman and Sweden's Olympic discus medalist Ricky Bruch.

The Danish "Sign" and "Bedside" films were hugely popular. (As said, Danish sex history is probably just as juicy, but someone else will have to write that book.)

In the early 1980's porn clubs were banned from showing explicit stuff and the rest of the world had overtaken the Swedes in porno films and all. But the reputation stuck. A label like "Swedish Erotica" is produced in Hollywood with 0% Swedish connection, "Schweden Porno" is a German concept, etc.

But time to pull the brakes! This has become longer than intended already. As a reviewer I must say Libertine Times is a very well-researched, fascinating book, a *cornerstone of any sex history library!* The only thing I think they perhaps should have added is a page spread or two with a timeline of different events. It would have been valuable to get a quick overview of when the different things happened and how they connect.

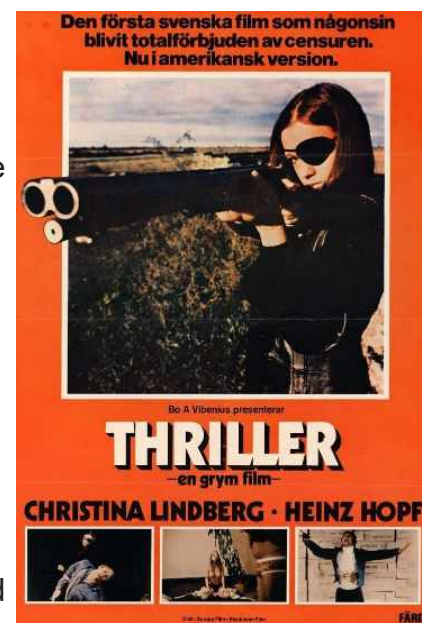
Anyway, it's a book for everyone to read in times like this, when a virus has made all of us fucked...

## Without a Song or a Dance What Are We?

There's absolutely no way to avoid it. If someone had told me how the biggest band in the world in the 1970's, which went silent for four decades...would come back, I'd rejected the story for my sf magazine. But everyone in the whole wide world now know: ABBA is orbiting Earth again!

Two new songs now, an album in November with ten songs, with a Christmas song for December, and in May a computer generated digital show in London, done with help of the Star Wars crew.

These virtual concerts are themselves pretty much skiffy. Anni-Frid, Benny, Björn and Agnetha spent five weeks (!) jumping around on a stage in black pyjamas with coloured dots, in front of 160



Alternative title of "Thriller" is "They Call Her One Eye". Worth seeing!

cameras and a crew of hundreds from Industrial Light and Magic (the George Lucas CGI company). There are examples of such digital concerts before, but ABBA is the first band to really go all in for it. They have worked on the concept for 4-5 years by now and are building a special arena equipped for it London, with 3000 seats in. Around 850 people have been involved in creating their "abbatars".

One wonders if, with all this work, they'll be able to push this technology further. As they have scanned the group for weeks in all angles and poses, these virtual figures should be able to move around more "spontaneously", so it all isn't like a film being shown. Or? Will be interesting to see.

I shortly give you my amateur analysis of one of their new songs, but first other thoughts.

While it was never true that ABBA was worth more than Volvo, they have probably been just as important as any car company or furniture chain for the world-wide perception of the "brand" of Sweden. But did you know that on their home turf they were *hated* by many?

In the 1970's there was the influential so called "alternative music movement", called "progg" (a word used differently from "prog" in the UK). It came from the left-wing that dominated those times, and said no to everything commercial, made progressive music for the proletariat, had solidarity with the third world, argued that everyone can play (many couldn't) and all that...well, not jazz.

And ABBA was their sworn enemy.

When their "Waterloo" success brought the Eurovision to Stockholm in 1975, the proggers organised their own Alternative Music Festival. As the Eurovision Song Contest was shown on SVT1, the Alternative Festival was simultaneously on the SVT2 channel. We could for instance hear a guy using the nom-de-plume Herring Strangler sing, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOFqfMuSEsI> (and I translate):

*And here is ABBA in costumes of plastic  
As dead as canned fish  
They don't give a damn, want fast cash  
My French nerves are smoldering  
Doing the immoral music festival...*

"Herring Strangler" comes from that "Abba" is also the name of a Swedish fish canning company, which however gave ABBA manager Stikkan Andersson permission to use the name ABBA "as long as you don't do anything to shame us". I don't think this company found they ever did... (We should be grateful they didn't keep the original name, from when their first single was released in Japan in 1972: "Bjorn and Benny with Svenska Flicka", the last = "Swedish Girl").

National TV was and still is massively dominated by left wing sentiments, so of course they'd dedicate one of their channels to this more Politically Correct festival. It was people who in many cases banged on cooking pots instead of drums, who forced the radio's music top-list show to shut down ("You can't compete in music!"), a music movement where one of the big "hits" was Philemon Arthur & the Dung's "In comes Gösta", consisting of them monotonously repeating the "song" title in a recording from their kitchen. If you don't believe me, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-d69hYZsGoo>. When this was given the Swedish "Grammis" prize the critics were so upset that the award was cancelled for 15 years! The proggers ruled and set the agenda.

ABBA was everything these guys hated. They didn't have politics in their texts. They sung about things interesting for young people - longing, love, happiness, sorrow. They had outrageous stage costumes full of glitter. They made catchy well-produced quality songs, money, money, money and were successful all over the world. There wasn't one molecule of the politically correct in this foursome. ABBA must be the demons from hell!

Personally, I was never among the ABBA haters then. At the time I just didn't care much about them, being too occupied by sf and fandom and other things. But I remember I already in the 1980's

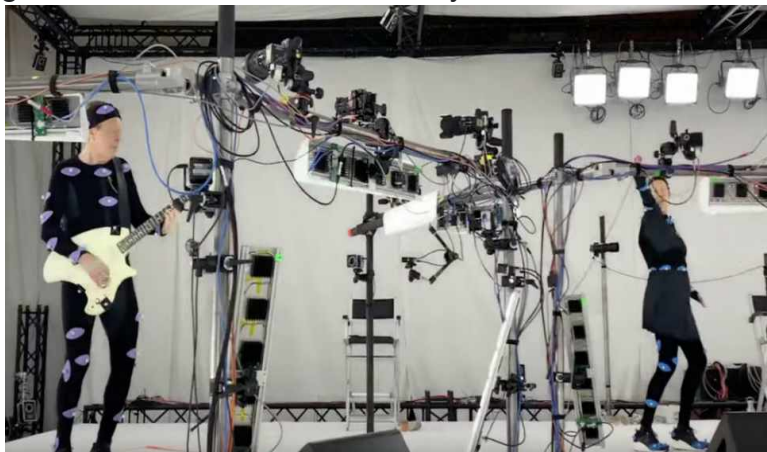


*Herring Strangler sings on the Alternative Music Festival.*

bought several of the ABBA LPs, at least second-hand cheaply, and of course it happened I put them on the record player. When ABBA took their (very, very long) break in 1982 it was quiet around them for years. But then the buzz slowly began to grow.

Many of the punk rockers that popped up liked ABBA, for instance Six Pistols who covered "Dancing Queen". Punk was anti-establishment and "prog" was the establishment. Heavy Metal fans liked ABBA too. The elaborate production qualities of the ABBA tracks were something symphonic heavy rock could relate to. And of course lots of ABBA tracks were perfect for the discotheques where the yuppies danced and enjoyed themselves.

When the ABBA Gold album came in the early 1990's ABBA began bouncing back for real. (And this album has since stayed on the 100 most sold list for a record 1000+ weeks in Britain!) The Australians, who had adopted the Swedes as their own, made films with ABBA music. We got the "Mamma Mia!" musical, now done in scores of languages, said to have been seen by 65+ millions, and also been made into two films. There came TV documentaries (half a dozen can be found on Youtube). Madonna, Erasure, symphony orchestras and others used ABBA music. We saw dozens of tribute bands with names like Björn Again, A-Teens, Abbaesque, Volez Vous...



*Björn and Agnetha from ABBA's motion capture sessions.*

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If liking ABBA was once an embarrassment, it now became cool, even an intellectual thing. You could write doctoral theses about their many layered lyrics and sound landscapes, maybe first studying their history in the ABBA museum that opened in Stockholm. And for me it was now, sometime in the 1990's when all this became obvious, I too got bitten by the ABBA bug. I don't regret it one bit, and what I write here is of course a bit biased. Just so you know...

So why did ABBA make this comeback? First we should note that the members weren't inactive for 40 years. Björn and Benny wrote musicals (I saw "Kristina from Duvemåla", which had several hits on the Swedish charts), were involved in the films, opened the ABBA museum and did many other things. It seems Björn Ulvæus is the businessman who travels all over the world to help all local stagings of the "Mamma Mia!" musical. Benny on the other hand leads his own folk music/schlager Benny Andersson's Orchestra.

And Frida and Agnetha have now and then released songs and albums, sometimes doing some chart climbing. Search Youtube for eg "Something Going On" by Frida or "The Heat is on" by Agnetha. I'm myself rather fond of Frida being guest singer on a Ratata hit, with the English version here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvC-IU1kvy8> ("As Long As I Have You"). Both have given interviews, Frida from Switzerland where she now lives, Agnetha less frequently - but while she's been a bit more reclusive she hasn't been a Greta Garbo. Agnetha has turned up on premiere events, been on TV and has released new albums as late as 2004 and 2013, also doing promos for them. (But she refuses to fly, having earlier had a scary episode with a thunderstorm on a plane during a US tour.) Agnetha has done more music than Frida, who on the other hand has become a real Swiss princess, through marriage. When ABBA not unexpectedly climbed to #1 on Swedish Radio's main pop charts show ("Svensktoppen") Agnetha gave a long interview, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGok5U-YRBw> (with English subtitles). Agnetha had more than 50 years earlier been #1 on "Svensktoppen" too, as a young solo artist!

In the 1960's Agnetha Fältskog was a star equalling Björn and Benny, writing her own music, often topping local charts. One of my favourite early Agnetha songs in Swedish is here, "Doktorn", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jc2qAzUM1lo> (English translation is below, on the site). She's credited with only one ABBA song however, though Björn - her husband at the time - said they

always in vain urged her to write for the group. She must have had a writers' block of some sort. Agnetha is credited with composing only one ABBA song, "Disillusion", on the Ring, Ring album.

But how strange isn't it that ABBA now in 2021 is reaching orbital speed! They are outdoing other billionaires - who cheat by using real rockets. The ABBA rise through the stratosphere is like a three-stage rocket, something like this:

*Stage One:* Preparing a Christmas Show (for NBC and BBC) leading to the idea of a virtual stage show.

*Stage Two:* Preparing that show (the one being set up in London) they got together for the motion capture, thought they should have a couple of new songs for it, so they recorded the two songs now out.

*Stage Three:* But since they seemed to enjoy that, why not a new EP, Benny asked. Or a whole album! The four members were now "fired up" and recorded eight more songs.

Björn Ulvaeus said in an interview:

*To tell the truth, the main inspiration to record again comes from our involvement in creating the strangest and most spectacular concert you could ever dream of. We're going to be able to sit back in an audience and watch our digital selves perform our songs on a stage in a custom-built arena in London next spring. Weird and wonderful!*

But I also believe ABBA came back out of the irresistible feeling of nostalgia, a longing for the past, that we all have as we get older, awoken by everything around the new show and recordings. It became a challenge they set up for themselves: Do we still have it in us? Dare we?

They had no need for money. The individual members are estimated to each be worth between 1.5-2.5 Billion Swedish crowns (divide by 8.5 for Dollar value). They have nothing to prove, with a legacy firmly fixed to the starry sky already in the 1980's, when they took "a break". And it seems they were professional enough not letting being divorcees from each other get in the way. That was 40+ years ago, after all. It probably caused some strains then, but as years passed feelings around such becomes softer and more distant.

ABBA was never much into touring. They would guest TV shows instead and were pioneers doing videos (or 16 mm film at the time). Björn estimate they weren't on the road more than six months in total. And in 2021 doing live stage shows would be even more out of the question, as old-age pensioners. Someone should tell The Rolling Stones, who should be renamed The Rolling Chairs...

4.5 years ago NBC in the US and BBC in the UK announced they were preparing a joint Christmas Special about ABBA, aimed for December 2019. The work on that started 2017, and according to a radio interview with Björn it was British TV's (of "Idol") Simon Fuller who suggested: even if you won't go on stage live, how about a virtual show? So Benny and Björn began to work on that concept. That was the lift-off for *stage one*.

The TV show was delayed because of a certain virus. (It seems to have been laid on ice. I haven't heard anything more about the NBC/BBC project, but if I was those TV producers I'd love to go back to it!)

But for a stage show, even if its digital, it's almost insulting to have no new material. A couple of songs perhaps? Benny phoned up their lead singers, ready to hear a "Sorry but..." But they said yes!



*ABBA-tars and originals in the motion capture costumes.*



*Agnetha's and Frida's ABBA-tars, done as they were in 1979*

ABBA went back to the studio, Benny's own studio on a central Stockholm island. The *second stage* fired up. That was in 2018 and they began preparing the virtual show..

While in studio the four of them found they hit it off splendidly. And because of the virtual show they had to jump around in front on 160 (!) cameras, in dotted leotards *for five weeks*, all managed by the Star Wars crew. They performed the 22 songs of the coming show over and over again. *ABBA's only live shows for four decades have been for Star Wars film crews!* (Lucky bastards!) And it was all done in the most outrageous costumes ever. It's unknown if the ABBAtar shows will use the voices from these sessions or if from older recordings (maybe a mix?). All that motion capture was done in one of the big film studios of the Swedish Film Institute house. Up to 850 people from the Lucas gang is said to have worked the knobs and dials of the computers and lasers.

After jumping around in a pyjamas, Benny asked: Since we've done two songs, why not a whole album? They did eight more songs, as I understand recorded this passed year, a couple of years later than the first two. The second stage had now burned out and separated. Orbital speed was to be reached as *the third stage lit up*. (I like space metaphors, as an old space fan.)

Björn and Benny had never taken a break from anything. And the brains of Agnetha and Frida were totally soaked in nostalgia from reborn ABBAmania and the ABBAtar posing and the first new studio sessions. It was the key thing that they too came along for the ride into uncharted territory - which surely will lead to some chart encounters. Benny expected Frida and Agnetha to say no when he phoned them up, but to his surprise they jumped at the opportunity. They crammed twenty something violinists of the Stockholm Concert Orchestra into Benny's studio, to fiddle with the new tracks, B&B grabbed the sliders of the control board, and Frida and Agnetha opened their vocal cords...

Björn has explained how incredible it was to record the tracks, the first two recorded about two years before the rest of the new album, where the last mixing was done in late August 2021. It just took a few seconds and they were catapulted back in time to how they worked in the studio 40 years earlier. It seems the material is basically new, though Benny maybe had some half-baked songs that they could add to and finish.

I'm certain that some of the new songs on the album will be top notch! (We can't expect all new ones to be hits. ABBA did some strange not too brilliant tracks too, in the beginning.) They did it because they loved what they once did and were curious to see if they could do it again. And they *could*. In an interview Benny Andersson said that their coming album, titled "Voyager", will be sold in all forms, including CD, vinyl - and music cassette! Do you remember those things you 40 years ago had in your Sony Walkman? 78 rpm records weren't mentioned...

Of the two new songs we have already heard, I'm slightly less enthusiastic about "I still have faith in you", mostly because it's a bit too slow and I'm not too much into ballads. But a) it's better that 95% of the questionable noise our radio stations annoys us with today, and b) Frida does a wonderful job, considering she's a 75 year old princess. Her voice may be a little darker, but she is in total control and has aged well. We can also hear that Agnetha has become a little lower in her voice. I think we willingly accept that Frida and Agnetha now are maybe only 98% of what they once were - ie the best female pop singers of the 1970's - but we take what we get, gratefully! The more mature voices of the singers brings the material patina and life experience.

If the first song was average ABBA I really think their second new track, "Don't Shut Me Down" is a world-tumbler! It's the gobsmaacking proof in the pudding. You can find small echoes from both "Dancing Queen" and "The Winner takes it all" in it. It's extremely catchy, danceable and sounds like classic ABBA. As always with Ulvaeus it has clever and deeper lyrics than you might think at first. You can hear it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWGWFa3jznI> At the time of writing it's No 1 in 18 countries, while "I Still Have Faith in You" does a notch better on Youtube - nice for Frida.

Agnetha's "Doin't Shut Me Down" works on four levels, with three stories:

- 1) *The story of a woman who returns to her former husband or lover.*
- 2) *The story of ABBA and lead-singer Agnetha herself.*

3) *There are cues to ABBA's coming virtual show.*

4) *Finally, I think the song also comments on the virus situation.*

The title "Don't Shut Me Down" can't be a coincidence. Everywhere owners of pubs, cafes, shops, theatres and sports venues have begged "don't shut me down!". Still the lockdowns have come and with them economic hardship and all kinds of long-term damage. Sweden didn't have lockdowns, but caps on gatherings still efficiently killed off concerts and music. Björn and Benny must have seen how their colleagues were badly hit by bans on concerts. And ABBA musicals were stopped all over the world. While B&B could easily survive, they saw how tough it was for all other artists. The song title could be interpreted as a comment to this. The biggest daily's - Dagens Nyheter - music critic Fredrik Strage, wrote in his Friday column September 10:

*"It strikes me that 'Don't Shut Me Down' feels political: don't shut down the music, I don't empty the dance floors, abandon restrictions."*

I think he's right. The lyrics also talks about changes and transformation, which is what both society and the mindset of people have gone through. It isn't a 100% "anti-lockdown" song, since it has so much else, but that must be seen as a component.

In the story that carries the lyrics we find a woman waiting in the park below the flat she once shared with her lover or ex-husband. That's what I call story 1, but also story 4. We have been isolated, like the lonely woman on the bench, and separated from our loved ones. It has been dark and cold in our lives, but a break in isolation is near ("lights are on, it's time to go") we all hope. We hear:

*A while ago, I heard the sound of children's laughter  
Now it's quiet, so I guess they left the park  
This wooden bench is getting harder by the hour  
The sun is going down, it's getting dark  
I realise I'm cold, the rain begins to pour  
As I watch the windows on the second floor  
The lights are on, it's time to go  
It's time at last to let him know*



As we come to the next verse, we can also see it as a comment to the divorce song "The Winner Takes It All", where the woman was left by her lover and crushed by it. But in this song it's the other way around - she left. She has now had a change of mind and there are hints it all will end well. She has "learned to cope and love and hope". Love is back and she "will let him know". That is all story 1, but story 2 as well as ABBA is coming back (and story 4 in learning "to cope" with high-handed virus measures). ABBA but also Agnetha left because they had "had enough" but now they're back in another "shape and form". That ABBA is back must make fans "look bewildered and..they/ should, I would" - catchy fast, double rhyme! There's also story 3 in that ABBA will "appear" in a new "shape and form" as avatars:

*I believe it would be fair to say  
You look bewildered  
And you wonder why I'm here today  
And so you should, I would  
When I left, I felt I'd had enough  
But in the shape and form I appear now  
I have learned to cope  
And love and hope is why I am here now*

Having "had enough" may be what many listeners have felt about extensive lockdowns, government rules, tests, masks, vaccine passports and such - story 4 in there.

More story 3 follows in the next verse, with "another" ABBA, "reloaded" soon to be "fired up". You "fire up" a system or machine, just as computerised avatars, don't you! (To "fire up" BTW comes from starting old steam engines.) And you are asked not to "shut down" the coming ABBA-tars - story 3.

During the virus days many pubs, shops, venues of all kinds have also been "shut down" - story 4. VR-like computer figures can be described as "a dream within a dream", story 3, while it's also a dream for all ABBA fans that they are back, story 2. And "decoded" definitely connects to advanced number crunching technology - more story 3. The new ABBA is "not the one you know" (story 2, but also 3) but also "now and then combined" (story 2). They are "not the same this time around" (story 1, 2, 3 and maybe 4, much of society isn't the same):

*And now you see another me, I've been reloaded,  
yeah  
I'm fired up, don't shut me down  
I'm like a dream within a dream that's been decoded  
I'm fired up, I'm hot, don't shut me down  
I'm not the one you knew  
I'm now and then combined  
And I'm asking you to have an open mind (And I won't  
be the same)  
I'm not the same this time around (Ooh)  
I'm fired up, don't shut me down*

In the next verse we learn that it will probably end well (story 1). She isn't left standing in the hall, but invited in - so she can see "the apartment hasn't changed at all". This hints that her former lover wanted to stay in their life together, the rooms "witness to our love". The hinted happy ending is also what people want now in the real world, as the virus hopefully is winding down (story 4). We will be ready to find love again. Agnetha ensures us that she has matured, gone "from mad to not so bad" (I like that phrasing!), story 2, and maybe the world itself will go from mad to not so bad (story 4)?

*Will you leave me standing in the hall  
Or let me enter?  
The apartment hasn't changed at all  
I got to say I'm glad  
Once these rooms were witness to our love  
My tantrums and increasing frustration  
But I go from mad  
To not so bad in my transformation (So now)*

The chorus is repeated once more and as it all ends, we are getting certain it all will end well. He "asked me not to leave" so he wants her, and she "love(s) you still". That's all story 1, but also a bit story 2 - about Agnetha herself. While she never was a Garbo, she was a little bit more reclusive and more further away from ABBA than the others. But now she is back, just like the woman in the song:

*You asked me not to leave  
Well, here I am again  
And I love you still and so I won't pretend  
I have learned to cope*

## TRIVIA ON SF & ABBA

- ABBA's original manager Stikkan Andersson was an artist himself and toured the 1950's Swedish "folk parks" together with Börje Crona, who later became a famous sf writer.
- Hans Arnold, horror artist and well-known in fandom (eg being on our cons), did the cover for the ABBA album Greatest hits. This very typical Arnold artwork depicts the group in horror style. ABBA made a "greatest hits" album already in the mid-70's, when they hadn't had their greatest hits yet... The reason may be they thought they had reached their pinnacle by then. How wrong they were!
- Agnetha Fältskog have sung on records by the cosmic composer Ralph Lundsten, who does skiffy inspired music and is also well-known in sf circles, also guested our cons.
- Björn Ulvaeus is said to be a big fan of sf. Details are unknown, but in later years he has often been involved in popular science and philosophical debates. Here he is interviewing pop science writer Richard Dawkins, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmacqKEJHvM>
- The cover of new ABBA album Voyage is space themed, showing the Sun and planets. In 2021 Björn Ulvaeus opened (as one of the main initiators) a digital culture activity centre in Stockholm, which they named "Space". It is three floors in of the Sergel highrises in central Stockholm. <https://translate.google.com/translate?sl=auto&tl=en&u=https://www.di.se/digital/eqt-grundare-och-abba-bjorn-bakom-jattesatsning-pa-digitalt-kulturhus-i-stockholm/>
- Finally the story of Stranded Records, a small independent record label later acquired by ABBA's label Polar Music. It was started by fans Klas Lunding and Anders Tapper, with publishing a fanzine named Stranded. Both had fannish connections. Lunding began with sf zines and was - if I remember - a founding member of the SFF APA, around in 1978. Tapper was around fans, I saw him in the SFSF clubhouse, and the brother of long-time fan Siv Tapper. When they drifted away they began their music zine Stranded (turned into the record label). Here's a 1983 article about them through Google Translate: <https://translate.google.com/translate?sl=sv&tl=en&u=https://www.blaskoteket.se/artiklar/schlagar/068/stranded-records/>

*And love and hope is why I am here now*

And the world may also bounce back, we all hope (story 4), just as love bounces back in this song.

I think it's great lyrics! ABBA often had fine lyrics, written by Björn Ulvaeus who is very well-versed in languages. He speaks German too and I have seen a short interview with him in French. Maybe he doesn't know French very well, just some phrases, but that's more than most (except Frenchmen). ABBA's lyrics often tell little stories, like in "Dancing Queen", "Fernando", "Chiquitita", "Thank You for the Music", "Happy New Year" and others. And "The Winner Takes It All" is so obvious storytelling that I shouldn't have to mention it.

That you can interpret this latest song on so many levels - anti-lockdown, a love story, ABBA's story, about the ABBA-tars - makes it transcend simple pop. It helps enormously that the song itself is catchy and happy with a tint of sadness. It prompts you to shake your legs and arms and dance, forgetting all your worries. Without a song and a dance, what are we, as someone queried.

On the net you read about people who have had "Don't shut me down" on repeat for days at end. I have myself heard it at least 20-30 times. It only took a couple of days for people to start doing their own re-mixes and covers. A particularly fine one is by young Emilia of Sweden here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdCsMIRsyrg> The ABBA comeback has released a deluge of emotions and joy. Spotify reports several hundred percent increase in downloading of ABBA's old albums and songs, also among younger people who weren't even born when ABBA decided to have their long, loud silence.

Among the old songs, a probably not too much remembered gem, we have "The Visitors". Unexpectedly it is a song against the oppression of Soviet communism. It's about people living in fear of late night knocks on the door by unwelcome "visitors", ie KGB. Be a visitor to

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_xFpjlRf38](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_xFpjlRf38) It's a rather "un-ABBA" sound production with Frida showing total singing mastership. It's worth a click and in itself says how much the world has changed in 40 years. ABBA was popular in the USSR back in the days, though perhaps not "The Visitors". Did you know that since the Soviets couldn't pay ABBA in their non-transferable Roubles - they paid in oil! <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/money-how-abba-actually-came-paid-oil-david-wylie> [https://www.rferl.org/a/The\\_Biggest\\_Western\\_Pop\\_Stars\\_Behind\\_The\\_Iron\\_Curtain/1986337.html](https://www.rferl.org/a/The_Biggest_Western_Pop_Stars_Behind_The_Iron_Curtain/1986337.html)

But an ABBA opposing communism wasn't perhaps what the 1970's left-wingers wanted. They were usually naively apologetic to all forms of communism. While being accused of being political idiots by the proggers, I'd say say ABBA rather showed themselves to be both masters of their craft and smarter than those herring stranglers.

The reviews and comments I see on their comeback are dominantly somewhere between ABBA back is pretty nice to "OMG squared - I can't believe it!" Some compare them to angels descending from outer space to rescue mankind from a 2020-21 that has been a rotten hellhole...

I wouldn't go that far, but it seems they can fly.

## HISTORY CORNER

Time for more sf & fandom history from the Royal Library's newspaper vault. Some of you can read the original text of the clips, but for the rest I'll translate and summarise.

I have covered early Swedish sf cons a lot. But here's a little story I missed, in Svenska Dagbladet August 23, promoting Stockon 1957, "A Whiff of the Universe in the Afternoon Rush":

*Just before 5 pm there was a knock on the door to the Marg column editors. In came a 16-year old youngster who presented himself as the publisher of the magazine "Super" /slang also for drinking booze!/. We bounced a bit but it showed that the title had nothing to do with anything of interest for teetotallers, but dealt with sf. "There's an sf convention starting tomorrow on the Gondolen restaurant", he said. "It continues Saturday with a speech by author Sture Lönnerstrand in a venue on S:t Erik Street. Organiser is the club Future /corr:*

Futura!, which publishes the magazine Star Stuff SF Fancies. /Sic! "It sounds American. Don't you use Swedish?" "Yes, partly." We asked about the activities of the club and were told it includes studies of space travel technology and literature on that. They haven't yet signed up for any moon trip, but an aeroplane will be brought in time for next convention. Harry Martinson is of course discussed, and also something called Sverifandom. "Sverifandom is declining in Sweden", the young editor-in-chief of "Super" explained and quickly left the office without us becoming wiser regarding sf or what this "Sverifandom" is.

"Sverifandom" is just Swedish fandom (from "SVERIGE"=Sweden). The young editor was Sture Hällström, who sadly passed away last year. His fanzine was one of the best of its time, and later merged with Roar Ringdahl's Norwegian "Fantasi" under the name Super-Fantasi.

When the sf mag *Häpna!* ("Be Astounded!") started in 1954 they promoted it with a number of small ads in major papers. This example from Dagens Nyheter November 5, 1954, concentrated on a strange titled story to arouse interest, "Captain Wyxtphll's Flying Saucer":

### Kapten Wyxtphlls Flygande Tefat

heter den märkliga historien om rymdvarelserna Crysteel och Danstor första besök på jorden med ett flygande tefat. Dessa två hade av sin chef, den fyrrarmade och fyrbenta Kapten Wyxtphll, fått i uppdrag att hämta ett exemplar av det underliga släkte som man antog bebodde planeten Terra. Efter många groteska misstag lyckades verkligen Crysteel och Danstor fullgöra sitt uppdrag... — en sensationell och andäkt spännande novell i science fiction-tidskriften HÄPNA:s novembernummer av den engelske vetenskapsmannen Arthur C. Clarke.

is the name of the strange story about the first visit to Earth by the space creatures Crysteel and Danstor with a flying saucer. These two had by their boss, the four armed and four legged Captain Wyxtphll been assigned the mission to bring back an example of the curious species they assumed lived on the planet Terra. After many grotesque mistakes Crysteel and Danstor really managed to fulfill their mission... - a sensational and breathtakingly exciting short story in the November issue of the sf magazine *Häpna!* By the English scientist Arthur C Clarke.

An alternative title for this story is "Trouble with the Natives" and if you're interested you can find

it here: <https://www.you-books.com/book/A-C-Clarke/Trouble-with-the-Natives>

From one of the Greats to another: Bobby Heinlein! I knew that he visited Scandinavia (he mentions it somewhere) and here's proof of one trip, "Little Interview with space writer who wants to reach the Moon", Dagens Nyheter July 26, 1955:

A space writer on a trip around the world is these days visiting Sweden. His name is Robert A Heinlein and is one of the most talked-about sf writers in the USA today. Robert Heinlein came to Stockholm together with his blonde wife Virginia after visiting 13 European countries.. He has then still four countries to visit in Europe before he returns to his house in the Rocky Mountains. Robert Heinlein uses half of the year to write and the rest of the time he travels. Last year he made a trip to South America, Africa, Asia and Australia and this year he goes through Europe. But Robert Heinlein dreams about far further journeys. I hope I may experience the day when a trip to the Moon is possible, I he confesses. In technical terms there's nothing to stop such a voyage today, but it'll cost a huge amount of "money". It'll be as expensive as the atomic bomb, Heinlein says, who however is convinced that Man one day will make interplanetary journeys. It is as necessary as it once was to go to the North Pole, he says. Robert Heinlein began as an engineer. During the war he was employed by the marine aviation and it was there he met his wife. It was a pure coincidence that I began to write, he says. I wrote a short story in 1939 and when it sold I just continued. The purpose was to get money for the house I have built near Colorado Springs in the Rocky Mountains. During the war I was fully occupied by my work as an engineer for the navy but since I left that job I have been writing full time. I have published around 20 books, Heinlein says, and two more are ready to go to print when I am back. My books have been translated to 13 languages, among them Japanese and Arabic. Robert Heinlein wo9nt say much about his writing. You must remember that a writer mainly writes to entertain, he says. He works in the "clown business" whether you want it or not. But that won't stop him from presenting his own philosophy of life. In the sf genre I'm more interested in people than machines, he says. I would rather call the genre "speculated fiction". But that doesn't stop me from trying to get all scientific details correct. Robert Heinlein is also an amateur astronomer and has a three inch telescope in his house. I built my house after I had grown tired of big city life and it is sited very isolated, he says. At night time bears may come into the garden. Robert Heinlein intends to

### En fläkt av universum i eftermiddagsbrådskan

Strax före kl. 17 knackade det på dörren till mang-redaktionen. In trädde en 16-årig yngling, som presenterade sig som utgivare av tidningen "Super". Vi studsade lätt, men det visade sig att titeln inte anspeglade på något som nykterhetsrörelsen kunde intressera sig för, utan på science fiction.

— En science fiction-kongress börjar i morgon på restaurang Gondolen, berättade han. Den fortsätter på lördag med ett tal av författaren Sture Lönnerstrand i en lokal vid St Eriksgatan. Arrangör är föreningen Future, som utger tidningen "Star Stuff Science Fiction Fancies".

— Det låter amerikanskt. Använder ni ingen svenska?

— Jo — delvis.

Vi frågade om föreningens verksamhet och fick veta att den omfattar studium av rymdfärdsteknik och litteratur om ämnet. Någon månfärd har man ännu inte antecknat sig för, men ett flygplan skall inköpas till nästa kongress. Harry Martinson diskuteras givetvis, och också något som heter "sverifandomen".

— Sverifandomen är i avtagande i Sverige, förklarade den unge chef-redaktören för tidningen "Super" och lämnade snabbt redaktionen utan att vi lyckats bli klokare på vare sig science fiction eller vad som menas med "sverifandomen".

# Liten intervju

med rymdskribent som  
som vill till månen

En rymd-  
skribent  
på jorden  
runt-resa

besöker i dagarna Sverige. Han heter Robert A. Heinlein och torde vara en av de mest uppmärksammade science fiction-författarna i USA i dag. Till Stockholm kom Robert Heinlein efter att tillsammans med sin blonda fru Virginia ha besökt 13 europeiska länder. Kvar i Europa har han sedan fyra länder att besöka innan han kan återvända till sin villa i Klippiga bergen.

Robert Heinlein använder halva året till att skriva och den övriga tiden reser han. Förra året gjorde han en resa till Sydamerika, Afrika, Asien och Australien och i år av-  
verkar han Europa. Men Robert Heinlein drömmer om betydligt avlägsnare resrutter. Jag hoppas att



Rob. A. Heinlein

jag får uppleva den dag då en resa till månen är möjlig, bekänner han. Tekniskt är det inget som hindrar att man företar en sådan resa i dag, men det kostar en oerhörd mängd "money". Det blir lika dyrt som en atombomb, säger Heinlein, som dock är övertygad om att människan en dag kommer att göra interplanetariska resor. Det är lika nödvändigt som det var att komma till nordpolen en gång, säger han.

Robert Heinlein var från början ingenjör. Under kriget var an-  
ställd vid marinflyget och där lärde han känna sin hustru. Det var en ren tillfällighet som gjorde att jag började skriva, berättar han. Jag skrev en novell 1939 och när jag fick den placerad fortsatte jag. Syftet var närmast att få pengar till det hus som jag byggt i närheten av Colorado Springs mitt i Klippiga bergen. Under kriget var jag helt upptagen av mitt arbete som ingenjör vid flottan men sedan jag lämnat min tjänst har jag helt ägnat mig åt att skriva. Ungefär 20 böcker har jag hittills gett ut, berättar Heinlein, och två nya är klara att tryckas när jag kommer tillbaka. Mina böcker har översatts till tretton språk, däribland japanska och arabiska.

Om sitt författarskap är Robert Heinlein mycket förtegen. Man får inte glömma att en författare i första hand skriver för att underhålla, säger han. Han jobbar inom "the clown business" vare sig han vill eller ej. Men det hindrar inte att han har möjlighet att servera sin egen livsfilosofi. I science fiction-genren är jag mer intresserad av människorna än maskinerna, berättar han. Jag skulle också hellre vilja kalla genren för "speculated fiction". Detta hindrar inte att jag anstränger mig mycket att få de vetenskapliga detaljerna korrekta.

Robert Heinlein är också amatör-astronom och har i sin villa ett teleskop på tre tum. Jag byggde mitt hus sedan jag tröttnat på stadslivet och det ligger mycket isolerat, berättar han. Om nätterna brukar det komma björnar in i trädgården. I Sverige ämnar Robert Heinlein studera svensk heminredning. Det är nämligen ett annat av hans stora intressen, bekänner han.

study interior decoration in Sweden, since that is another of his interests, he confesses.

I haven't found any indication that Heinlein met Swedish fans on his visit. Sverifandom was young at the time and not very well organised, and probably didn't even know about the visit in advance. Maybe some tried to get in touch after reading this interview? It sounded like he would stay at least for a little while. Swedish interior decoration was BTW quite well-known at the time, even before IKEA.

I have earlier (especially in #96) covered the attempts to find a Swedish word for "science fiction", which was considered a bit awkward. A number of contests were announced in 1953 - the year sf became a big topic in the papers - but despite clever suggestions and announced winners, "science fiction" it remained. The two most enduring suggestions were "faktasi" launched by sf author Sture Lönnerstrand and "vetsaga" proposed by scholar Tord Hall.

The perhaps first contest was announced in Svenska Dagbladet August 27, 1953 (see #96). I don't know who won, but the enthusiasm among readers was limited. September 4th the paper had received just one entry, as noted in "World Literature":

*was what we happened to call this stuff "science fiction" the other day, upon which the readership was invited to make suggestions for a Swedish name. A total of one suggestion has now arrived: it is the signature "Grewlin" who writes: As Swedish name I'd like to suggest fictective novels, as connected to detective novels. The name connects to the English original and in pronunciation to the Swedish one, as seen above. The popular name "decker" could get an equivalent in "discoverer". So far the letter. Marginalen doesn't think the name "fictective novel" really says much - all novels tend to be fictitious (except those based on a real story). More suggestions are welcome.*

The translation needs comment. I tried to give the original suggestion "fictivromaner" a more English flavour with "fictective novels" (from "detective"). Detective novels are often called "deckare" in Swedish, which here became "deckers" in my translation attempt. Aftonbladet announced an sf naming competition later in several notices, with a major article November 28, 1953, "Good Swedish Name for Science Fiction":

*Yesterday the radio audience sat with ears flicking of fear and listened to readings from books of the type called "science fiction". It was spaceships and robots and atomic magic. It was Robert Heinlein and AE Van Vogt and other greats of the genre. The informed average American who reads high-class novels and fine poetry, he also reads "science fiction". It is an accepted form of entertainment reading. It is expected to also arrive here - in reality a number of translations have already been made - and because of the expected invasion the the public was prepared through this radio program. The radio commentator Torsten Jungstedt showed the ways of horror literature from the 1800s by comparing "science fiction" with figures like Frankenstein, Dracula and Mr Hyde. He took some of the exciting properties in "science fiction", the blood thirst, destruction - the lust, but he couldn't*

*unveil the social commentary and the cultural discussion that also exists in a corner. Yes, he mentioned that Harry Martinson with his latest poetry collection - Cikada - had an sf story of 60 pages as poetry. That should quiet those who believes that the genre only is a danger for culture. But we must have something to call it. We won't avoid it in the long run. We can't talk about "science fiction" in the long run. Aftonbladet has decided to let the Swedish people compete about what "science fiction" shall be called in Swedish.*

## "Världslitteratur"

kallade vi visst den anglosaxiska företeelsen "science fiction" härnäst, varvid läsekretsen samtidigt inbjöds att komma med förslag till svenskt namn på litteraturgenren i fråga. Summa ett förslag har nu inströmmat: det är signaturen "Grewlin", som skriver så här:

Som svensk benämning skulle jag vilja föreslå fiktivromaner, som en pendang till detektivromaner. Benämningen anknyter i betydelsen till den engelska förebilden och uttalsmässigt till den svenska föregångaren enl. ovan. Populärbenämningen "deckare" skulle kunna få sin motsvarighet i "upptäckare".

Så långt insändaren. Marginalen tycker förstås att benämningen "fiktivroman" egentligen inte säger så mycket — alla romaner plär väl vara fiktiva (utom de som kan öppnas med nyckel, kanske). Fler förslag emotes!

"Science" means science, especially natural science. "Fiction" means something made up, especially novels and short stories. "Science fiction" thus means novels and stories inspired from the field of science, novels about technology's future. The radio program gave a number of examples from typical sf reading. More excerpts will come in Aftonbladet coming week in the Blinken column. That should give a clear picture of what this is all about. Send us a good name for "science fiction" in Swedish! Your own name should be included, of course, so we know where to send the prize - 50 crowns, 25 for second prize and third prize is books of science fiction type., Write to "Science fiction", Aftonbladet, on the envelope! Last date for the prize competition is December 10.

The eventual winner (see #96) was "teknodikt" (dikt=poem, made up) which didn't catch on.

Let's move on. Fanzines were mentioned now and then in the press (you have eg seen it about my VÄ/Fanytt/SFJ), and here's more, "Fine Fanzine", Expressen April 7, 1979:

Around 50 different fanzine/s/ are these days published in Sweden, ie publications with a few short stories, reviews, messages and opinions - all about science fiction. All major

### Fina fanzine

I SVERIGE utges numera ett femtiotal olika fanzine, dvs skrifter med några noveller, recensioner, meddelanden och åsikter — allt om science fiction. Alla stora sf-författare har gjort sina första publiceringar i ett fanzine.

Fanzine är nästan alltid billiga, mellan 1:50 och 5 kr per nummer. Kvaliteten varierar kraftigt, från 60-sidiga offsettryckta tidskrifter till ensidiga spritduplicerade blad.

Ett av de senaste alstren i fanzinefloran heter Ziméria och utges av sf-föreningen vid Zimmermanska skolan i Västerås. För tre kronor får man 44 sidor med goda noveller, några recensioner, lästips samt en presentation av författaren Isaac Asimov. Med lite bättre layout och bilder har Ziméria utsikter att bli ett av landets bästa fanzine.

— Fred Stenbom

sf authors have first being published in a fanzines. Fanzine/s/ are almost always cheap, between 1:5 and 5 crowns per issue. The quality varies, from offset printed publications of 60 pages to spirit duplicated one-page sheets. One of the latest works in the fanzine flora is Ziméria which is published by the sf association of the Zimmerman school in Västerås.

For three crowns you get 44 pages with good short stories, some reviews, reading tips and a presentation of the writer Isaac Asimov. If it had a little better layout and pictures Ziméria could very well become one of the best fanzines in the country.

I was glad to discover this, which gives due credit to Michael Svensson, one of the three editors, together with Öjvind and Mikael Bernander, a Good Fan and co-owner of the SF Bookstore who unfortunately passed away in early March last year. (I don't know if it was from corona. He suffered from diabetes, but the time was a bit early for the epidemic.) Unfortunately, we also learn that Mikael Bernander also passed away last year, in September

from cancer, as reported in SFJ. Zimera was a very good, serious fanzine. One thing they did was "boxed pages", ie manually adjusted right margins, which takes a lot of work! Third editor Öjvind Bernander once took part in a "Writers of the Future" (scientology sponsored...) contest and appeared in this anthology: <https://www.writersofthefuture.com/the-anthology/anthology-volume-07-1991-winners/>

Another fine fan not with us any more is Lars-Olov Strandberg (1929-2018), active in fandom since the very first Swedish con, Luncon 1956, and Fan-GoH of the 2005 Worldcon in Glasgow. 2018. Here's an interview with him in the evening paper iDag, September 4, 1991. "A Quite Incredible Collector" (the odd colour shifts are for technical reasons from the Royal Library search system):

Ny AB-tävling:

## Bra svenskt namn på science fiction!

Radiopubliken satt i går med öronen viftande av fasa och lyssnade till uppläsningar ur böcker av typen "science fiction". Det var rymdskepp och robotar och atomtrollerier. Det var Robert Heinlein och A. E. van Vogt och andra genrens storheter.

En bildad genomsnittssvenskan som i allvarliga stunder läser högklassiga romaner och god lyrik, han läser också "science fiction". Det är en accepterad form för lätt förströelseläsning. Den väntas också komma hit till landet — i själva verket har en del översättningar redan gjorts — och inför den väntade invasionen förbereds allmänheten genom radioprogrammet.

Radiokommentatorn Torsten Jungstedt ådagalade beläsenhet i skräcklitteratur från adertonhundradakallt genom att jämföra "science fiction" med figurer som Frankenstein, Dracula och mr Hyde. Han tog fram en del av de rafflande egenskaperna hos "science fiction", blodtörsten och förstörelse-lusten, men han fick inte fram den samhällskritik och den kulturdiskussion som också är med på ett hörn. Jo, han nämnde att Harry Martinson i sin sista diktsamling — Cikada — har en hel 60-sidig science-fiction-historia på vers. Det

bör väl tysta munnen på dem som tror att genren enbart är en kulturfara. Men vi måste ha något att kalla. Vi undgår den inte i längden. den för. "Science fiction" kommer inte att kunna användas i längden.

Aftonbladet har bestämt sig för att låta svenska folket tävla om vad "science fiction" skall heta på svenska. "Science" betyder vetenskap, särskilt naturvetenskap. "Fiction" betyder dikt, i synnerhet romaner och noveller. "Science fiction" betyder alltså romaner och noveller som fått uppslag från vetenskapens fält, romaner om teknikens framtid.

Radioprogrammet gav en del utdrag ur typisk science-fiction-läsning. Flera andra utdrag kommer Aftonbladet med under den närmaste veckan på Blinken. De bör ge en någorlunda klar bild av vad det rör sig om.

Skicka alltså in ett bra namn för "science fiction" på svenska! Ert eget namn skall också vara utsatt, förstås, så att vi vet vart vi skall adressera priset — 50 kronor första, 25 kronor andra, 10 tredjepriser som är böcker av science-fiction-typ. Skriv "Science fiction", Aftonbladet, utanpå kuvertet! Sista dagen för pristävlingen är den 10 december.

With gene-editing technology scientists want to bring back the mammoth. The idea of reviving a long-dead prehistoric animal came from the ABBA reunion.

Lars-Olov attended the first Swedish sf convention in Lund 1956. Since then he has had time to attend almost all that have been arranged in this country, plus many foreign. Talk about record interest! ... You can collect anything - from books and stamps to advert pens and porcelain gnomes. But is there anyone else than Lars-Olov who collects sf conventions? He went to the first one in Lund 35 years ago. There have been a few hundred since then. "But I really don't know exactly how many," he says. Every year a couple of thousand sf cons (short for congress /no, convention/ ) are arranged in the world. /Not that many, eh?/ Some are big with thousands of attendees, the majority are small, with less than 100. On a con fans, authors, publishers and others meet to discuss, trade books, watch films, exhibitions etc. Cons began in 1939 /no, 1937, Leeds/ but the first one in Sweden didn't arrive until 1956, Luncon in Lund. And Lars-Olov was there. "At that time a con was almost the only chance to meet a kindred spirit. Sf was frowned upon, and it was nothing you could speak with your work mates about. Today the genre is respected in a quite different way," he says. /Frequent Guest/ Luncon was followed by more Swedish cons and Lars-Olov set as a target to attend them all! "I haven't managed exactly all. I have missed a few for purely practical reasons. But on the other hand I have managed some foreign ones, so it evens out," he says with a laugh. Through attending cons he has made friends all over the world, of all ages. In Sweden he is an institution: a con without Lars-Olov isn't a real con. "Those who attended in the 1950's doesn't come now. /Eh, there was 3-4 in the early 90's: Lundwall, Stenfors, Palm.../ But there are some 1960ers who still hang around. We are now in a generation shift, noticeable by that the attendance is a bit lower than

Lars-Olov Strandberg var med på den första svenska science fiction-kongressen i Lund 1956. Sedan dess har han hunnit besöka nästan alla som arrangerats här i landet, plus många utländska. Tala om rekordintresset! LEIF GUSTAFSSON



## En helt otrolig samlare

Man kan samla på allt - från böcker och frimärken till reklamplattor och porcelänsfigurer.

Men finns det någon mer än Lars-Olov Strandberg som samlar på science fiction-kongresser?

Den första besökte han i Lund för 35 år sedan. Det har blivit några hundra sedan dess.

- Fast exakt hur många vet jag faktiskt inte, säger han.

Av JOHAN WOPENKA.

Vad är arrangemanget ett par tusen sf-cons (förkortning för congress) runt om i världen. Några är stora med tusentals deltagare, men den absoluta majoriteten är små, med mindre än 100 besökare. På en con träffas fans, författare, förläggare och andra för att diskutera, handla med böcker, se på filmer, utställningar etc.

Cons började arrangeras 1939, men den första i Sverige kom inte förrän 1956, Luncon i Lund. Och där var Lars-Olov Strandberg med.

På den tiden var en con nästan den enda möjlighet man hade att träffa andra sf-intresserade. Sf ansågs inte fint, och det var inget man kunde tala med arbetskamraterna om. I dag är

genren respekterad på ett helt annat sätt, säger han.

Förtig gäst

Luncon följdes av flera svenska cons, och Lars-Olov satte som mål att besöka dem alla!

- Riktigt har jag inte lyckats. Några enskilda har jag missat av rent praktiskt skäl. Fast å andra sidan har jag hunnit med en hel del utländska, så det jimmis väl ut sig, säger han med ett leende.

Genom sitt con-deltagande har han resat sig vänner över hela världen och i alla åldrar. I Sverige är han näst intill en institution. En con utan Lars-Olov är bara ingen riktig con.

De som besökte con på 50-talet dyker inte upp på. Men det finns en del "60-talare" som fortfarande hänger med. Slutet är vi i en generationsskifte, det märks på att deltagarantalet är något mindre än normalt, förklarar han.

Stjäl tid

Allt resande kostar naturligtvis en del, men det bekymrar inte Lars-Olov.

- Nej, någon hobby måste man få lagga ner lite tid och pengar på. Och det här har gett mig oerhört mycket, inte minst kontakt med en mängd trevliga människor och en bakgrund till all sf jag läser. Finns det någon nackdel med allt con-deltagande så är det att jag inte hinner läsa så mycket som jag vill...

normal," he explains. /Steals Time/ Travelling around of course costs a bit, but it doesn't worry Lars-Olov. "You must be allowed a hobby to spend time and money on. And this has given me very much, not the least contacts with many nice people and a background to all sf that I read. If there are any drawbacks with all con-going it is that I don't have time to read all I want.

I have corrected the article's "Lars-Olov" to Lars-Olov. He did so much for fandom, was secretary (often) for the cons or club boards, wrote the minutes, kept track of everything, always had a camera on his belly documenting cons and meetings through many thousands of photos, then showed on the Lars-Olov Slide Show on every con!

Finally, stepping back a to libertine times and the history of sex, a little story from Expressen November 18, 1957, "Pretty French Venus Beats Swedish Bathing" (film stills and poster below):

Frenchmen now don't have to look for Swedish films to enjoy nude bathing on the silver screen. Their domestic production has taken up the competition, lately through a funny sf parody, "Un amour de poche" - that could perhaps be "Your Beloved in the Pocket". It is the shooting star Agnes Laurent, who there pops up in the waves "in natura" to embrace her beloved professor Nordmann, somewhat clumsily portrayed by Jean Marais. The reason is simple and can be explained. The professor is working towards a Nobel Prize and have produced a method to deep freeze living beings, who only need to be exposed to salt water to regain their original form. So what is simpler than to take

## Söt fransk Venus slår ut svenskbad

Av SVANTE LOFGREN

PARIS (Expressen). Nu behöver fransmännen inte leta upp svenska filmer för att få njuta av nakenbad på den vita duken.

Den inhemska produktionen har tagit upp konkurrensen, senast genom en skojig Science fiction-parodi, "Un amour de poche" - som på svenska skulle kunna bli "Sin älskade i fickan".

Det är nya stjärnskottet Agnès Laurent, som där dyker upp ur vågorna in natura för att omfamna sin älskade professor Nordmann, en aning vållant framställt av Jean Marais.

Orsaken är enkel och kan förklaras: professorn jobbar på ett Nobelpris och har lyckats framställa en metod att djupfrys levande varelser, som bara behöver lösas i saltvatten för att återfå sin ursprungliga gestalt.

Vad enklaste då än att han tar sitt söta laboratoriebiträde, "frysar ned" henne till en liten statyett, som han stoppar i fickan undan fästmon-ragatans blickar, och far ut till kusten för ett trivsamt litet bad.

Metoden kan rekommenderas helt, filmen kanske bara delvis - om det inte vore för det friska, fräscha filmfyndet, med det även i Sverige uttalbara förnamnet.



his sweet laboratory assistant, "freeze her" down to a little statuette, which he puts in his pocket out of the view of his fiancée-bitch and go to the coast for a nice little swim. The method can be fully recommended, but the film only partly - if it wasn't for the fresh movie find, with the first name than can be pronounced also in Sweden.



Shower scene.



Scene from the film.

## Mailing Comments

First EAPA and then N'APA - but Mr Thiel is in both, so those are merged. But first: A number of outsiders get Intermission, so I'd like to lure you into joining an APA! More members are welcome and needed. The fanzine world is struggling in this electronic era and more zines would be fantastic. PDFs is the "natural" format and they are easy to do, usually by just selecting "save as PDF" in your word processor. Fanzines used to be the backbone of fandom, so do your fannish duty. Roscoe demands!

**Garth Spencer:** I understand you had only the ToC and OO in the mailing due to moving house. OK.

**William McCabe:** Interesting to hear about that exhibition on your old school, and see a picture young William! I remember my early school days. I began 1st grade at age six. Usually you begin at seven here but I was born just a few days into January. B just a few days "underage" they made a test and I was allowed to start in school. (I could already read, something I have taught myself to be able to follow the TV programs. As mentioned before, there several shows I liked, "My Favourite Martian", "Space Patrol", "The Flintstones", "The Addams Family", "The Saint".) I was probably the last generation who went to school on Saturdays, though there was only three hours of school then. People also worked Saturdays at the time. It changed shortly thereafter and Saturdays became free. Folks today probably think it's strange working on Saturdays... In first grade my school house was the old municipality building of the now Stockholm suburb Hässelby (I believe it is now a Hässelby Museum), which until it in 1949 was incorporated into Stockholm was it's own independent "köping" (a term which seems should be translated into "market town") with its own administration. When I was in 4th grade I remember that a film team came to our school to record the school scenes of a major adventure series for TV, "Crows Gold", which was very exiting. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kr%C3%A5kguldet> says it has been shown in Britain too by BBC, as "Gold on Crow Mountain". The theme song of the series is here, in both English and Swedish: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vvS3kBSVUk> My general views about education is that it must concentrate more on results and knowledge, and less on messing around. It doesn't have to mean mean more "discipline", but you must try to connect to a kid's natural curiosity and urge to find out. / So you were in an APA for a long time that was finally down to three members... I hope we can do something about EAPA before that happens! Doing fanzines is such an overlooked fandom activity these days. Get away from games and junk, and *write!* Learn to express yourself in words! Doing fanzines is an excellent school for that. You did the Brum group web for 20 years! Impressive! / Several of the players of the Swedish women's national football team are now in the English top league. The Swedish league is quite good, but the big countries have more money so our top players get signed for foreign clubs. An excellent player rumoured to be interested in the English league is Stina Blackstenius. Five goals in the Olympics, a girl to keep an eye on! (Women's soccer is slowly getting more money, of course not even close to the men's game. Still, women in the top leagues are full-time pros.) / When it comes to corona statistics I'm not too interested in claimed number of infections. Such numbers are very, very fuzzy, as they depend on a) how much you test, b) incentives for those feeling or not feeling symptoms to test and which groups you reach, c) reliability of tests (quick tests have low reliability), d) and efficiency of statistics handling in each country. Death figures are much more reliable! You are either dead or alive and that's easy to figure out and report. There *are* however doubts about causes of death. Many die with and not from the virus. So called "excessive death" figures are more reliable, and Swedish ones indicate that only ca 40% of reported corona deaths are from the virus. 60% are deaths *with but not from* the virus. The death definition is simply to "generous", just having had the virus 28 days previously even if you died from falling off a ladder...

**Henry Grynsten:** No, I don't think languages have been static in complexity for thousands of years. Hundreds of years ago Swedish for instance had two types of objects (like German still has) and four genders, now merged into two. During my first school years they still tried to convince us that we had four genders (called neuter, reale, feminine, masculine). In reality, the last three had since long merged into what

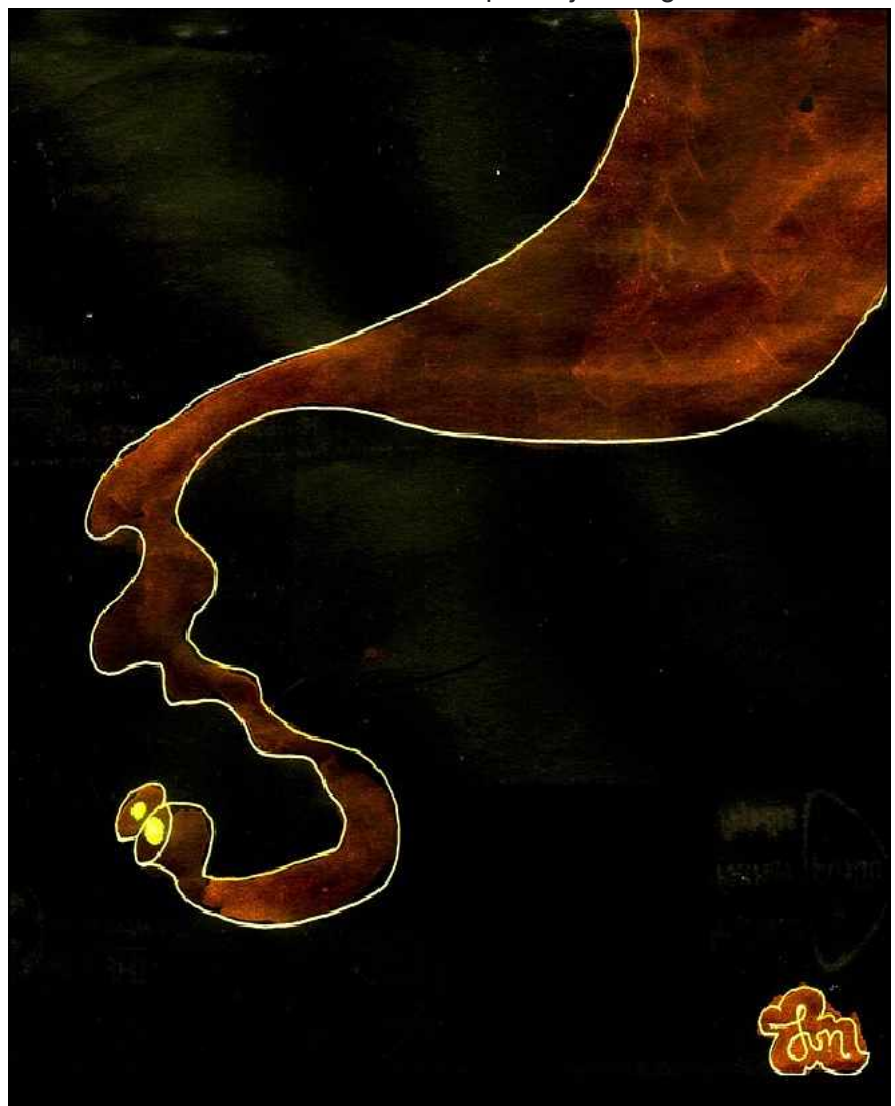
we now call utrum. The grammar of eg Latin, a very old language, is much more complex than most modern European languages, and it seems that grammatical complexity is grinded down by time and the more spread and used a language is, probably out of necessity. The more you need to use something, the more need for shortcuts, which means stripping down the grammar. Vocabulary of course becomes more complex, but not grammar! / I don't know if anthropologists are sure that Neanderthals mourned their dead, but *if* they did I would see that as a sign of consciousness. / Sorry, I'm not with you when it comes to coffee. It may have negative effects if drunk to a more extreme excess, but normal usage is probably harmless. There's always talk about that and that food or substance being poisonous or harmful, but remember the golden rule in toxicology: the poison is in the dose! Everything is a poison, it just depends on how much you take. Even water is poison. There has been cases of water poisoning on rave parties by people under influence of drugs - but it was water, not drugs, that did them in. So many herbs and plants in nature contains caffeine that it should be strange if we haven't through evolution developed a certain tolerance for it. The big drawback with coffee however is that it can interfere with your sleep for many hours afterwards. And if anything, not getting enough sleep is a bad thing, for both your body and mind. An article I read says your immune system goes into overdrive while you sleep, a thing to remember in virus times! Sleep helps curing corona. Worth informing foreigner reading this is that Swedes are among the biggest coffee consumers in the world, being at or near the top in coffee drinking statistics. A national trait is the concept of having coffee breaks now and then throughout the working day, which is called "having fika". Offices of course have their "fika rooms". The word "fika" is what is called "back slang", the syllable in "kafi" - coffee, or kaffe - just switched. Fika as a word is on it's way to become as famous as smörgåsbord...

**John Thiel:** Sorry, there was no picture of me and that other guy (speaking of punks...). You're having a mix-up with pictures of my cousins. / You don't have recordings of your compositions? To bad. If you should find a cassette or so I'm sure someone could help you to transfer it to files. That it's jazz sounds interesting. I used to listen a lot to Swedish radio's jazz program "Smoke rings" a lot. / Strange poetry: *Bap-Dep-Gip-Pop / Excuse me, which way to the sea? / Dap-Ge - - Madam, does this puppy belong to you?* My buddy Comet John Benzene may like it... I like poetry and interested in sf related poetry - *Intermission* has eg written a lot about "Aniara" by Harry Martinson. One of my friends in fandom was the fine Swedish sf poet Kjell Borgström and I sometimes write poetry myself, eg in the form of filksong texts. But use a better, more readable typeface for the poems! / From what I know, sf fans have always been interested in all kind of things, like science, philosophy, space and such.

**Jefferson P Swycaffer:** On masks: A) Big studies have shown infection differences (mask Vs no mask) smaller than the margin of error. B) And the reasons may be (1) that masks may also cause infections - by touching the mask and then your eyes, nose etc - and (2) when wearing a mask you take distancing less seriously. I suspect that authorities insisting on masks more want it for the psychology and symbolism of it, to have people going around wearing something to constantly remind them about corona. / I think sf was better in the older days! The Swedish idiom for what today's authors do is "word shitting" ("ordbajseri"). Novels today are 6-700 pages, a waste of space, words, paper and the reader's time. Writers have no discipline today, can't cut, and are too much in love with their own pretentious prose. Before word processors came, novels were 200-250 pages, writers were "to the point". Less is more!

**Will Mayo:** Sorry, no comments.

**George Phillies:** About the missing MP of the Swedish parliament: the party groupings, expected "passive support" - abstaining helps a government, ie passive support - and such have shifted so that the runaway parliamentarian is irrelevant and



How the Virus sneaks into your body? Lars "LON" Olsson speculates.

not needed in the vote mathematics right now. As I write the social democrats have just nominated finance minister Magdalena Andersson as new party leader, and thus probable new PM. It's less than a year to next election and no one wants to rock the boat. The government still has a weak position. / About UFOs, that 5% may be unexplained doesn't mean it's *inexplicable*! The explanation just can't be pinpointed out of several possibilities. We don't have enough info to know exactly what. It's highly unlikely that there are LGM (Little Green Men) from Galaxy 666 visiting us. One argument for this is that as our SETI search has constantly been expanding, with better and more sensitive radio telescope, on more channels, using better computer analyses, etc and we *still* haven't found any aliens! The more we listen, without any results, the higher the odds for LGM. On the other hand, If we'd find traces of earlier micro life on Mars, the odds would shorten, of course.

**Samuel Lubell:** "Cases" of corona infections is a *lousy* criterion! It depends on rate of testing and incentives for different groups to test. Testing more gives you more "cases". Were you test, who, how you reach out, and other social factors will affect "case" numbers. The *best* measurement is "excess deaths", and the *second best* is number of deaths, but that has uncertainty in the form of varying definitions of cause of death. In Sweden for instance it's too "generous", like if you die in a car crash but had the virus 28 days earlier. Excess deaths will catch infection tallies independent of too wide definitions. Analysis of Sweden's excess deaths indicate that deceased from the virus are about *just 40% of the official figures*. Virus deaths statistics globally are probably very, very uncertain numbers. There are reasons to assume many are deaths *with but not from* corona. We must wait until the epidemic is over and apply some very careful statistical analysis before conclusions can be drawn. About masks, see my comment to JP Swycaffer. / About the Hugos: what I don't particularly favour is having ballots and awards decided by ideological/political campaigning, which is what we have seen for the Hugos for years. I think everyone is aware of that the Hugos have become a ideological/political battleground, which lowers its status. Who wants to "win" an award on the basis of writing from the "correct" political opinions, instead of being a good writer? / I disagree with the claim that the sf "industry" in the past "blocked" female writers. It has never been that way. I've read tons of genre history and never found any examples of such "blocking". The simple fact is that female writers have tended to be much, *much less interested in writing science fiction*! That's reflected in the fact that women have always been much less interested in reading the stuff. The proportion of sf published by female writers in the past is in all likelihood close to *equal* to the proportion of manuscripts received, and that means no "blocking". / Eric Flint has written a number of alternate history novels involving the Thirty Years War in Europe in the 1600's, with the Swedes (we were heavily involved) and king Gustavus Adolphus playing a big part. But I have yet to read them... Too much else to read!

-Your Faithful Ed, Ahrvid E

**Since there's space left, some pictures of interest...**



Australian police out of control, pepper spraying lockdown protesters.



Four brave, strong Aussie officers handle the "crime" of being maskless.



Archive Midwinter  
a zine for N'APA 255

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8 October 2021

### Comments:

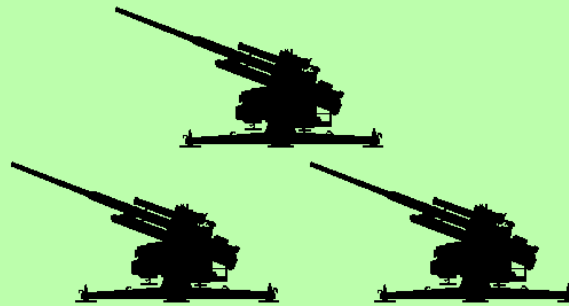
**Cover: Jose Sanchez:** Fun Spaceship! Definitely evokes a fly, but is also vaguely fish-like, bringing to mind a manta-ray. Nice reflections of the laser-blasts in the hull and on the wings, nice speckle effect on the compound eye, and, of course, nice starfield and planet, to give the spaceship context.

**Ahrvid Engholm:** Fun travelogue! It's good for us yanks to read about places we (most likely) never will actually visit. Travel broadens one, but just reading about travel helps a little!

Too, fun to go flipping through fanzines of the past! SF Fandom has always had a good eye for history, and SF archivists are always highly respected.

**Ahrvid Engholm:** Again! I couldn't write the amount you do even once a month, certainly let alone twice! I'm impressed at your dedication!

I'm a WWII buff too, and it was most certainly a remarkable era for technology. Someone once pointed out that in WWI, the pilots were essentially superior to their aircraft, whereas in the jet age, the airplanes are much superior to the pilots. (This is why pilotless craft



are pretty much the face of the future in aerial warfare.) But for a brief period, in WWII, pilots and their craft were at par with one another, evenly suited, and they mutually brought out the very best in one another.

**John Thiel:** I'd never heard of Kombucha! I do have to confess, you daunt me with the observation that it doesn't taste very good!

Fun editorial on the various uses of the word "Go." It's a vigorous little word with a lot of functionality! (Makes me think, a little, of the versatility of the word "it." Remember "The It Girl?")

I was unable to read the poetry closing your zine; the typeface was too tight, too compressed, too thin. I tried, but I just couldn't make it out.

**Will Mayo:** I can't think of anything useful to say in response to your opening observations. I largely agree. Life is weird....but it's all we've got. If I were to create a cosmos, I would do it differently! But who can possibly say whether or not it would be "better." Likely enough, I'd improve a few things...and do a few other things less well. The universes I \*have\* created -- in fiction -- are more quiet and soft-edged than our own world. Maybe I'm just getting up in years, but I prefer a softer existence. I prefer "Cold Wars" to hot ones.

One subtle effect of Covid is its role in fiction. My writing support group is putting together an anthology, and we had to address the matter. Should our stories acknowledge the existence of Covid? Should movies and TV shows acknowledge Covid? Should it be a plot element in the next James Bond movie? One problem with including it is that it "dates" the work, nailing it firmly to the year 2020. It's like having a reference to the Los Angeles Olympics, or Hurricane Katrina: it turns any book into a "historical" book. But, of course, the problem with \*not\* including references to it is that it is so incredibly pervasive, it's a little like not referring to the elephant in the bedroom.

My personal preference in fiction -- both when I'm writing it or when I'm reading work by others -- is for a kind of mythic timelessness, a sense that the book could be happening "now" no matter when one happens to read it. I prefer not to include references to conspicuous current events. This doesn't always work and isn't always possible. Just as one example, mobile phones have completely changed the complexion of adventure stories.

I \*loved\* the old TV series UFO! The spaceships and other toys were remarkable, all done by puppetmaster Gerry Anderson, famous for Thunderbirds. The acting was pretty good, and the writing was gripping. I own all the episodes on disk, and, not too awfully long ago, I entertained myself re-watching the whole series.

**George Phillies:** rct me re arms, valid point: swinging multiple swords is a very dangerous tactic. Even fighting with two swords is quite risky, and the benefits do not seem to be worth the costs. Sword-and-shield has proven, historically, to be a fairly good combination, especially in warfare with many similarly-equipped soldiers fighting in formation.

re wargaming, I wish I could find some decent computer solitaire wargames. SSI published a very nice pair of Civil War

computer games, Antietam and Gettysburg, and I would happily play those again if they were compatible with modern computers. Are there games like those out there, these days? I tried Sid Meiers' gigantic Gettysburg game, but found it vastly too large for me to cope with. The thing was immense!

re publishing, hooray for your book being available as an Amazon paperback! May sales soar! I tried using the Amazon self-publishing interface, and, while the interface for ebooks was brilliant -- one of the best-designed computer systems I've ever seen -- the interface for doing paperbacks was impenetrable, and I could not successfully use it. Nasty! Meanest computer experience I have ever had!

Fun courtroom scene! One common thread, through all of your writing, is embodied here: the innocent protagonist, making a hash of the would-be predations of less-than-wholly-prepared antagonists. It's a scene you've written a number of times, and it is delicious every single time!

My brother-in-law finished his first novel; it's pretty good, overall, but is too heavy on dialogue, with almost no descriptive narration. It is very much a "first novel" with all that that implies. Ray Bradbury famously said everyone's first million words are garbage: I can say, with comfort, that Bradbury is not always right about this! My b.i.l. is now looking for a literary agent to represent the book for sale, but, alas, in my opinion it is not publishable. It is a "learning experience," but is only a stepping stone toward the writing skills needed for actual publication. (This is known as "damning with faint praise.")

# INTERMISSION #114

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, [ahrvid@hotmail.com](mailto:ahrvid@hotmail.com), for EAPA, N'APA & other suffering victims. Follow @SFJournalen sf/f/h&fandom newstweets. Bewäre öf typös, they are pricks! Late Oct'21

## Editorially: Piff Paff, Aussie Subs, Lapland to space, 66 years of Joyce

I don't have much news about the blasted virus. After a tiny bump over a month ago the little bugger takes it very easy here. While some still catch it, few cases are serious, very few kicks the bucket. It's probably because a high vaccination rate, and most of the few unvaccinated may have natural immunity (claimed to be better than vaccines!) But at the same time we see 100 000's, or more like millions in street protests the world over against lockdowns, virus passports and vaccine mandates. Strangely enough old media mostly refuse to report it, or if they do claim it's just "right-wing extremists" (it isn't) and "vaccine conspirators" (a tiny minority). The protesting crowds are just people who are fed up being pushed around. Why do mainstream media misreport so? A theory, or at a least contributing factor, of why traditional media pump up fear and misreport forced vaccination protests is that reporters, often older ones, are in *personal* virus fear.

The vaccines are just fine. Risks from the corona virus is many times bigger than from the *extremely rare* side effects. So get a shot! But as a very important matter of principle, to respect civil rights and personal integrity, a sensitive medical operation like injecting stuff into your body *must be voluntary*. The individual must have the final say over the body. If you're worried you can protect yourself with vaccine, but don't try to force others. It's understandable why so many take to the streets. Respect personal choice! That's *more important* than trying to push vaccine rates up.

What else? Australia won't leave us alone. Now they've struck a deal with the US and UK about getting atomic submarines. Their present subs are actually a modified Swedish construction. More below!

Oh, this will also have a visit to a Hson sex publisher from the 1960's, a follow up to last issue's porn history. To my surprise one of my regulars worked for Hson in the 1960s and had pictures! We will also hear from Kjell G who wrote for Hson. Call it culture history! To this we have more sf/fan history, event snippets - physical meetings are back! - and mailing comments you can ignore.

But why not become an APA member! New members are needed. Scientific studies show that publishing fanzines both raises your IQ and increases your libido. And it's easy: write something, press "Save as PDF". The mimeograph days, with spurting ink and wrinkling stencils, were harder. Be a trufan. Skip silly masquerading and lazy computer effects, just do a fanzine! --Ahrvid Engholm

## Addendum...dum-dum!

First a couple of corrections from Rob Hansen, regarding #112, an issue covering old fanzines and volumes of fanwriting and fanhistory, which Rob has published a lot of. He notes about pub meetings mentioned:

*It wasn't the Tun that Asimov visited but the Globe, in fact the very last fan gathering held in that pub before London fandom moved to the Tun. (I was old enough to have been at this but, alas, would not discover fandom for another year.) And Tolkien did not turn up at the 1957 Eastercon to receive his IFA but at a special dinner at the 1957 Worldcon. More at:*

<http://fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN%20Archive/1957Worldcon/LonWorld8.htm#1.NAM>

*Also: You seem unfamiliar with Nic Oosterbaan (or was it Osterbaan). He showed up over here at 1953's, CORONCON. There are a couple of photos of him in the report:*

<http://fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN%20Archive/1953Coroncon/Coron.htm>

Thanks for corrections! This Oosterbaan guy was Dutch, but he was presented as Swedish - that's why I tried to interpret the name to something I could recognise. He wasn't an "Österman", so mystery is solved. Rob also mentions he's working on another fandom history book, *BIXELSTRASSE: The SF Fan Community of 1940s Los Angeles*, ie fandom around the LASFS

1940's clubhouse. Sounds interesting! I hope I'm not the only excited one!

In #113 I covered an interview with Robert Heinlein as he came to Sweden in 1955, as a part of a wider European trip. I sent the issue to The Heinlein Society in the US and asked if they had more info. The Society's vice president Ken Walters found this in a Heinlein biography:

*"Travel permissions with the Naval Reserve were becoming more and more cumbersome for Ginny. She asked for and obtained an Honourable Discharge on April 21, 1955, the day before her thirty-ninth birthday.*

*Ten days later, the Heinleins left Colorado Springs for New Orleans to board the Tillie Lykes for stops in Savannah, Georgia; to the Azores; to Genoa; Naples; Rijaka, Yugoslavia; Venice; Athens; Istanbul; Alexandria - and on to Heidelberg where they would camp out with brother Larry and family, making side trips ad lib for four or five months. One of those side trips they initially planned would be to Sweden - "One purpose of this trip to Europe was to look into the possibility to adopting a Swedish child - but for various reasons we have decided against that, so now the trip is just for pleasure and education." Heinlein was now too old to adopt under Colorado law - he would turn forty-eight while they were gone - and in any case, the state of the world was just too uncertain."*

But the Heinleins came back to Sweden also in 1960, on the way back from a trip to the USSR (which he has covered in *Expanded Universe*). We learn:

*"From Finland they went to Norway, taking a steamer to the Lofoten Islands and a tiny boat through the Göta Canal. In Sweden, where his niece Lynn timer was finishing up her year as a foreign exchange student, they stayed on a family farm north of Stockholm - a stopover long enough to sketch out another article, funny-ish, in a gruesome sort of way, an ironic how-to deal with InTourist." Source: Robert A. Heinlein: In Dialogue with His Century Volume 2: The Man Who Learned Better" by William H. Patterson Jr.*

Thanks to Ken! They may write something about the travels of the Heinleins in the society journal. I understand. Robert Heinlein unfortunately had no contact with local fandom, neither in 1955 nor 1960.

In 1955 Swedish fandom wasn't too organised, it was a bit better in 1960, but I guess Heinlein had



Sam J Lundwall's old address, 19 Storskogs Rd (he's now in an old age home). Dunno ABBA-Tretow's exact address, but it could be one of the surrounding houses.

no addresses or

anything to establish contact. The newspaper interview in 1955 was presumably set up by his Swedish publisher. The Heinlein Journal

BTW recently won a design award,

<https://locusmag.com/2021/10/heinlein-journal-wins-design-award/>

Congrats! Award juries may be a harsh mistress, and sf publications could be seen as a stranger in a strange land...

Finally, I think I forgot when detailing sf connections to ABBA in lastish. It somehow slipped through my fingers that the group's famous sound engineer, Michael B Tretow, was a neighbour to author/publisher Sam J Lundwall in Bromma (a Stockholm suburb). And not only that, he helped Sam doing the EP that came with the Swedish edition of his novel *King Kong Blues*, 1974, ie during the

time of ABBA - who also did a track named "King Kong Song" that year! This has been mentioned here before, as well as Sam J Lundwall as troubadour. (Tretow unfortunately struggles with an effect of a stroke and probably isn't much involved in the new ABBA album coming in November. Review hopefully in #115.)

### Piff, Paff, Raff!

In last issue I did a lengthy review of *Libertine Times*, a new history book about the birth of porn in our little country. One of the main porn publishers back in the days was Curth Hson, doing saucy



magazines like *Piff*, *Paff* and *Raff*. (“Piff” means decoration in Swedish, “paff” means surprised, “raff” refers to raunchy clothes.)

Imagine the surprise of your trusted editor when receiving a series of photos from the office of the Hson publishing house, situated on 37 King's Street! (Kungsgatan 37, Swedish street numbers are placed last). And that came from fan and great illustrator - also appearing here, as you notice! - Lars “LON” Olsson. He worked for Hson for about a year in 1968 when he snapped the pictures, he told me (he OKed to publish it and tell about it).

This is cultural history, maybe a bit spicy cultural history, but still... The publisher Kurt **Hugo Nilsson** (1945-1988, the bold letters probably became “Hson”, and first name spelling varies: Curt, Curth). He began his career working for a social democrat newspaper, edited a comics magazine for a while, but is most known for his erotic magazines. He began with them already in the 1940's, titles like *Pin-up* and *Kavalkad*, vaguely soft porn stuff with bikinis, maybe some nudity and suggestive short stories. In the 1960's as the barriers against porn slowly dropped, rags did the same in his mags, and as we entered the 1970s barriers fell altogether. He also published



A 1964 Piff issue.



From Hson's pre-Xmas Lucia party 1968. Lars LON Olsson in the middle. To the right Curth Hson himself. (Photo by Werner Pöttler, all other ones by Lars LON Olsson.)

paperbacks to which Kjell Genberg contributed (he's portrayed in *Libertine Times* - we'll come back to Kjell). Most of Hson's publishing stopped around 1982. In the early 1980's VHS porn videos began arriving, slowly pulling the rug from under the market. Hson's rather spicy mag *Crime of the Week* continued until his year of death of cancer in 1988. “Crime of the Week” was strangely enough later picked as name for a TV crime show from the national SVT network. Did they consider the juicy background of the name?

LON says Mr Hson himself was very kind: “It was nice to work for Hson, a very sympathetic man. When he for instance saw you were in a

*bad mood, he said: Do you want a whisky? Do you want a cigar? And then he gave you that. But my adventures in the porn business ended when I on an occasion became angry with him and handed him my resignation. So I became unemployed which proved fortunate, because the Royal Library suddenly needed someone who a) knew Latin and b) could start at once. In a way I have Hson to thank for my job at the Royal Library.*

It is at the Royal Library this zine lately has done the history digging. (LON was then retired from the library, but he helped me earlier when I investigated the 1682 *Relationes Curiosae* “fantastic” magazine, which I'm sure I covered in *Intermission* some time back.) It's interesting to note how *Intermission* with this moves from a Royal Library to a porn publisher...

Kjell Genberg wrote erotic fiction for Hson and has a lot to say about it on his site <http://www.keg.se/1960.html> \*, from which I'll borrow some snippets (with his permission).

He first encountered erotica as a kid from “French cards”, trickling in via sailors coming to his



Looks like the reception of Hson's office. Very 60ish!

\* The same page through Google's automatic translation to English, though I'm not sure it works very well:  
[https://www.keg.se.translate.goog/1960.html?\\_x\\_tr\\_sch=http&\\_x\\_tr\\_sl=sv&\\_x\\_tr\\_tl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_hl=sv&\\_x\\_tr\\_pto=nui](https://www.keg.se.translate.goog/1960.html?_x_tr_sch=http&_x_tr_sl=sv&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=sv&_x_tr_pto=nui)



hometown Hudiksvall's harbour, and nude mags (eg Hson's) at the barbers. Hson had some social and literary ambitions in the beginning, until the porno explosion, which Kjell dates to around 1967-68. Kjell was in the music business as manager for some

*What the inside of Hson publications could look like.*

(he has many stories, but that's for another day) but could use some extra cash. He'd just survived a very wild and wet party with some pop stars of the days and had self-published a novel about it.

Why not re-write it, longer and with added spicy bits, he thought! It took him 1 ½ week after which he brought the manuscript to Hson: *It was a magnificent office with mirrors and big windows facing King's Street. The carpeted floors were soft and hinted wealth.*

*Henning /book editor/ was a fast reader. While I took some coffee - both two and three cups - he had*

*time time eye through the manuscript. He then came back with a smile on his face: "Can you write more?"*

Kjell could and was given a cheque.

*I wanted to know how much material was needed, and how thick manuscripts should be to secure the best pay, and things of that sort, because I was getting really into it. "As much as possible. Porn is glowing right now. Let's go and talk to Curth."*

*The big-boned publisher's room was as several others of the office put together. It was the first time I met him in person, through I had of course seen*



*Hson editors conferring, L to R: mighty production boss him in the newspapers. He Elis Olsson, book editor Henning Pallesen leaning over drove around in a Rolls-*

*Royce with a cigar in the*

*corner of his mouth. Henning introduced me and said I had done a novella in about ten days.*

*"Can you continue with that speed?" Hson asked.*

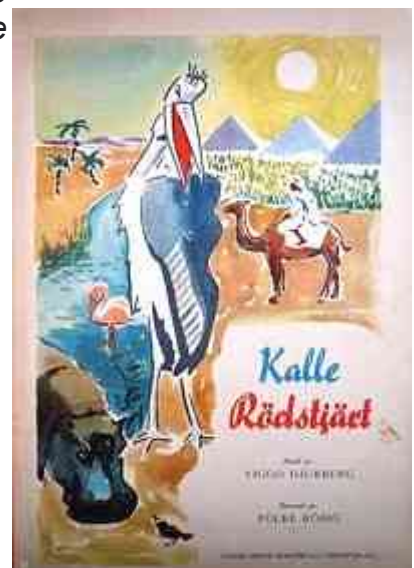
*I thought so. He then took a book from the shelves, opened it and went to a giant copying machine by the wall. It rattled for quite a while and then he handed me a dozen sheets. It was the table of contents of a book of intercourse positions he had published.*

*"Write books with 10-12 chapters," he said. "Each chapter shall be around 10 pages. Of those, seven shall be banging. The other three shall advance the plot. Use the positions described here."*

Kjell began to write a number of sexy books for Hson's two paperback series, named Snabbis (approx "Fast-ish") and Fickis (approx "Pocketsized-ish"). His wife thought the extra job sounded good and Kjell began hitting typewriter keys in a small corner room on the second floor, in a summer



*Hson's work area! Modern art, not nudes, on the walls. Looks very stylish!*



*An early book by Curth himself, "Kalle Red Ass", 1947. Non-porn for young readers, though the title has strange connotations...*

house they rented. Hson's papers was nailed to the wall. Kjell had constructed the plot while driving to the house: *It was about a mysterious cuckoo clock that made everyone crazy as soon as the cuckoo popped out. When one intercourse was over I crossed out that position with a thick blue marker... That summer I wrote like crazy from dawn to when dusk was so dark you couldn't see. In the autumn I could deliver seven magnificent erotic books to Hson. My eyes widened when I saw one of the books had kept my joking title: Cock, Cock, said the Cuckoo. Another was Way of Lust, about a truck driver's wild life on the road. The texts constantly moved: new places, new women, new conquests. I had made some attempts to create psychological drama, but that was deleted without mercy.*

It was published in 1970-71 and by writing such books they they could afford to move into a better apartment. Kjell tells about later meeting one Lina Boreman (aka Linda Lovelace, known for "Deep Throat") and understood she had gone through hell.

*But I was unaware of such things at the time. I then saw her film as an excellent study object for writing for Hson. A couple of other "instruction films" I remember from the time was "The Devil in Miss Jones" and "Behind the Green Door". I wrote a number of books for Hson - Outlaw Heat, Guy on the Go, Bed and Breakfast of Lust, With a Hot Orifice, Porn over the Prairie, Sex Amazons, and The Big Porn Hunt. The worst is I'm guilty of inventing the titles. Writing for Hson brought in others. I was contacted by other magazines - and God knows there were many, most of them short-lived. The owners thought they had a gold mine and paid what you asked. I wrote stories for a lot of them in those days.*

Kjell describes how small film companies doing sex flicks popped up, together with porn clubs showing 8 mm films for a groaning audience, with a special section having professional ladies for "private posing". One Sixten Andersson thought films would sell better if they had a plot and asked Kjell to write scripts: *He invited me to a shooting. It was both interesting and comical but not the least arousing. The house looked it needed renovation inside out. In a corner of the industrial site rusty machines rose from the floor and the film team had built something looking like bedroom, with a huge bed having a naked girl, a*

*bookshelf and a window. A man sat by the bed and opened a bag. A poster behind the window showed a sunny sky. On the shelf was a cookbook and some plastic flowers. The rest was filled with mini-bottles of booze of the type you bring home from Mallorca and the Canaries...*

Sixten had a 35 mm camera so he could sell his films abroad. But:

*"We shoot all scenes simultaneously with 8, 16 and the big camera."*

*Uninterested guys stood around and smoked and on a stool behind a camera sat a totally naked man reading a newspaper, without noticing others in the room. The girl on the bed opened her legs and the man by the bed bent down. He began putting colour on her labia. "Take it easy for heaven's sake," she suddenly said and yanked. "It's tickling, dammit."*

*"It's not my fault your pussy is to bleak that we must use make-up so it looks like something. Now, I'm finished."*

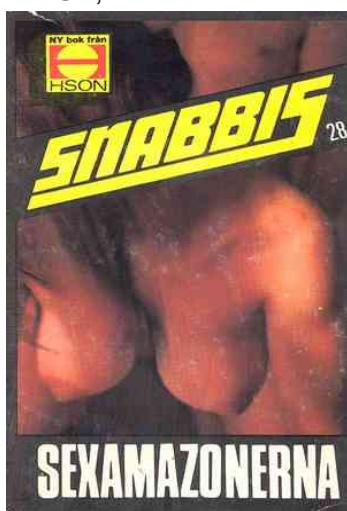
*The man on the camera stool threw away the newspaper and looked between his legs. He looked worried and Sixten noticed that.*

*"Lisa," he shouted to the girl on the bed. "Help him, or nothing gets done today."*

Kjell wrote six short scripts for them for decent fixed sums. It was easy.

Dialogue was minimal. In ordinary scrips one page gives one minute of film. Here half a page was enough for ten minutes. He often took plots from his own short stories. Kjell would later turn out a number of so called Sexy Westerns and finally turning to "unsexy" westerns. Writing porn had its complications.

*After describing fictitious persons rolling around in the bed I lost all lust myself. It took me four*



months to become fully functional.

I return the word to Lars LON Olsson about Hson's book publishing: *When Henning Pallesen /their book editor/ was on vacation I was deputy book editor. A great novel manuscript arrived on one occasion which I thought we should absolutely publish. But Hson disagreed, so with sadness I wrote a rejection The book later came from the (in)famous French publisher Girodias. It was Sture Dahlström's Cuckoo Man. Another well-known writer with us was Lars Norén. Hson had several imprints: Hsonproduktion. Elephant Press, a series called Pocket Facts. The Hsonproduktion books were sold through the Press Bureau /the almost monopoly news stand chain/ that required some decency. Publications may have nudity but no intercourse. /Ed: I think that policy came after a few years. They sold men's mags like FIB Aktuellt and Lektur with hard core for a while/ The more advanced porn came from Elephant Press, eg Fanny Hill.*

Hson's block buster was the Treaty of Rome (the original EU treaty) with 248 paragraphs! Not a week went by without a conference ordering a few hundred copies. LON ends with saying how Curth Hson a few years before his death took him to lunch, where they talked about poodles, which both owned, the whole afternoon: *I didn't know then that he was seriously ill. I liked him very much.*

Kjell Genberg was far from alone supplementing "normal" writing with saucy stuff. In the US we have for instance Robert Silverberg, said to be responsible for stacks of such books. Surpassing him was Andrew Offutt who according to SF Encyclopedia wrote 375 pseudonymous porn novels, many



*More from the Hson office. Looks super. I'd like to work there and edit the stuff by Denis and Kjell!* with science fiction sex. In Sweden we have Dénis Lindbohm, of course sometimes writing skiffy porn. There is "John Norman" with the Gor books, in reality philosophy professor (!) John Lange. We have Barry Malzberg, even Damuel Delany, and several others. You should study the writings of sf fan Earl Kemp who worked with publishing "sleaze" books [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earl\\_Kemp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earl_Kemp) - see memoir articles in his fanzine e\*1\*, <https://efanzines.com/EK/>

Nowadays you'll find raunchy encounters in virtually any novel, even by high-brown writers. The difference is that today it'll be seven pages of plot and just three pages of horizontal jogging.

### Atoms and Hot Air

We learn that the people Down Under are planning new ways to get down under water. That is, Australia has struck a deal with the Americans and British about acquiring nuclear submarines. The French say *Merde!* since they saw their Aussie submarine deal torpedoed and sunk.

Submarines have been big in science fiction since Jules Verne's Nautilus. In lastish I complained about Australia, putting their own people in house arrest, treating corona as ebola, with politicians wildly overreacting, police arresting moms with children for being unmasked, thousands of dollar in fines for "non-compliance". But the Crocodile Dundees seemingly can't leave us alone. The problem with their submarine deal is that the new U-boats won't be ready for at least a couple of decades.

Them little atoms are complicated devils, you know.

The Aussies presently use subs of the Collins class, now almost two decades old and an upscaled version of the Swedish Västergötland class, designed more than 30 years ago. (Must be a heavy upscale and re-design: Västergötland was ca 1500 tons, the Collins are double that at 3000!)

Now, instead of trotting along with ageing submarines for another 20 years, do as the Swedish navy: upgrade them with the Sterling/LOX air-independent propulsion system. In the mid 00's two of the Västergötlands were taken to the navy yard, cut in the middle, and lengthened with a new section having Sterling "hot air" engines and cryogenic tanks for Liquid Oxygen (LOX).

What you get for a rather cheap price is an extremely quiet sub, much quieter than water-boiling turbine-spinning nuclears, with a superior endurance compared to diesels. Diesel subs need to gasp for air every day. Sterling/LOX subs can be under water for two weeks, and the Sterling engine is famous for being almost vibration free.

The Swedish navy is right now building new subs of what will be called the Blekinge class, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blekinge-class\\_submarine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blekinge-class_submarine), probably to be the quietest in the world! The forerunner, HMS Gotland, was leased by the US Navy for testing. And in war games "it "ran in rings" around heavily defended carrier groups and several times torpedoed (simulated ) huge, expensive US carriers. <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-swedish-sub-ran-rings-around-us-aircraft-carrier-escorts-2021-7?r=US&IR=T>

Stirlings are a whisper compared to nuclear reactors, that constantly boil water, run cooling pumps and spin turbines at high speed. And they are much cheaper to run and maintain. The Swedish subs are smaller, with a smaller crew, which also cuts cost, but can still throw a good punch with six torpedo tubes. Nuclear also means handling radiation, fuel and waste, which is complicated and costly, while handling LOX is a breeze these days.

Atomic submarines can be underwater for months, but a Stirling/LOX sub has a "good enough" endurance while being stealthier and cheaper. The Royal Australian Navy would do well to have their old submarines upgraded while waiting for atomic ones (could be done in 3-4 years if ordered now). The phone number to Kockums, the Swedish navy submarine shipbuilder (owned by SAAB, BTW, who does fighter jets too), is +46 455 68 30 00. More on the Swedish Sterling/LOX submarines:



"Sweden's carrier killer": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcfPOmG4V2g>

"How a single Swedish submarine defeated US Navy", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saCdvAp5cow>

"Sweden's new submarine is probably the world's stealthiest", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWYjQPp2QCU>

"Swedish Submarines a silent, powerful new engine" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2L8WRfuyOs>

"Sweden's ghostly super sub of the future" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lj3yUkWHHMw>

## Satellites from Lapland

From below the waves to up in space. News are that satellites may be launched from Swedish Lapland's Esrange base (pic above) on the Arctic circle, *already in 2022!* Through increased government funding and securing an investment loan of €12m, the northern space research base Esrange will be upgraded for orbital launches, with the aim of a first satellite launch in 2022.

The loan is part of an extensive modernization of Esrange that has been ongoing since 2015 - a total investment of around € 50m (\$57.8m). The loan will finance completing the construction of a new spaceport capability, aiming at a first satellite launch in 2022. With more than 50 years of experience from launching rockets and balloons, Esrange Space Center is already one of the most active and versatile launch sites in the world. And with the new spaceport capability it will likely become the first launch site on European mainland.

...not counting Russia, that is. Esrange aims for micro satellites, with weights from a few kg up to perhaps 100 kg. There's a growing market for that as improved electronics today let you do a lot with much lesser weight. Esrange is especially well placed for polar orbits, by which satellites can sweep all of our planet's surface, ideal for observation and certain IT services.

Let's hope they'll be able to make it in 2022. Space is hot! NASA and SpaceX prepares a Moon landing, using the huge Starship system, which may later go to Mars. William Shatner (Cpt Kirk) has made a space jump. The Chinese are building a space station. Russia is making a space movie shot in orbit. And a little country of 10 million souls will launch satellites! Grand days for space.

## Religion Critic Dead

The Swedish artist Lars Vilks became globally known in 2007 after being threatened to death. When he made a religious satire by portraying Islam "prophet" Muhammed as a dog, Islamic religious leaders put a price on his head. He was since then protected by body guards from a special unit of the Swedish security police. Terrorists at one time tried to burn down his house. Other terrorists



The drawing that so infuriated religious fanatics.

struck when he appeared on a conference in Copenhagen and one bystander was killed. Now it breaks my heart to tell you that Mr Vilks was *killed in a road accident* in south Sweden October 4, together with two bodyguard policemen. Their armoured SUV slipped over to the wrong side of the road and collided with a lorry, whereupon the remaining fuel started a violent fire. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-58783998> No terrorist involvement is suspected, but it doesn't make the news less worse. Freedom of expression means you must be free to joke about, criticize, make satire of any religion, and we must defend those rights.



One of the last pictures of Lars Vilks. He tests a contraption resembling a G-force tester for space projects, which was a part of an art installation.

## Zooming Out...

Before the shitty pandemic I had event reports in every issue. They had to be paused when the bloody virus arrived, because most physical meetings were canned. But they have since early autumn begun coming back, as the government skipped most "restrictions", vaccination and immunity is on a high level and all curves are bobbing at a low level. I have never liked Zoom and



Sept 3, a Romanian Culture Institute evening, called "Reflections on the mediated self from contemporary Transylvania". But it wasn't on vampires - they have no reflections. Note "social distancing" chairs.



My vaccine jab in early Sept. Showing the band aid from it. No problems! Vaccines are OK - but they MUST be voluntary!



Oct 6 the Romanian Culture Institute opened the exhibit "Spirituality in Watercolour" with work by artist Ligia Podorean-Ekström. The sparse virus chair placement was now over and it was well-attended. In the middle the artist herself, on screen a video showing her at work. She had impressive handling of colour and being able to catch a scene with a few light strokes. She's been living in Sweden for decades and is widow after P-O Ekström, who wrote the novel "scandal" hit movie "One Summer of Happiness" was based on (see #113's sex history).



At nachspiel, me speaking with Kenth Nedergård of the Stundars open-air museum in Finland which the artist Ligia P-E has often visited, worked and had exhibitions at. Nice chap, mid picture, of the Finland-Swedish part of the country.

digital "meetings" (but I forgive ABBA for going virtual), but now I can present some stuff I've attended in person, the last couple of months. *Free at last! Thank Roscoe almighty, we are free at last!*

Zo here let's unzoom what's been on.



4 Oct the Polish Culture Institute opened the exhibition Lem's Beastiarium according to Mroz, where artist Daniel Mroz illustrated strange monsters in works by Stanislaw Lem. It is 100 years after this sf writer's death and the Polish parliament has declared 2021 to be a "Lem year". Myself, I remember as I visited the Polish Eurocon in 2000 that Lem wasn't too popular with local fans, who thought of him as a snob sitting alone in his Ivory Tower.



Both the Polish and Romanian Culture Institutes treated us with liquids and snacks - here a comparison. Romania had better snacks and wine, but the Poles had a great blue "rocket fuel" which was mighty potent!

**There should be  
a vaccine against  
autocratic politicians!**



In early September, the full-size wooden replica of the East India trader Götheborg visited Stockholm. A very impressive ship!



8 Oct we had the annual Space Rendezvous at the Royal Technical Institute. Astronaut Christer Fuglesang (two missions) introduced it, here talking about space projects connected to the Institute, eg students building a micro cubesat for later launch. Due to virus scare (I guess) only ca 25 turned up. Before the pandemic the event was almost full. Program: "Tangent Room" (interesting film touching quantum physics and cosmology), lecture "Music in SF", space quiz. I won (!) last space quiz, but this time I only scored 8 of 22 points, maybe because many questions were about film and TV which isn't my strongest area.



16 oct Sweden's smallest gallery Örhänget ("Ear Piece") exhibited strange beasts art by Inger Edelfeldt (centre, in the stairs) and had book release of A for Alice (=the Wonderland girl), which author Jonas Ellerström here presented, standing in the stairs outside the actual one-room gallery. Packed with people. Both Jonas and Inger are well-known also in sf fandom.



Afterwards there was coffee and cakes (what we call "fika"). Behind me the director of "Tangent Room", Björn Engström, who I chatted with a bit. A well-made film out of a small budget. It was about four scientists being in a locked room trying to solve a mystery involving quantum leaps and parallel realities. Shown on some international festivals. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4230078/>



A week later Oct 23 Jonas Ellerström again (bass, far left) played with his band Blago Bung, in picturesque Bonehus (a former morgue). Middle Martti on guitar, right Kamilla, song. The band name is from a dadaist poem by Hugo Ball. Way back zine editor Jan Fornell was also a band member, as on this 1981 record, "Wittgenstein", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpS9aVlyNm4>

## HISTORY CORNER

It's a mixed bag from my Royal Library finds in this issue: con, poetry, genre name, unknown film, Joyce... If you know Nordic lingo I hope you can read the clips, for others I'll translate or summarise. As I remember Bacon in Lund, June 1978, was my third con, after Scancon 1976 and the Sam J-con 1977. Bob Shaw was GoH and presented in the program through a funny "This Is Your Life"

show. I talked a bit with Bob and came to know him a bit through the years, meeting him on several cons. I eg especially remember the fun we had with him on the Norwegian roomparty on an Eastercon. Anyway, here's a fat report from Bacon in Dagens Nyheter June 11, 1978, "Not a Single Little Green Man":

*Full of delusions as we humans tend to be it was a terrible disappointment to arrive to Lund on Friday; not a single little green man with three heads, not a flying saucer. Not a Raygun. Not even the slightest hint of spooky self-replicating plasma. Was this really the day to register for the 23rd Scandinavian sf&fantasy convention? Yes it is and we're sorry that the delusions is rather common among those who don't even know what sf is, Tommy Ljungberg said, treasurer of the organising committee and just as the over 150 attendees from all Nordic countries and in all ages - from 2-year old McKinney to 80-year old P Adolf Herrlin - a quite normal and human being "The green men, plasma and all that is Hollywood's view of sf and is rather bad entertainment fiction. What we're dealing with is the type of literature that broadens the horizon, based on existing activities, eg genetic manipulation, and extrapolates it into the unknown but within certain frames." Does it mean you no longer count on writers like Jules Verne? "Of course he is highly respected. But honestly, he's in the past. Generally the type of sf dealing with technology easily obsolete since development is fast. It has happened that such books are surpassed already before they are printed. Serious sf can be compared to futurology with social, political and human relations, representatives*

*coming forth from 'The Fandom' tell us, people interested in sf. Bob Shaw has expressed this very well in an interview where he talks about how he began writing sf, Richard McKinney says in the convention's program book. Shaw saw a magazine cover with a drawing of a giant spaceship. At the bottom of the spaceship there was a small hatch and looking like a little line there was a person. "How does this individual, a human being in a far future, think of the existence? What do he think of Earth? What's his relations to other humans? Those are the questions that most of all interests the sf fans of today? Well, but what kind of people are Bob Shaw and Richard McKinney, I ignorantly ask and is almost seen as a green little man with three heads by those who know. Bob Shaw is a soon to be 50 Irishman with 12 published novels and numerous short stories and articles and one of the big names in modern sf literature. He is Guest of Honour for this convention, which he has also been on other cons around the world and on Saturday he'll be asked questions. Richard McKinney is an US-born Lundian doing a PhD thesis in sf. He'll making a study of 'intelligent artificial beings'. Sf is so far from the strange delusions, in other words, and this convention is thus a quite normal convention. A meeting place for writers, publishers, film makers, artists and all who are simply interested in sf, with debates, lectures, films and book tables with many otherwise hard to find books are for sale. The only thing making a bit sf-ish, at least for an old Lundian with memories from AF and Håkansson's cafe, is that it takes place in Sparta's futuristic sf-inspired concrete surroundings.*

I've never been rich, so on cons I tend to "crash", ie the old fannish tradition of finding shall we say "alternate sleeping spots". And during Bacon I stayed in a...phone booth. But it was an indoor facility where you could expand space by opening door to a cleaning cupboard on the side, so don't worry. (My Buddy BAGS - as he is known - offered floor space another of the nights, if I remember.)

I just can't get novelist Harry Martinson and his *Aniara* off my mind! Dagens Nyheter's legendary

## Inte en enda grön liten man

□ Fyllt av vanföreställningar som vi människor är blev det för mig en fruktansvärd besvikelse att komma till Lund på fredagen: inte en endaast trehövdad grön liten man att skåda, inte ett flygande teofat, inte en strålpistol, inte ens skymten av läslig själv- alstrande plasma. Var detta verkligen dagen för registrering till den 23:e skandinaviska science-fiction & fantasy-kongressen?

Jo, det är det, och vi beklagar mest att den vanföreställningen nog är rätt allmän bland dem som inte vet vad sciencefiction verkligen är, ss Tommy Ljungberg, kassör i organisationskommittén och liksom de drygt 150 registrerade kongressdeltagarna från hela Norden och i alla åldrar - från tvååriga McKinney till 80-åriga P Adolf Herrlin - en högst normal och mänsklig varelse.

— De gröna små männen, plasmamän och allt det där är Hollywoods bild av SF och väl också en rätt dålig underhållningslitteratur. Det vi sysslar med är den typ av litteratur som vidgar vyer, som går ut från redan befintlig verksamhet, tex genmanipulation, och drar ut konsekvenserna i det okända men inom givna ramar.

Betyder det att ni inte längre riktnar med en författare som tex Jules Verne?

— Det är klart att vi högaktar honom. Men upplejligt sagt är han puss. Överhuvudtaget blir den SF-litteratur som sysslar enbart med det tekniska mycket lätt föråldrad så fort som utveck-



Jules Verne — rätt pussé

lingen går. Det har nämligen alla sådana SF-böcker är övertruffade av verkligheten redan innan de hunnit tryckas.

SF på allvar är mer att likna vid framtidsforskning med sociala, politiska och mänskliga relationer, får vi lära av andra tillskyddande representanter för "the Fandom" som folk intresserade av just SF kallas.

Bob Shaw har uttryckt det där mycket bra i en intervju, där han berättar om hur han började skriva SF, säger Richard McKinney i kongressens programbok.

Shaw såg ett magasinomslag med en teckning av ett jättelikt rymdskepp. Längst ner på rymdskeppet fanns en liten lucka och som ett litet streck skymtade en människa. Hur upplättar den individen, en människa i en avlägsen framtid, tillvaron? Hur ser han på jorden? Vilka är hans relationer till andra mänskliga varelser? Det är framför allt sådana frågor som intresserar SF-fans idag.

Jaha, men Bob Shaw och Richard McKinney, vad är då det för figurer, undrar jag okunnig och blir nästan betraktad som en trehövdad liten grön gubbe av dem som vet.

Bob Shaw är en snart 50-årig irländare, som med tolv publicerade romaner och ett otal noveller och uppsatser är en av den moderna SF-litteraturens stora. Han är hedersgäst vid den här kongressen liksom han varit vid åtskilliga andra runt om i världen och på lördagen skall han utfrågas.

Richard McKinney är en amerikafödd lundensare sysselsatt med att som den förste här i landet delförora i sciencefiction. Han gör en ematisk studie av "intelligent artificial beings" — intelligenta konstgjorda varelser.

Så långt från de världsförmanande vanföreställningarna är sciencefiction alltså och därför är kongressen en högst normal kongress. En mötesplats för författare, förläggare, filmare, konstnärer och alla som rysslar med eller bara är intresserade av SF, med debatter, föredrag, filmvisning och ett stort bokstall med många annars svåråtkomliga verk till salu.

Det enda som gör den något sciencefictionbetonad, åtminstone för en gammal lundensare med minnen från AF och Håkanssonskonditori, är att den äger rum i Spartas futuristiska sciencefictionbetonade betongmiljö.

CLAES STURM

editor-in-chief Olof Lagercrantz had in an article accused a reviewer of dragging this space poetry in the mud by *daring* to call it science fiction! Ivar Harrie, founder of - and editor, almost equally legendary - gives a reply in Expressen Oct 15 1956, "*Does Expressen make Martinson Profane - Virtue of Horror on Culture Page*":

...Olof Lagercrantz is upset because Expressen has a picture spread about a major event in Swedish literature: Harry Martinson's epic about the spaceship Anlara, the only genuine and spontaneous epic in contemporary Swedish poetry. The page has a construction drawing of how the spaceship is built - every

# Profanerar Expressen Martinson? Dygdig fasa inför kultursidan

Av IVAR HARRIE

DYGDIG FASA kan Expressen fortfarande framkalla, nu senast hos Olof Lagercrantz, diktare och kulturredaktör. Han är ense med Erwin Leiser i regeringsorganet om att Expressens kulturredaktion förnedrar kulturen och sänker allmänbildningen genom att framställa händelser i kulturlivet så som journalister brukar framställa alla slags händelser, med tonvikt på vad som är nyhet, alltså ovanligt och ägnat att väcka uppseende, kanske också förargelse.

Sådant får inte förekomma, kulturhändelser ska förbli interna angelägenheter kulturpersonligheter emellan, det är helgerån om de framställs så att de kanske väcker intresse hos "plebs", den stora enkla dumma allmänheten.

Olof Lagercrantz har just nu blivit upprörd över att Expressen har en bildsida om en stor händelse i svensk skönlitteratur: Harry Martinsons epos om rymdskeppet Anlara, det enda genuina och spontana epos som finns i nutida svensk diktning. På bildsidan finns en konstruktionsritning som visar hur rymdskeppet är byggt - varenda detalj är belagd med citat ur Harry Martinsons dikt, som redovisas omsorgsfullt.

Usch, säger Olof Lagercrantz, där ser man hur en sensations-tidning vulgariserar och banaliserar stor dikt. Harry Martinsons dikt är ju inte "science-fiction" om hur samfärdsmedlen ska kunna tekniskt utvecklas. Hans dikt handlar om människolivets eviga villkor. Rymdskeppet ska fattas symboliskt, som sinnebild av hur hopplöst det är att söka ändra människolivets villkor med maskiner, med teknik.

Ja tänk, det är just vad som står i Expressen - i Bo Strömstedts utförliga och genomtänkta analys av Harry Martinsons dikt på kultursidan.

Men sen tillkommer det märkliga, det unika, det med rätta uppseendeväckande: Harry Martinson har inte bara skissat upp ett rymdskepp som symbol för teknokratiska framtidsdrömmar - nej han råkar dessutom vara intresserad av det tekniska problemet hur människor ska kunna färdas i världsrymden. Den frågan har engagerat allt som finns inuti honom av ofördärvat, nyfiskt barn. Han slukar, harnsligt, allt han kommer över av "science-fiction". Han har lärt sig allt man kan lära sig om hur ett rymdskepp ska konstrueras, och det har roat honom, och varit en ärsak för honom, att när han nu behöver ett rymdskepp som sinnebild i en dikt, så ska det rymdskeppet vara riktigt, stämma in i detalj med vad han lärt sig i många lärda tekniska skrifter men också i "science-fiction"-tidningen Häpna.

Detta unika, detta som gör Harry Martinsons symbolik olik alla andra, är vad Expressens

medarbetare Lars Widding har tagit fasta på. Det är en poäng som han har ovanliga förutsättningar att fatta, eftersom han är både journalist, diktare och flygare. Han kände sig hemma på rymdskeppet Anlara.

Och den poängen har Olof Lagercrantz dessvärre inte märkt alls. Vad som har hänt är att Expressens nyhetsredaktion har upptäckt och åskådliggjort en komplikation i Harry Martinsons diktning som kulturredaktören i Dagens Nyheter inte tycks ha en aning om.

Till allra sist en upplysning åt herrarna Lagercrantz och Leiser: den redaktör som bär ansvaret för Expressens kultursida menar att där ska tillgodoses de två väsentliga kraven: ge nyheter och väcka debatt (alltså inte söva ner debatten med schablonklyschor). Längs den linjen kommer Expressens kulturredaktion att fortsätta. Personnamn är oväsentliga i sammanhanget.

Men väsentligt är att vi också framgent hoppas kunna framkalla dygdig fasa.

detail is presented and backed by quotes from Harry Martinson's poem. Yuck!, Olof Lagercrantz says, look how they vulgarise a great poem and make it banal. Harry Martinson's poem isn't "science fiction" about how vessels may technically evolve. His poem is about the eternal terms of human life. The spaceship is symbolic, showing it is hopeless to try to change the terms of human life with machines with technology. But behold, that's what Expressen says - in Bo Strömstedt's extensive and thoughtful analysis of Harry Martinson's poem. But then comes the remarkable, the unique, that which has caused a stir: Harry Martinson hasn't sketched the spaceship only as a symbol for technocratic dreams of the future - no, he also happens to be interested in the technical problem of how humans could travel in space. That question has engaged all in him which is left of a undamaged, curious child. He childishly swallows everything he finds of "science fiction". He has learned everything there is about construction a spaceship, it's been a matter of honour that when he needs a spaceship as a symbol in his poem that spaceship should be real, correct in all details he has learnt in many learned technical magazines, but also in the "science fiction" magazine Häpna. This unique thing makes Martinson's symbolism unlike everything else and is what Expressen's Lars Widding has concentrated on..he felt at home on the spaceship Anlara. And that's the point Olof Lagercrantz unfortunately hasn't noted. What happened was that Expressen's newsdesk found and illustrated a complication in Martinson's poetry that Dagens Nyheter's culture editors never suspected was there.

I have earlier covered how Martinson was genuinely interested in both space (mingling with the Atomic Noah club, that speculated on how to construct a big spaceship going to Mars) and sf (in an interview he showed his shelf of sf books, among which he liked AE Van Vogt best).

# MARG:8 SPRÅKSPALT

I vårt tidningsspråk ha tvenne anglosaxiska ord arbetat in sig, vilka illa passa till god svenska och därför borde ersättas med inhemska uttryck.

Det ena är *science fiction*. Skulle man ej efter ordet *vetenskap* kunna bilda ordet *vetenlek*, lek med vetenskapliga begrepp?

Krämligare är det med *science fiction*. Ordet *vetenskap* täcker icke betydelsen av engelskans *science*, och för *fiction* i denna användning har vi ingen svensk motsvarighet. Det stundom brukade ordet *dikt* passas ej i detta sammanhang. Närmast ligande svenska översättning vore väl *vetenskapsdiktning*, eller mer exakt *naturvetenskapsdiktning*, men slående är den icke. Om man vill undvika pressning av svenska ordbetydelser, är man i själva verket hänvisad till nybildning, och då är *vetenlek* onekligen ett fyndigt förslag.

Till formen liksom till innehållet är det just den blandning av *vetenskap* och *vitnerlek* som kallas *science fiction*.

Ett annat förslag har för ett år sedan framförts i denna tidning av Tord Hall, som i en streckare (S.1.60) kallar SF-litteraturen för *vetesagan*. Är det fråga om en enskild roman eller novell av SF-karaktär är ordet *saga* utmärkt, men gäller det hela genren, så är *vetenlek* bättre. Förleden *veten-* för också mera bestämt än *vet-* tanken till vad som avses, vilket ju icke är *vetenskap* utan *vetenskap*.

Svårigheten är att få vårt mot svensk nybildning mycket avog folk att verkligen knäsa ordet *vetenlek*.

It was in 1953 that "science fiction" became a buzzword in our newspaper, first used in Swedish print in 1945 (see an earlier issue). Several of them thought it was clumsy to use and launched contests to find a Swedish word for it. Despite creative suggestions like *teknovision*, *teknodikt*, *faktasi*, *vetesaga* and more, the Swedes in the end preferred the English original. Here's from a later discussion in the "Marg's Language Column" in Svenska Dagbladet January 2nd 1961:

Two Anglo-Saxon words have worked our way into our newspaper language. One is *science fiction*. Couldn't we from the word *science* construct the word *sci-games*, a game with scientific concepts. /Trying to create sort of translation of Swedish "vetenlek"... (Word #2 was "pool", but:)/ *It's more difficult with science fiction. The word "vetenskap" doesn't cover the same as the English science* /ie "vetenskap" also includes social sciences/ and for fiction in this sense there's no Swedish equivalent. /Rather, Swedish has several words for "something fictional" depending on form and circumstances./ *The sometimes used word dikt doesn't fit in this context. Closest Swedish translation would be science-fictionising or more exactly natural-science-fictionising, but it's hardly something striking. If you want to avoid pressing the meaning of Swedish words you'll in reality need something newly constructed, which makes sci-games an ingenious suggestion. To its form and content it's exactly the mix of science and the scholarly that is called science fiction. Another suggestion came a year ago in this newspaper from Tord Hall in a "streckare" column (5 Jan 1960). If it's a single novel or short story of sf type the word saga fits very well, but for the whole genre, sci-games is better. The prefix sci- /in Swedish veten- from vetenskap/ is more distinctly than sci- /vet-/ and more distinctly points the thought to what is intended, which isn't knowledge /vetskap/ but science. The difficulty is to make our people intolerant to new constructs to really embrace the word sci-games.*

So many words wasted on replacing the term science fiction, all for nothing... And sf had really made an impact in the 1950's! Here's an article from 1953,

Aftonbladet June 28, asking "Will the Crime Fiction Be Defeated by Science fiction?":

## Ska deckaren slås ut

SCIENCE FICTION är här — den tekniska fantasidikten, forskarvisionen, uppfinnardrömmarna. Det är en genre, som i Amerika har hunnit bli en litteraturgenrens av nästan förskräckande dimensioner. Noveller, romaner, magasin och serier har med science fiction bländat och förtvålats miljoner läsare i Väster. Radio och television predikar teknisk fantasidikt. Lärda professorer tvättar manna och skriver intryck att denna boka drömmar kan mycket väl en dag bli verklighet osv. Jules Verne har återupplästs, skrivits kritiken. Lär känna framtidens värld genom snälliska författarens ögon, ropar förläggarna.

Natur och Kultur har med vanlig vägenhet överst och utgivit "Morgondagens äventyr" — en antologi naturvetenskapliga framtidsnoveller sammanställd av E. N. Tägerstedt. Det är säkerligen ett väl gjort tvärsnitt ur den breva halvan av området och passar bra för en principdiskussion. Är detta den nya stora framtidsdiktaturen? Skall deckarna slås ut eller äminstone få en

Jämbördig konkurrens? Det finns de som professorar det. Så avog som detektivgenren är, kunde ju saken a priori tänkas. Vad man skriver i Norden, Eng-

Av JOSEF ALMQVIST

land, USA och Frankrike när för eller senare hit, och utanför denna rayon brukar föga vara att hämta. Nåväl, ur en sådan kittel med en kvarta miljard folk borde det kunna droppa ett ganska sktningssvårt antal gods kriminalförfattare. I verkligheten torde det vara ett bra år, om man försöker bärja in så mycket som fem rikligt förmåna, strama, spännande, hejglutna deckarböcker. Öftare är det en å två, ibland kanske ingen.

Vad är orsaken? Men väl att motiven måste, börja bli sällna eller mestis är överproduktion i spåren av Sherlock Holmes. Där till kommer att en framtidsrik kriminaldiktning mycket snart blir lagad av förläggarens påtryckningar, folkets Årå och månskalligt eget vinstbegär. Följden blir bråkade, slarv, trötthet, leda. Man

tar till de enklaste tekniska medlen. Ett enda tunt motiv, som ingen kunde bära upp en novell, byggs ut till ryggvad för en hel bok. Handlingen görs kryssad och laboratorieförakt, slängs in bland några få timmer eller minuter. Typ: vem hade tillfälle på cocktailpartiet att hålla gift i mr Rischwoods glas mellan klockan 15.38 och klockan 15.43? Till slut kommer det naturligtvis fram att den snälla tant Annie kunde ha flyttat på den extra baryagnen

## av science fiction?

med den förgiftade tonicflaskan och skjutt fram det precis kl 15.40 när mr Foot gick på händerna, och det med vägen kunde ingen bära därför att den hade blivit smord på tredagen och gick ljudlöst, vilket ingen kunnat ana emellan tant Annie inte hade lust någon olja, men hon hade tagit lanolinkräm för händerna ur sin väska och det kunde förstås inte polisen utan bara gamla zora Hickory, som själv var en kvinna, fundera ut. (Till på köpet är hela

detta broderi enbrett, eftersom den vane läsaren redan på femta sidan vet att brottslingen måste vara tant Annie i hennes egen skap av den minst sannolika och alldeles omöjliga personen — det är nämligen offret som skulle ha ärvt henne och inte tvärtemot.) Tyvärr kan nu detta att deckarböckerna är undermåliga inte födda en förfallen läsare från hans last. Liksom vanouppuren heller lär en unken whisky eller en aromlös var de vis till sängföars. Än en kopp ångande stöt och vit mjölk, vesper den deckarsjuke heller en udel kriminalhistoria än en aldrig så välkrydd mixatroman. Endast kryddan

bara flyttad lite längre fram i utvecklingen! Efter den idén skrev Jules Verne. Hans visioner har blivit verklighet. Om science fiction är en framtidsning här på, betyder den intet nytt. Här kanako inte all världens press äminstone sedan den första atomsmällan redan profeterat tanvis med framtidsådröm och framtidsdikt! Det står oss nästan i hålen.

Banningen är nu, att den moderna tekniska fantasidikten på intet sätt motsvarar sitt namn. Den sysslar reellt med helt andra ting än uppfinnningar som kan bli verklighet. "Morgondagens äventyr" berättar visslängten om underliga atomkrafter, rymdresor

uppfinna nya världar men en liten anskynling till verkligheten skadar aldrig som kända är. Science fiction har likat lite utveckling, lite broderier från vetenskapen. Med verklig vetenskap har den inset som helst att skaffa. Noveller av detta slag hör inte till teknisk diktning utan till den genre som brukar kallas "sällsamma och övernaturliga berättelser". Precis som detektivromansen är de fullständigt eskaplam och precis som den har de sin utlösa i den femmanna Pae. Med hundra år före sin tid, hade Edgar Allan levat nu, borde han ha haft royalties som en Sonnetet Maugham.

Har genren sällsamma historier inte förut lyckats slå ut deckarna, så lär den inte heller göra det i sin nya utformning. Det hindrar naturligtvis inte, att den så kallade tekniska fantasidikten skulle kunna bli en schlagre vid sidan av kriminalromansen. I så fall krävs det appenbarligen gods förtärlare. I "Morgondagens äventyr" är "Allt öppna dörrar" — historien om överbergade ungdomarnas kamp för att hjälpa varandra till utveckling — en smula för hurrisk och snusfornuigt. "Mannen", som handlar om en Kristusgestalt på en avlägsen planet, är ett menligt publikfieri, och "Odjurets torn" har så massiva sällsammeter att läsaren gläpar. Men "Fem år i Marmoleiden" äger trota sin litet platta dialag (ett nästan genomgående drag för bidragsgivarna) en graciosa läk. "Monstret" har något av trevligt solid skänkning från old England, och vårt favoritsyke, "Florkeln är ett lyckligt djur", är inte bara lustigt utan rymmer även ett litet slink demoni. Sådana ting är bättre än de flesta detektivnoveller.

Science fiction är här och äminstone i en tid kan denna diktning säkert vara en välkommen förstörare för dyrare av onyttiga och lekfulla ting.

Allt det där kan vara lustigt som lek och kurriska. Som framtidsdrömmar är det nonsens. Allt tal om naturvetenskap är här en ren förevändning. Skribenterna vill ha frihet att



Indignation hjälper emellertid ej — en liten dosis eskaplam är och förlärl i vår förtorkade värld en god stimulans. Har så science fiction samma mått av flykt från vardagen? Man skulle inte tro det, när det sägs, att här finns bara naturvetenskapliga drömmar, prövade av fackmän. Intet annat än praktisk teknik alltså.

Science fiction is here - the technical imaginative tale, the scientist vision, the inventor dreams. It's a genre which in America has grown to almost horrible dimensions. Stories, novels, magazines and comic books with sf dazzles millions of readers in the West. Radio and TV preaches technical fantasies. Learned professors review manuscripts and certifies in writing that the dreams of this book could very well become a reality one day. Jules Verne is born again, critics say. Know the world of the future through the eyes of brilliant writers, publishers shout. Natur och Kultur has with usual alertness translated and published Morgondagens Äventyr ("Adventures of Tomorrow") - an anthology of scientifically produced future tales compiled by E N Tigerstedt. It is probably a well-done sample of the upper half of the field and well suited for a discussion of principles. Is this the big, new entertainment literature? Will crime fiction be defeated or at least get competition from an equal? There are those who predict that. As weak as crime fiction is, it could be a foregone conclusion. What's written in the Nordic area, England, USA and France sooner or later arrives here, and outside this there's usually not much to find. Well, from such a cauldron of a quarter of a billion we should get drips of a substantial number of good crime writers. In reality it'd be a good year if you can harvest as much as five really fine, tight, exciting, cohesive crime novels. More often it's one or two, sometimes none. What's the reason? /Article says overproduction, laziness, silly plots - they are good sleeping pills, and escapism./ But indignation is no use. A small dose of escapism is and remains stimulating in our dried up world. But is sf the same sort of escape from reality? You could hardly believe that, when it is said it is scientific dreams tested by professionals. Nothing but practical technology, just a little further in development! That was the idea of Jules Verne. His visions have become reality. If sf is just continuing this it has nothing new. Hasn't the press all over the world since at least the first atomic bang already predicted tons of future knowledge and future technology. We're full of it. But the truth is that the modern technical imaginative tale in no way honours its name. It deals with other things than inventions that may become real. Adventures of Tomorrow does talk about strange atomic power, space travel and exploration of alien planets. But the ideas are far away from facts. You travel in small rockets through space, and not only that, also back and forth in time - which the worldview of Einstein won't allow, whatever people think. If you want to visit faraway worlds you equip yourself with a size indicator which increases or decreases your size so you always have the suitable size for the beings you encounter - a good idea, but with practical problems to design. When the relatives of a doctor have died he recreates them (but fails to make them grow in age). Strange creatures prove to be invisible, as soon as they are frightened. There are monsters locked in towers, closed with tractor beams that can only be opened with the biggest known prime number... All this may be a funny game and curiosity. As dreams of the future it's nonsense. All talk about science is just a pretext. That writers want to be free to invent new worlds with little connection to reality shouldn't harm anyone, as you know. Sf has borrowed a little bling and embroidery from science. It has nothing at all to do with real science. Stories of this kind don't belong to technical fiction but to the genre which is usually called "strange and supernatural tales". Just as crime fiction they are total escapism and just as them they have their founding father in the phenomenal Poe, born a hundred years before his time. If Edgar Allan was alive now, he'd earn royalties like a Somerset Maugham. If the strange stories of this genre hasn't earlier had stories to defeat crime fiction, it's unlikely it will in it's new form. But that doesn't of course stop that the so called technical imaginative tale could become a hit alongside crime fiction. In that case it obviously needs good writers. In Adventures of Tomorrow "To Open Doors" - about super-talented youngsters struggle to help each other develop - is too hasty and smartass. "The Man" about a Christ-like figure on an alien planet, is pointless play for the gallery, and the "Tower of the Beast" is so massively strange that you yawn. But "Five Years in Marmaladia", despite a flat dialogue (an almost common feature among the contributors), has a grand idea, "The Monster" has a bit of solidly fine atmosphere from old England, and our favourite piece, "The Huckle is a Happy Beast", isn't only funny but also contains a dash of the demonic. Such things are better than most crime stories. Sf is here, and at least for a while its imagination could very well be welcome entertainment for those who yearn useless and playful things.

The writer here, Josef Almquist, was a prolific translator (Biggles, HG Wells, also John Steinbeck) and worked for a juvenile fiction publisher, Google reveals. He wasn't totally negative but a bit narrow in his assessment that sf must be totally scientifically plausible (think...Star Trek!). Sf hasn't stabbed whodunnits in the library for the sleuth to investigate, but both genres have grown (I believe) and I think an important reason is that they have real storytelling in common, ie real plots, an ambitions to catch the reader's attention and less of pretentious muttering. At the very best both sf and crimefic are far from slow, self-absorbed, introspective lull.

Now, on to another unknown Swedish sf film. (See also what I wrote about "By the Gates of Hell", 1948, in *Intermission* #109, with nuclear research and alt history.) It comes from finding this little note (right) in a newspaper, Dagens Nyheter January 8, 1955:

★ Science fiction, populärt i amerikansk film, kommer nu i svensk. I den nya filmen om "Janne Vångman", skall hr V. möta marmänniskor och andra rymdens vidunder...

Sf, popular in American films, now comes to a Swedish one. In the new film about Janne Vängman, Mr V will meet Martians and other monsters from space...

The reason I've missed this film may be it hasn't been on Swedish TV (scrutinizing numerous net sources finds no trace of that) but I do find more info about the film and Janne Vängman. The hero, Johannes "Janne" Vängman (1858-1945) was an existing person, a clever, colourful character living alone in the woods, becoming a legend and character of a series of books by author JR Sundström, and also a number of film comedies. This film was titled "Janne Vängman and the Big Comet", and I find a poster for it in fine sf style as well as a short summary, <https://mubi.com/films/janne-vangman-and-the-big-comet>

*Pastor Efraim Andersström declares that a large comet is approaching Earth. To meet this threat of doom, penance is required. Janne Vängman shows up at a revival meeting calling the pastor a liar. That night Janne dream of aliens from space inviting him and his wife on a tour of the planets.*

The premiere was October 10, 1955. Despite the space aliens being declared being a "dream" there's also something about a big comet and a threat to Earth, so overall I have no problems labelling the film as skiffy. Another connection to "our" field is that the screenplay was by the notorious Åke Ohlmarks! - trashy translator of JRR Tolkien and in the 1980's in a wild feud with local Tolkienists (see *Intermission #110*). I wonder why the film has been given an English title and summary, since I doubt it was ever exported. It was hardly Cannes material. But since the film is rather unknown, I'd be glad if any of my readers have more information! And Swedish TV, both SVT and TV4 who gladly through the years have shown hundreds and hundreds of old Swedish films in the afternoons, why not try to dig up this gem and run it! Me wanna watch!

Finally a newspaper piece not from my Royal Library archaeology, since it's new. It is about the ever resourceful and amazing Bertil Falk finally publishing his *Finnegans Wake* translation! Or rather, since this James Joyce book is the Mount Everest of translating, he says he has done an "equivalent-making" of it. Only the first chapter of this, as most critics agree, central work of 20th century literature have before existed in Swedish. The text is a labyrinth of associations, folklore, puns, riddles, history and all you can imagine - and that's why Bertil has worked on it for 66 years! Not 66 years 9 to 5 of course, but off and on through the years when he has felt the inspiration. Bertil is of course well-known in our little skiffy world. A retired journalist and himself an author (crime fic, but also sf and fantasy, eg stories about the Viking age detective Gardar the RiddlerSolver!), re-launcher of *Jules Verne Magasinet* in 1969, pulp magazine expert, recently author of a grand history in three parts of Swedish language sf (ie no translations) titled *Faktasin*. I know him well since the early 1980's when he ie worked for *Teknikmagasinet*, and later from *DAST Magazine* (which he edited) and the Short Story Masters. If there's anyone who had the tenacity to tackle *Finnegans Wake* it's Mr Falk! Beside that he recently was interviewed in national radio and big morning rag Dagens Nyheter had a piece, his local Trelleborgs Nyheter wrote September 9, *Mission Impossible. He Took 66 Years to Translate the Joyce Classic*:

*It has been called impossible to translate, Irishman James Joyce modern classic Finnegans Wake. But now we have Finnegans Likvaka in Swedish for the first time, produced from 66 years of hard work by Bertil Falk from Västra Alstad. The key was to let all hope of understanding go. The giant job began during the Xmas break 1954 on Sigtuna Folk College School, a spare time project with seemed endless. The coming author, journalist and crime fiction aficionado Bertil Falk was 21 years. Now he is 88. "I was very interested in avant garde poetry, read TS Eliot, Ezra Pound and such. And I had read James Joyce Ulysses which is difficult, but possible to understand, Bertil Falk says. Finnegans Wake from 1939, James Joyce's last book, is with its experimental labyrinth of dreamlike streams of consciousness, dialects and onomatopoeia one of the most impenetrable novels written. The lack of an identifiable plot is a big obstacle for the reader, who must be very stubborn to get through the modernistic, experimental work. Many saw the book as a joke, mocking serious literature and critics. But Joyce himself, who worked off and on with the text for 17 years, claimed that every syllable in the*





"Läser man en obegriplig text högt hör man klanger och rytmer. Det tryckta ordet ligger platt på en boksida och har inte samma liv", säger Bertil Falk som tycker att James Joyce

# Omöjligt uppdrag. Tog 66 år på sig att översätta James Joyce klassiker

VALSTAD

Den har kallats omöjligt att översätta: irländaren James Joyce moderna klassiker "Finnegans Wake". Men nu finns "Finnegans likvaka" för första gången på svenska, framtagna efter 66 års hästjobb av Bertil Falk från Västra Alstad. Nyckeln var att släppa allt hopp om att förstå.

Mastodontprojektet inledes redan juloft 1954 på Sigtuna Folkhögskola, som ett fritidsprojekt utan skönjart slut. Då var den blivande författaren, journalisten och deckarfantasten Bertil Falk 21 år. Nu är han 88.

– Jag var väldigt intresserad av avantgardistisk lyrik, läste TS Eliot och

Ezra Pound och så där. Och jag hade läst James Joyce "Ulysses" som är svår, men begriplig, berättar Bertil Falk.

Finnegans Wake från 1939, James Joyce sista verk, är med sin extrema snårlag av drömlika medvetandeströmmar, ordlekar, dialekter och ljudhärmanden

en av de mest svårnomen-trängliga romaner som skrivits. Inte minst är det avsaknaden av en greppbar handling som lägger krokben för läsaren, som får vara bra en vis för att ta sig igenom det experimentella, modernistiska verket.

Många såg boken som ett skämt, en drift med seriös litteratur och kritik.

Men Joyce själv, som jobbade på texten av och till under 17 år, hävdade att varje stavelse i boken var berättigad. Och han skrev den första mening som en fortsättning på den sista, så att boken blev en oändlig loop.

– Reaktionen från Joyce egen bror var "vad är det för mening med detta fyll-

Från början ville jag också förstå och skriva på normal svenska. Men det går inte. Många har försökt tolka boken, men det har de inte kommit långt med. Joyce själv sa att "det kommer ta 300 år innan de förstår". Och det har ju bara gått 82 år, eller hur?

**Bertil Falk,**  
författare och journalist

snack", skrockar Bertil Falk.  
– Joyce drev säkert med

oss, många tror ju det. En del tycker att boken är rolig, andra tar den på djupaste

allvar. Oavsett hur man ser den har Joyce verkligen fått folk att tycka. Det ska bli intressant att se om översättningen får folk att också läsa den.

Värdet, som Bertil Falk ser det, ligger i den rytmiska, lekfulla hanteringen av språket, som knådas som en deg och får låsa fritt från första sidan till sista. Bäst upplever man "Finnegans Wake" som högläsning, menar översättaren.

Hur skulle du sammanfatta handlingen?  
– Vilken handling? svarar Bertil Falk med ett skämt.

– Den kan tolkas på många olika sätt, fortsätter han. Men den är i stort sett ogenomtränglig. Så jag gav upp att försöka förstå. Jag bryr mig inte om mening utan koncentrerar mig på det lingvistiska, på författarens språk. Många gånger har jag frågat mig "vad fan håller jag på med?" Men jag har också haft väldigt roligt.

Bertil Falk är ovillig att

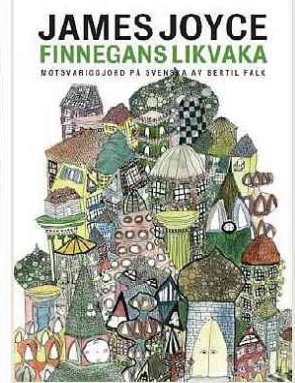
kalla sitt jobb en översättning, utan har uppfunnit ordet "motvariggränd" för att beskriva sin presentation av "Finnegans".

– Från början ville jag också förstå och skriva på normal svenska. Men det går inte. Många har försökt tolka boken, men det har de inte kommit långt med. Joyce själv sa att "det kommer ta 300 år innan de förstår". Och det har ju bara gått 82 år, eller hur?

Vad skulle James Joyce ha tyckt om ditt arbete, tror du?  
– Han skulle säkert ha varit nöjd med att någon ger sig på romanen. Men det är inte säkert att han skulle varit lika nöjd med resultatet.

**Lars Thulin**  
Text  
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**Fakta**  
**Utdrag ur "Finnegans likvaka"**  
Roddade, förbi Eva och Adams, från strandens sväng till bokens båg, för oss via en behändig ström av återvändande tillbaka till Howth Castle och Ewings. Sir Tristram, violer d'amarres, från över Isomskärs, hade än en gång återanlänat från Nord America på denna sida av Mindre Europas skrovliga nids för att omkämpa sitt peninsulära krig: inte heller hade topsavyns klippor vid Oceanus ström överdrivt sig själva till grevskapet Laurences georgier medans de fördrubade sitt tiggande hela tiden: inte heller en öst ur enald fängtransporterad misbe misbe tilltautauft tuestpatrick: ännu ej, fast myckessort efteråt, hade ett källingrick avslutat en blind gammal bok: ännu ej, fast allt thidelt i färliga, var med tväna tvillingstyster Nathandjes. En sköpa ruttat av pappas malt hade hem eller Shen bryggt vid blglampa och regnbrynets röda ände var att bli sedd som ring på vattenytan.  
(Bokens inledning. Aleph förlag, översättning Bertil Falk.)



Bertil Falks översättning av "Finnegans Wake" innebär att det modernistiska verket nu för första gången ges ut på svenska. FOTO: ALEPH FÖRLAG



Bertil as he began in 1954 (left) and today holding the result.

book was justified. He wrote the first sentence as a continuation of the last so the book became an infinite loop. "The reaction from Joyce's own brother was 'What is the point of this drunken drawl?' Bertil Chuckles. "Joyce probably put us on, that's what many think. Some think the book is funny, others take it very seriously. Whatever you think about it Joyce has made people think. It will be interesting to see if the translation will make people read it too." As Bertil Falk sees it the value is in the rhythmic, playful treatment of language, knead to dough and then fermented from first to last page. The best experience of Finnegans Wake is hearing it read aloud. How would you describe the plot? "What plot?" Bertil Falk replies with a laugh. "It can be interpreted in several ways. But it is basically impenetrable, so I gave up trying to understand. I don't care about meaning but concentrate on the linguistic, on the language off the author. Many times I have asked myself 'what the heck am I doing?' But I have also had it very fun." Bertil Falk is unwilling to call his job a translation, so he has invented the word "equivalent-made" to describe his presentation of Finnegans. "From the beginning I too wanted to understand and write in normal Swedish. But you can't. Many have tried to interpret the book, but they haven't reached far. Joyce himself said "I'll take 3030 years before they understand". And only 82 years have passed, as you see. "What would James Joyce have thought about your work. "He would probably have been happy with someone tackling the novel. But it's uncertain if he'd be happy with the result." (Captions: "If you

read an incomprehensible text aloud you hear sounds and rhythms. The printed word lies flat on a page and doesn't have the same life in it," Bertil Falk says who thinks James Joyce is best read aloud. And: Bertil Falks translation of *Finnegans Wake* means that the modernist work now for the first time is published in Swedish.)

The article also has an short excerpt of the book, but that's *impossible* to translate... *Finnegans Likvaka* comes from small press publisher Aleph, with fannish connection through Rickard Berghorn who runs it, earlier ed of essay/sf/horror/etc zine *Minotauren*).

## Mailing Comments

MCs only for EAPA , since N'APa as bimonthly has no new mailing. BTW, why not join these APAs! Ask me for info. Just write something interesting and choose "save as PDF" command. World needs more fanzines!

**John Thiel:** Yes, unfortunately EAPA has had problems finding new members for a long time. I've tried myself doing some PR and urging people to join, but it has been very difficult to get any reaction. / The thing with FT Laney was that he to a degree misinterpreted some things and exaggerated other. Though, there was probably also truth in what he wrote and I think he is very entertaining. / I've read *A Clockwork Orange*. I didn't think the style was avant garde. Maybe you are just thinking of the interesting "future slang" he used?

**Henry Grynsten:** That married couples could have similar dementia situation doesn't have to be explained by drinking coffee... We have what is called the Connected Third Factor. People who are similar in personality tend to fall in love and marry. Personality is a mental factor, so being similar in personality means they could have other similar mental factors, like the risk for dementia which is also a mental factor. No coffee needed. Other factors may also play a role. It is claimed dementia is slowed by living an intellectually active life, and a married couple similar in personality will both if they are intellectually active stimulate each other to such a life. Again, no coffee needed. / Interesting idea that the myths of trolls could be memories of Neanderthals inherited through thousands of years. On the other hand, the long timespan makes it sound a bit far fetched. Homo sapiens has more recently cohabited with mammoths. Neanderthals disappeared perhaps 20 000 years ago, mammoths only about 5000 years back - but still, we have no myths about hairy elephants! Anyway, it is very understandable that myths about trolls and other supernatural beings have come about. We've been living in the woods and among the bushes. Our eyes are especially adapted to notice movement and our brains to try to create explanations for what we see.

Trees and bushes flutter in the wind, we think we see...what is it...could it be...a troll! / I'm not sure I understand your time travel metaphor and its possible connection to myths. / As for robots, I believe that we sooner or later will build robots similar to the ones Asimov described. Our society is adapted for the human form and our abilities, so human-like robots would be very practical. I especially think of how fine it would be with robots for space colonies. Those fellows could work for us without need for food and atmosphere and can stand extreme temperatures. / What connects fandom is, I think: 1) *Science fiction* - somewhere, sf is always around! 2) *Text*, reading books and stories (of sf, of course), but also writing, fanzines, your own attempts at stories, articles. I think text and not visual media (like film, TV, comics, computer games) is a core value of fandom. Text engages your imagination more that visual stuff, because it doesn't present everything, you have to visualise and think for yourself. 3) *Humour*. You



"Asteroid king" is what artist Lars LON Olsson calls this...

can't be serious all the time, you need to relax with lighter stuff too, and here the need to be funny and appreciate humour comes in. Even the very earliest fan of the 1930s went into humour, wrote parodies, shared jokes and so on. Humour is connected to creativity, because you need to be creative to be funny. My observation is that fringe fans engaged in media fandom have a deficit of humour. They can't see the funny, absurd side of what they are doing. They are too busy trying to copy and imitate ready-made stuff, copying other stories with "fanfiction", copying looks with dressing up as figures from comics or films, copying "worlds" when making and playing games. Trying to become part of their object of desire means they can't get away from it, take a step back and watch from the outside. 4) *Fandom's history and traditions*. Things that have been with us for a long, long time. Fannish legends. Ways to do things. Fanspeak. Recursiveness belongs to this - going into traditions is to recursively go into fandom itself. Sadly, a lot of that is dying, as there are few new fans of the Right Stuff, only costumers and gamers and film buffs. / Of course Piketty refutes the criticism, but if you evaluate what critics state you'll find a lot of sense in it, and that Piketty is wrong in major points. That there are two opinions doesn't mean that both are on an equal level of truth - one of can be right, the other wrong. Yes, inequality exists, of course. But my point is that it in itself isn't a problem! The problem is only to try to make it better for those worse off, *not* to at any cost obliterate any inequality at all levels - the end result would be that everyone is the same. It's a scary idea that everyone must be forced to be the same. It can't be done without heavy oppression. People aren't the same, so you must apply pressure (oppression) to try to force them to be that. As I believe I said before: suppose we have a society where 9 out of 10 own one Rolls-Rolls (I use that as a symbol for "being decently well off"). One out of 10 own 10 Rolls-Royce. Now, do those with 1 RR get a worse life just because there's someone else with 10 RR? The answer is no. It wouldn't matter if 1 out of 10 own 100 Rolls! The others are still pretty well off. The only problem is if there is a poor fellow somewhere who only has a wheelbarrow with a flat tire. That's something that should be fixed, not that there's someone having more Rolls than others. Applying oppression to take the Rolls from someone and "redistribute" it creates much bigger problems, the oppression itself, the suppression of individuality and that resource growth will slow down, which makes everyone poorer.

**Garth Spencer:** Good that you give a good explanation of APAs and fanzines for the open mailing, and I hope it may interest new members! (Come on guys!) I do some recruiting efforts myself. We must get more folks! Why are people today too lazy doing fanzines? / You talk about "the fashion for privatizing essential public services" as if that would be bad. I'll just want to comment on what is done in Sweden and schools (which has been in the debate). What the "free school" reform here meant was that the government introduced a sort of voucher ("skolpeng") which followed with the pupil, whether he/she went to a council school or a free school. Both got the same "skolpeng" for their services, so in cost it was no difference. Both council and free schools have to follow the same standards for schooling, and this is checked by school inspectors. What we get is just alternatives for those who want it, where school entrepreneurs can work *under supervision* without costing more. About 85% of schools in Sweden are still run by the local councils, 15% are free schools, but



studies have shown that competition between schools types improves council schools in municipalities where both exist. The council schools have to improve to keep pupils, which of course is good. Critics claim that "millions" are "embezzled" by shameless school capitalist and sent to the Cayman Islands. But the average profit margin of the free schools is only 6%, which is *much lower* than generally in business life. The 6% only comes from that entrepreneurs tend to be more efficient than bureaucratic politician's councils. There are less than a handful of examples of free schools attempting to squeeze out huge profits, and that's what critics pick from their cherry garden... (But I agree with critics taking a shot at schools with too much religious affiliation.) Letting

We're "Under Attack" by a robot in this ABBA song! entrepreneurs try things, giving competition with new ideas is good. / I had some contacts with Taral and DNQ in the early 1980's. / Time to sign off. More history stuff in nextish, and probably something about the coming ABBA album "Voyage"! While we are waiting for that, one Brian David Gilbert has in almost folksong tradition done clever horror-inspired ABBA covers:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCakAg8hC\\_RFJm4RI3DID7SA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCakAg8hC_RFJm4RI3DID7SA)

(See ya! – Ahrvid E, E as The Ed)

# *SYNERGY #31* November 2021



**NAPA Mailing #255**

**Edited by** John Thiel, residing at 30 N.  
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*Cover by Bill Van Dawson*



Healthy people seen above? They make synergy their mainstay and thus are achievers.

Welcome to another issue of Synergy, the fanzine that strives to be a real fanzine. We have poetry in this issue to bring you delight, a prose short-short, and an article that might be of interest to you, though with this interest hopefully not being of an overwhelming interest in the topic presented. The art is chosen with the reader's viewing in mind, and, oh yes, the mailing comments substitute in many ways for there being a letter column. It's only twenty pages, but completing it gives me a feeling of there being a fanzine well done, and that fanzine is my own. I hope that readers will find enjoyment.

# EDITORIAL



## Money Talks...But Do We?

The article in this issue of Synergy about science fiction's usage of other forms of money reminds me of the controversy concerning it which occurred in Ron Smith's fanzine **Inside/Science Fiction Advertiser**. Noticeable about Smith was that his fanzine cost a quarter, he did in fact publish paid advertising in his fanzine, and he would sometimes talk about the cost of publishing his fanzine, which was done by a process called "photo offset", on eight and a half by eleven paper folded to be eight and a half by five and a half, which made the way it was printed and assembled more of a mystery. It came to pass that he printed an article on the very topic of the article in this issue, namely the monetary systems in stories of science fiction and fantasy. Several of his readers pointed out that the article came as no surprise to them, since he seemed to have an unusual amount of interest in monetary concerns. The main purport of the article was that stories set in the future and on other planets would not present the same means of buying and selling that exists today. The article pointed out that several stories already printed featured something called "credits", a concept that seemed plagiarized from its original source in a science fiction story. There was consideration given to the concept that the three apparently widely diverse stories had the same background and that a style sheet was being passed around among them. (**Inside** was a fanzine interested in such matters.) It was noted that it was a lot of trouble formulating an alternate monetary system and perhaps there *should* be some background talk about that and other things that a writer might have difficulty with, and perhaps a

uniform system like the one that seemed to be evolving.

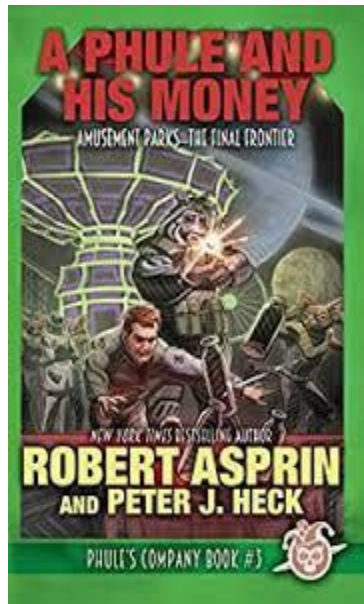
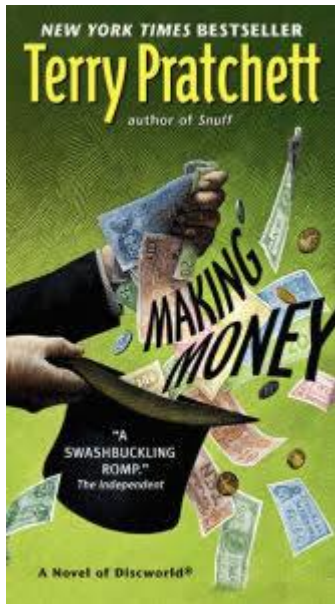
It was proposed that science fiction stories seldom featured monetary exchanges and that they were not part of what science fiction was interested in. If they did have some kind of sales going on in their stories, they could write their way around naming the bills or whatnot that were involved. But then it was brought up that where complex social arrangements were involved, units of transaction were part of the action; if the stories were sociological in nature, there would be attention given to money. It did, in fact, have an important effect on a culture, sometimes having all evils attributed to it. But why encourage or seek to generate stories that led to this particular factor in a society's problems? Well, some writers might have money problems and want to express them. Yes, but why seek out such stories? The editor said that such stories were in the process of evolving. It seemed on consideration that stories with such interests as that would be wreckage to the readership. Perhaps they wouldn't be able to get such stories into print. Again, the editor pointed out that that might be said of the three stories that had so far appeared, and he was wondering if a system would appear that had all of them using credits as a future use of money...and that the stories might be processed into print.

So there we saw stories about money and things involving it being a possible invasion of the science fiction field, with pressure being put behind it. And indeed, there was a surge in science fiction of writing about finance, business, governmental matters and importing and exporting of goods, architecture and the like. (See ARCHITECTS OF EMORTALITY by Brian Stableford as a somewhat more recent example.) There were stories that were police procedurals and stories taking place in transportation offices. These played off established writers like Isaac Asimov and Alfred Bester.

This does tie in with how little profit there is in writing science fiction and how set aside the science fiction field is from actual wealth. The government has money, but your average citizen perhaps does not have a whole lot and might have to go through times when he hasn't any. I think there is reason to suspect science fiction which is concerned with social problems and city management as not being science fiction. Sure, it is somewhat, but it just does not have the science fiction outlook or commitments.

I don't expect much argumentation on this topic, because I don't get a whole lot of feedback on anything I write. But here I mention having this point of view.

## Science Fiction Money by Jeffrey Redmond



*This article has a lot of currency*

A fictional currency is some form of system of money defined, depicted, or alluded to, in works of fiction, such as novels, films or video games. The names of units of such currency are sometimes based on extant or historic currencies. A "cubit" is a fictional currency on the Battlestar Galactica sci fi TV series. Other examples are "Altarian dollars" or "Earth yen", while other names such as "Kalganids" in Asimov's Foundation series, may be wholly invented. A particularly common type, especially in science fiction, is electronically managed "credits".

In some works of fiction, exchange media other than money are used. These are not currency as such, but rather nonstandard media of exchange used to avoid the difficulties of ensuring "double coincidence of wants" in a barter system. Coin props depict a fictional wizarding currency in the Harry Potter fantasy films.

Authors doing world building and creating imaginary societies have to take care when naming fictional currencies, because of the association between currency names and countries. Recognizable names for currencies of the future, such as dollar or yen, may be used to imply how history has progressed. But these would appear out of place in an entirely alien civilization. Historical fiction may need research. Writers need not explain the exact value of their fictional currencies, nor provide an exchange rate to modern money. They may rely on the intuitive grasp of their readers, for instance that

one currency unit is probably of little value, but that millions of units are worth a lot.

Currencies in science fiction face particular problems due to futuristic technology allowing matter replication and hence forgery. Authors have proposed currencies that are incapable of replication, such as the non-replicable "latinum" used by the Ferengi in the Star Trek universe. Or the currency in *PANDORA'S MILLIONS* by George O. Smith, which is booby trapped to explode if scanned by a replicating machine. Money in fantasy fiction faces analogous challenges from the use of magic. In the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling, magically created currency is time limited. While in Ursula K. Le Guin's fictional realm of Earthsea, the world's equilibrium is unbalanced when something is created from nothing.

In the Demon Princes pentalogy by Jack Vance the currency "SVU" or Standard Value Unit is described as being employed on most major settled worlds. It has a value equivalent to one hour of unskilled labor in standardized conditions. Its printed notes are verifiable by scanning with a device called a "fake meter", the function of which comprised a critical theme of the second book in the series, *THE KILLING MACHINE*. The protagonist undermines the system and prints ten billion SVU undetectable by the fake meter, thus setting the stage for three books to follow.

The long term value of currency is an issue in works featuring journeys through time or the lapse of very long periods, such as being due to the deep sleep or cryopreservation of the protagonists. In some cases, compound interest may swell small amounts into a fortune. This happens in the *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams, *When the Sleeper Wakes* by H.G. Wells, and the Futurama episode "A Fistful of Dollars". In other stories, inflation reduces the value of money, as in *The Age of the Pussyfoot* by Frederik Pohl. Other plot factors can affect the worth of currency. In *The Moon Metal* by Garrett P. Serviss the world's currency standard must be switched from gold to a mysterious new chemical, "artemisium", after the discovery of vast mineral deposits in the Antarctic devalues all known precious metals.

While modern fiat currencies lack intrinsic worth, some fictional currencies are designed to be valuable in their own right. Intrinsically valuable currencies are used in the Frank Herbert's *Dune* universe. The Dragonlance world of Krynn where steel coins are the primary currency and are more valuable than gold by weight. This is also in the *Apprentice Adept* series by Piers Anthony. The space opera *CONSIDER PHLEBAS* by Iain M. Banks features coins convertible for chemical elements, land, or computers. In utopian fiction, a money-free economy may still need a unit of exchange. In "The Great

Explosion" by Eric Frank Russell, the Gands use favor exchange based on obligations called "obs".

The use of "credits" is particularly common in futuristic settings, so much so that Sam Humphries has pointed it out as a cliché: "In any science fiction movie, anywhere in the Galaxy, currency is referred to as 'credits'". Credits are frequently envisioned as a form of electronic money.

In science fiction set in the near future, modern currency names are often used. The selection of familiar currencies such as the dollar or yen, particularly in the far future, may be used to make suggestions about the way history unfolded. However, it would seem strange for aliens to use a recognizable currency.

There are lots of interesting SF&F economic systems that are without money—post scarcity AI-nano cornucopias, magic subsistence economies, *etc.* For those who imagine worlds that still have money, though, there are the more interesting speculative monetary/currency/financial systems.

Along with all the "gold coins" and "credsticks" of SF&F, Cordwainer Smith's distinction in THE PLANET BUYER between "FOE money" and "SAD money" reflects the dangers of interstellar commerce. "Secure and Delivered" money, for transactions on remote planets, is massively marked up relative to "Free on Earth" money. There's pricing in the probabilities and perils of getting anything from one place to another.

One of several plot threads in Neal Stephenson's CRYPTONOMICON is the creation of a cryptocurrency secured by a large cache of gold that was abandoned by Japanese troops in the jungle of the Philippines at the end of World War II. There is also the literal application of the adage "time is money" in Andrew Niccol's 2011 sci fi movie in **Time:**

"In 2169, people are born genetically engineered with a digital clock on their forearm. When they turn twenty-five years old, they stop aging and their clock begins counting down from one year. When it reaches zero that person "times out" and dies instantly. Time has become the universal currency. It is used to pay for day to day expenses, and can be transferred between people or capsules. The country has been divided into time zones based on the wealth of the population."

Charlie Stross has slow money and fast money in "Neptune's Brood". Slow money is used to fund stellar colonization projects. Fast money is what we would call financial assets today. This is pretty much just a big screen adaptation of the short film THE PRINCE OF LIFE.

In Damon Knight's "A Reasonable World" the world transitions to a gift economy. It starts with essentially swap meets and grows from there. The system works because everyone is infected with a parasite that kills them if they are doing harmful things to others. Gold pressed Latinum remains the currency for the Ferengi, because replicators cannot replicate it. Robert Heinlein's proto novel, FOR US, THE LIVING, has a weird economy/currency system which is described in detail including exercises in an appendix.

It's not really well-developed IIRC, but in HOLY FIRE Bruce Sterling uses a two-tier system of money where old people have "real" money, and young people have "play" money. It seems like everyone's basic needs are met, somehow. There also seems to be a sort of proto-post-scarcity economics in Star Trek.

As Mars undergoes terraforming, the various political factions on Mars at the time try out several different monetary and economic systems in Kim Stanley Robinson's MARS trilogy. Some that still use money, but are largely creative explorations about what drives the economy, include Dune. The money is the Solari, but the economic driver is Melange/Spice. In WAR WITH THE NEWTS the economic driver is the Newt labor.

At least one of John Varley's EIGHT WORLDS stories concerns the problem of the stock market on Pluto, which is seriously disadvantaged by being many light hours away from the big inner system Stock Markets.

THE HANDMAID'S TALE begins with how easily a credit card/paperless money system is made to completely render half the population impoverished. A few of those considered trustworthy were then issued chits or vouchers with pictures of items for sale to use for purchasing.

There's the "rights economy" in Karl Schroeder's PERMANENCE. As technology progresses it becomes possible to track who holds the rights to anything. A chair, a tree, a pretty view. It drives pretty much everything in the worlds of the book. Although not stated as currency *per se*, the many creatures in Greg Bear's EON and ETERNITY novels deal in and negotiate with information, energy, and political favors. The setting for these novels is across space, time, and alternate universes.

Alison Sinclair's BREAKPOINT:NEREIS includes a society that uses "obligation" as a payment system. This effectively leads to slavery. People who owe more obligation than they can ever repay.

Douglas Adams' HITCHHIKERS GUIDE series includes such currencies as:

- The Flanian Pobble Bead, which is only exchangeable for other Flanian Pobble

Beads.

-The Triganic Pu, a unit of currency worth eight Ningis. But since a Ningi is a triangular rubber coin six thousand eight hundred miles along each side, no one has ever collected enough to own one Pu.

The DEMON PRINCES series by Jack Vance uses the "SVU", equivalent to one hour of common labor. The currency in PANDORA'S MILLIONS by George O. Smith is booby-trapped to explode if scanned by a replicating machine in order to prevent forgery. Phlebas by Iain M. Banks has coins which are convertible for chemical elements, land, or computers.

The residents of Luna City, and other Authority holdings, in "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress", use parallel currencies. Both truthfully named: Authority Script, which is the official currency. At the time of the story it is experiencing heavy inflationary pressure, and is only useful for paying debts owed to the Authority. And Hong Kong Luna (HKL) Dollars which is a "fake" currency. Everyone but the Authority prefers this, because it's backed by a fixed amount of gold or other defined commodities.

The protagonist says: "Simply know we were glad to lay hands on this non-money, whereas script one accepted reluctantly, and not just because we hated Authority".

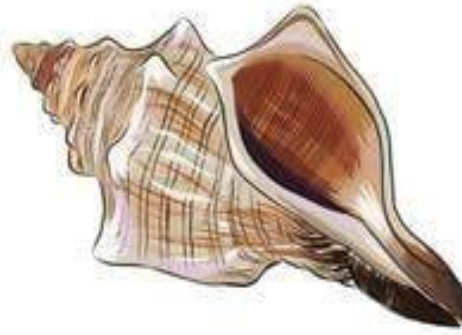
Other kinds of currencies in futuristic worlds have yet to be defined. But there will no doubt be more and varied ones, as highly creative inclusions in science fiction works to come.



**Current, see?**



# *The Sea Shell* by Gerald Heyder



My name is Maritime Fourmast.  
I come from a long line of sailors, ships and mermaids.  
I have a sea shell that talks to me, yes,  
I put it close to me ear and I hear many tales it has to tell.  
It dwelled at the bottom of the Graveyard Sea.  
It washed up on the beach and began to teach me  
Many strange stories, some of tragedies, some of glories  
And some from beyond this mysterious planet we inhabit.  
From soup to nuts, from wolves to rabbits,  
The accounts run the gamut!  
I know you won't believe what I say, but hey,  
It really doesn't matter anyway,  
Not in this world where earplugs rule  
And truth has been relegated to being an obsolete word in the dictionary.  
Life has become "Fictionary!"  
Believe what you will, I am going to listen to my sea shell.  
I hear a ringing and it's not the phone or doorbell!  
Yup! Yup! Yup!

## *In Drama of Dreams by Betty Streeter*



### Dreams, Worlds

You can flow on cloud world, only things you can tell others.

Only things with your brain, you tell it fast.

You ask yourself, what have I seen?

Dreams, like, stick in the mud.

They appear, if trying to list.

In mind they disappear.

**DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS IN ROBIN HOOD (1922) by Cardinal Cox**



Sun is bright, grass is green, gather  
Round on the first of May  
And hear of brave Robin Hood and  
Little John in our play

The outlawed Earl of Huntington  
Forms a rough robber band  
To protect all from tyranny  
In an ancient free land

Conniving Prince John has usurped  
His noble brother's throne  
John's base wickedness is whispered  
And becomes widely known

And his audience here thrill to  
This legendary tale  
The broad popularity of  
This ballad will not fail

The crowd know how Jesse James gave  
To widows and the poor  
He would not steal from old comrades  
From the long civil war

They read about Poncho Villa  
In rich Hearst's yellow press  
How he shares his stolen silver  
With those who have much less

They have known factory bosses  
Foreclose and sack their staff  
They've heard the swoosh of truncheons and  
Strike breaking coppers laugh

In the cinema they cheer when  
Robin once again wins  
Punishes the grasping sheriff  
For his multiple sins

Outside there's poor veterans begging  
On cold winter streets  
Thin coats on bent backs, holes right through  
Boots on their broken feet

Flying Saturday matinee  
Boys flip them a few cents  
Wish them warmth, thick soup and bread in  
Their cardboard shacks and tents.

When Robin fights Guy of Gisburne  
He fights for all in pain  
When he takes gold from merchants, he  
Takes to share, not for gain

They say John Dillinger sat in  
The same cinema dark

Not knowing how he, then young, was  
To one day make his mark.

Sun is bright, grass is green, come all, gather and hear our play  
Of brave Robin Hood and Little John on the first of May.



## HAZING by Will Mayo

There was this secret organization, known as much for its kindness to the poor as for its secret handshakes, that was widespread and very powerful during the early years of the last century. All that got word of it wanted to join its ranks and join in all of its good works. It had that kind of aura about it that attracted people from throughout the land.

There was, however, one catch. In order to join this powerful, stable and valid organization, all prospective members had to, with no warning given, spend 24 hours in a locked room with a human skeleton. If they emerged from that room with their senses intact, they were then welcome to be part of all the club's affairs. But all of them, male as well as female, young as well as old, had to go through that trial with the room containing the dead. It was their own rite of passage.

The years have now passed. The halls of this once powerful group lie all in ruins, its members having dwindled to a handful that linger on in my nation's nursing homes. Many still have their senses intact and all remember that long ago, awful day with the dead. Yes, they remember it, but will only whisper it among themselves.

And the question remains whether these human remains used in those rites of passage were always obtained in the usual normal and legal ways that bodies are given in this world. Or was there ever some foul play at work here?

The clock ticks on. The years continue to pass. And the remaining members of this once powerful organization continue to grow old.

But no one says a word. No, not one.



## Mailing Comments



Ahrvid: My brother has his musical group on YouTube, so I suppose it would be possible to record "Poor Boy Sandwich" or "Dew-Line Dooley's Cowboy Trick" and put it on there.

Laney's title should have been longer—something like "Ah, Sweet, and Forever Vibrant and Wonderful, and Never to be Forgotten—IDIOCY!" Otherwise the reader takes the title in at once and doesn't get the surprise slam effect. From the photo, one can imagine him considering his writing of that and deliberating whether he really should do it, because once done, it's rather irrevocable.

I don't see where guilt would accrue to a tasty potato salad, but it seems as if it might be nice to have a few women at such a get-together. Without them, somebody'd have to go out and buy a potato salad.

Strangelove and Clockwork blew an enormous downer for me. I can boast of having remained in my seat all the time those two films were playing, though others would get up as if they were getting in the action and looking for traction and forming a faction, which might have been a basis for the cosplay which was to follow.

Jefferson: I recall being able to use hyperlinks, but I no longer have as advanced a computer arrangement as I once had. Way back, my rig apparently allowed me to hack in, but I didn't try it out very much.

"Staple Wars", I think, revolve around printing and formatting. The argument would be about binding and having a more professional look.

Xanadu seems to have been in use in other than Sturgeon's story; there's a film called "Xanadu" and a song I rather like of that title.

You and Will had better both be looking out for window peekers. I'll say to both that I live well enough. I like to keep to a simple existence, meditating on things seen and heard; I'll take a modest look out my window and appraise what is going on around my home, perhaps step outside and study the atmosphere, or take a stroll and have some

back-and-forth with the drivers. I assume the gods take this into good consideration, but it's just an imaginative thought to contemplate gods, call it visualizing and in a sense creating a viable environment for myself to dwell in.

World building lacks hubris, but if it had that, it'd be a really solid undertaking.

Will: The houses on each side of me give an impression of being haunted. On the north side, the kitchen light near their back door is left on all night, with the blinds now open, which didn't used to be their arrangement. The view of it is uncanny. And the neighbors to the south usually have their cellar light on, even when there's no other light in the house. But, what's unusual? I keep getting these lights without a source making patterns, only now it's on a backyard tree when on anything at all, and there is regularly a light on the northern neighbor's wall which doesn't come from my house. It's in the form of an X.

George: Yeah, we have people who run around in the neighborhood partially undressed and I wonder how they are faring with the insects. They weren't that bad this year, though.

Samuel: Well, there could be a future which is a polarized replica of the present. Nothing's a sure bet, though—no one ever pays off on a bet.



# LAST WORDS



I've always thought that apa publications were complete fanzines, in which there was art, fiction, poetry, letters, reviews, articles, in short, fanzines that could be envied, but had a limited circulation outside the amateur press, and the larger circulation in the apa. This made them somewhat an in-group; but the apas were formed to make fans aware of one another and help them circulate to the right people. The end result was to get the members a secure place in fandom, but at the same time it did this, it got them somewhat cloistered. This was being discussed in fanzines at one time. Amateur Presses did not originate with science fiction fans; there was a National Amateur Press Association with a large membership that was not devoted to anything in particular outside of being an amateur press association. One of the people in this association was the editor of *The Providence Amateur*, coming out of Providence, Rhode Island. Its editor was interested in fantasies, and he sent some copies out to readers of *Weird Tales*, and printed their comments in his journal, and they were discussing fantasy and ghost stories. These others liked what he was doing but did not join the National Amateur Press Association (sounds like our apa); however, they sent what they published to people appearing in the *Weird Tales* letter column. They became known as the Circle. Later some people formed a science fiction amateur press association; I believe that was Fapa. Nowadays apa publications are not typically very long and have commentary on most anything in them while not referencing science fiction all that much. As you can see, I'd like my own apa fanzine to be more like a standard fanzine and so I include a variety of contents. I might send some copies of it out to others, as we are not a secret society, and have more of a fanzine, which is something I like to have, and could take some delight in. Not leaving N'APA with it, of course.



Don't forget credit where credit is due. [Endpage]

# *The Contents of a Good Life*



**Will Mayo's contribution to NAPA**

**November 2021**

**255<sup>th</sup> Mailing**

**Will Mayo.** 750 Carroll Parkway, Apartment 9B, Frederick,  
Maryland 21702. [wsmayo@yahoo.com](mailto:wsmayo@yahoo.com) .



**Spirits alive! My town.**

Back sometime late in the 1960s my brother came upon me in the back yard of our house where I was digging a hole with a shovel.

“What are you doing?” he asked.

“I’m digging a hole to China,” I answered.

“I’ll race you,” he said.

And so, with our dueling shovels we raced, digging our holes to China until our mother called us away to supper.

“Hey, hey,” my brother said. “I dug a bigger hole than you did.”

Over dinner, our mother fussed about our digging up the back yard and so we lost interest in tunneling away to China. At least my brother did. A few years later, our family moved to a different house. And in the back yard of that new home, I was determined to dig my way to China all over again—that is, until a neighbor’s son talked me into running away with him for some mischief and adventure.

After that, I eventually came to the conclusion that a boy could more easily take a plane ride to China than he could dig a hole there. By then, however, my family was to move out of state to a town I liked, so I gave up the notion for good. It was not easy being a kid and digging to China was only one of many strange ideas I had in those days.

In my younger days, I would sometimes pause in my wanderings about town to scribble a few lines on a napkin at barside or coffeeshop and then, eyeing my rough words, I would place a quarter into a payphone and call one of my many acquaintances for feedback on the poem in question. My listeners would include schoolteachers and preachers as well as award winning writers. Nevertheless, one by one, they listened to my stumbling turn of phrase and gave me much-needed advice on writings that are still being published today. I can’t imagine who would do this now—and, yes, this

includes myself—but they helped pave the way. It seems a shame that far too many of them are dead and gone for me to thank them today.

Like most everybody here, my online persona does not match my private persona. Most days, in fact, I don't see a soul. But I do love to dream. And out of dreams come forth what I put on the page and across the Internet. To some people, this might strike them as just plain phony. To me, it is my own manner of living. And I suppose that is good enough.

I sit in my room waiting for the fall of the night. Downtown, the mayor shuffles his papers. A dead man sings the blues. A lonely woman orders the latest special. The School of Rock can be heard rocking the creek on the way to sundown. A retired Navy admiral sells tires on the side. Skeletons and ghosts litter one house's yard in the approach to the Days of the Dead. And it's said that some people are never the same. If ever they were anything approaching what passes for "normal" in this world to begin with.

It's a strange time to be alive. It's an even stranger time to be dead. The clock ticks forward.

To my friends and family and whoever comes across me here in my book-lined rooms with my cat, I'm just a nobody, a has-been who never could make good on the grade. One of society's castoffs consigned to the rubble heap of "Not Good Enough". But daily I write the words here and tell my stories and sell my little books. In hopes that dreams can come alive and that somebody, somewhere, out there can see me as something more than the nobody I am here to those who know me. Years pass. And then decades.

I grow old. But dreams come alive nevertheless for those who care to know the tales.

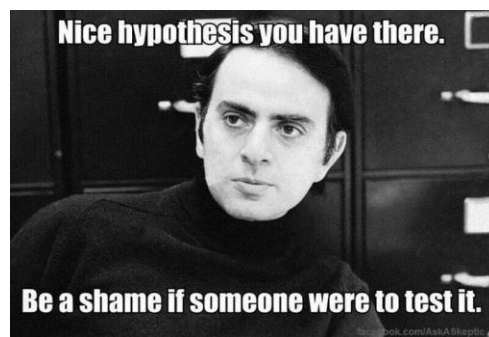
One of the things that I've learned in life is that nothing is forever. Not you. Not me. Not even those gods some people love to talk about. Sooner or later, we all go tumbling into the void from which we came.

Today is everything, folks. Tomorrow? There is no such thing.

I had a dream and in this dream I saw a great many people coming and going amid the green grass of a yet-to-be season. Some of these people I knew only from my correspondence. Others from my acquaintance of many years. Yet I felt that I knew them all well.

When I asked them what they were gathered together for one of them replied, "We are here to honor a friend. A very dear and strange friend."

As their names were called, they each read words from some near-forgotten letter, poem or story, and the more they read, the more I felt I knew the deceased well. And when at last body and spirit were laid to rest, I knew at last that their departed friend was none other than myself, With weary eyes, I shook myself loose from this dream and wrote these words. Ready for another day.

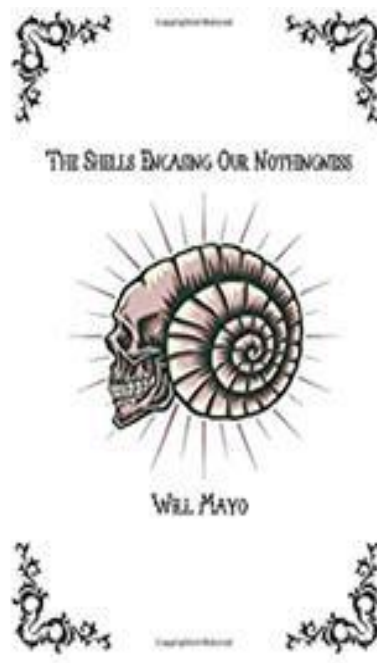
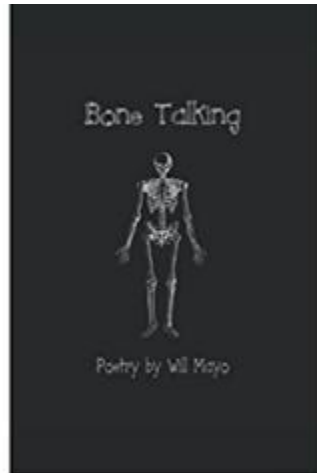


From my book BONE TALKING available at Amazon:

### A BETTER ME

I take heart in the possibilities of multiple universes. Surely, I tell myself, in all of the dimensions of time and space there is a better me that has not made the mistakes I've made.

But, if so, does he know he's better off? There's the gist of it.



The Shells Encasing Our Nothingness. Available also on Amazon.

I have only words. They quickly fade from my computer and the night. But oh, what magic they cast!

It occurs to me that we are all stars in our own movies, our own palace of make believe. We each chase our own shadows, dance with our own loves, and when at last the movie is over, the film reel tatters back to the beginning. Time for the next show.

But, you know, I don't regret the living. I regret the dead. The living can always forgive us. The dead never will.

And, maybe it's true that, rather than heaven or hell or some other life, we live on in another's dreams. For a while, anyway.

If you meet anybody who claims to have all the answers, then run. For he has no answer at all.

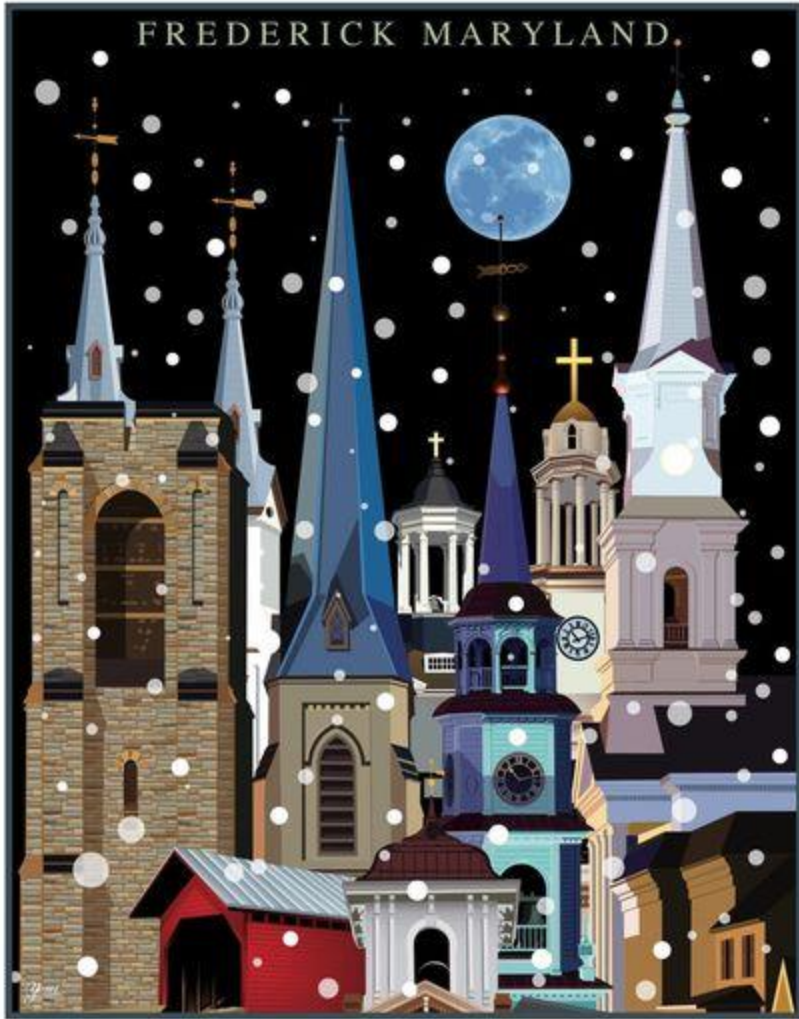
In "Starman" and "Rebel, Rebel" and countless other songs, David Bowie summed up the feeling of alienation in a world gone mad better than just about anybody else in his time. He threw everything into his lyrics, including Tarot and all his readings in the occult.. And when at last death found him, he was still singing songs of aliens in a world where no man is another man's brother. Perhaps it is fitting that we all pay tribute to him now. Yes, David, we are all mad here now. You just opened the door.

### **Mailing Comments**

John Thiel: Thanks for seeing me into another issue of NAPA. And I'll agree with you that the mystical, awe-inspiring element of science fiction appears to be the primary attraction. I'm not sure that "religious" is the word for it but it's definitely there.



*The Tombstone Tourist*





## HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON

cheaper and easier to create and send than paper fanzines and pdfs can do most things that print can. Very few clubs in the U.S. have their own clubhouse. I think LASFS lost its clubhouse a few years ago. Boston and Baltimore have their own clubhouses. As always, your stories of fannish history are a treat.

Synergy - Go, go, go! I was a big computer nerd in middle and high school. I even taught computers for a year in my first job out of college. The Science Fiction Book Club is on the web at [www.sfbcc.com](http://www.sfbcc.com) and physically at Science Fiction Book Club 34 West 27th Street - 10th Floor - New York, NY 10001. War Productions reads more like fictional history than a conventional story. It's telling rather than showing.

Good Life - I don't think today is any stranger time to be alive than at other points in the last 200 years or so. Serfs and slaves had fairly routine lives, but I suspect many people today have their own routines. I doubt today is any stranger than in the 1960s with presidents and civil rights leaders being assassinated, the Great Depression and WWII of the 30s and 40s, just to pick a couple of periods. I like your ghost walk photos.



## ...LOC on N'APA 254

Nice cover.

Intermission #111 - Great that so many Swedes are getting vaccinated. We're still having far too much resistance in the U.S. Looks like a nice vacation. It is good that you are preserving your country's fannish history. I agree that a mask protects others from you more than it protects you from others. But to me that makes it more urgent that authorities requiring masking, to protect citizens from each other. A 50 person limit would have allowed the virus to spread at weddings, church services, small concerts etc. I disagree that word processors have made novels longer by making it easier to write. Plenty of 19<sup>th</sup> century novels have impressive page counts even before the invention of the typewriter.

Archive MidWinter - I think you are misinterpreting me. I think the overall level of quality of science fiction is better now than it was in the past. A lot of older sf had weak characterization and few literary qualities. But the best of them had a drive and sense of wonder that much of today's SF lacks. In the Dresden Files, I got a sense that the wizards went out of their way to convince the general public that magic was not real (although I don't see how that would work in Chicago after the events of the last couple of books.)

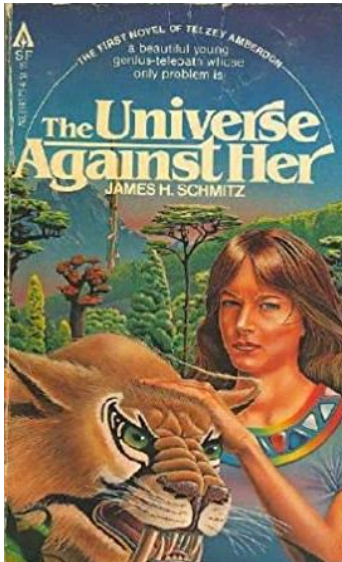
Intermission #112 - The population of Sweden is about 10 million. That puts it around the same as Michigan and North Carolina that have a much higher death rate. I don't see anything wrong with electronic fanzines. They are much

Ye Murdered Master Mage - I like the name Fanactivity Gazette. I need to write up something about Worldcon for it (I'm doing the Newsletter if anyone wants to volunteer to help). Yes, NESFA has played a major role in keeping Cordwainer Smith alive. Your account of the trial in Adara's tale is sufficiently interesting that I want to read the novel. However, I suspect that were I reading it all at once and not in pieces 2 months apart, I'd think the trial scene was going on too long, especially if the book had already presented the incidents being described.

### ...Writer Spotlight: James Schmitz

James Schmitz, born in 1911, was a major writer of short stories in the 1950s through the early 1970s, but largely faded away after that and died in 1981. (Ace reprinted three short books worth of Telzey stories in the early 1980s, which is where I encountered him). His writing was mainly published in Astounding and Galaxy SF.

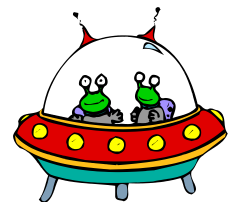
Schmitz is best known for his Federation of the Hub universe, a large scale setting for stories that initially focused on separate characters before he started having some of them meet (in what could be considered early examples of crossovers.) His Hub has some strong worldbuilding, and his CommWeb comes remarkably close to today's Internet-equipped smartphones. Many of these subseries focused on female characters, especially Telzey Amberdon, a supergenius telepath, and Trigger Argee, a highly intuitive intelligence operator. Unlike most writers of the 1960s, Schmitz portrays a future with complete female equality and has highly capable female characters who are not just in the story to be rescued by the hero. He also had much stronger characterization than was the norm for space opera stories.



Perhaps his most popular stories focused on Telzey, who was an extremely competent (one of her villains complains about her being too stable) character even before she became a telepath. She goes around the Hub getting into trouble and using her abilities to help out her friends and dealing with problems that catch her attention. His most popular book, *the Witches of Karres*, also focus on young people with psychic abilities.

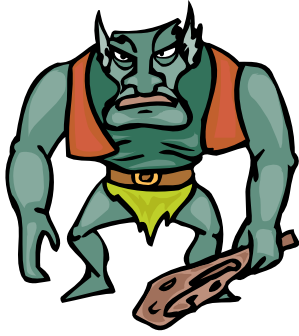
The main reason why James Schmitz is not neglected today is the fact that Eric Flint was a fan of his writing in the 1960s. So when he talked Baen Books into letting him reprint the works of classic writers, Schmitz was at the top of his list. Flint edited seven volumes of Schmitz' complete works in cheap mass market paperbacks, including *The Witches of Karres*. In addition, he worked with Mercedes Lackey (first book only) and David Freer to write sequels to *The Witches of Karres*, without any Schmitz's content in them but using his characters and worldbuilding.

Schmitz's books are fun and the Eric Flint edited volumes are very inexpensive as mass market paperbacks. A sampling can be found at [https://www.freesfonline.net/authors/James%20H. Schmitz.html](https://www.freesfonline.net/authors/James%20H.%20Schmitz.html)



### ...The Return of Live Conventions

After over a year of cancelled conventions and online conventions due to the Covid-19 situation, it is great to be able to attend live science fiction conventions again. In October, I attended [Capclave](#), a small literary focused convention "where reading is not extinct" outside DC in Rockville, MD. Note: this is my home convention, run by the Washington Science Fiction Association, and I am almost always on the concom (so I may be biased in this description). This year's Capclave was understandably smaller than usual, probably around 250 or so people and the Guests of Honor were Peter S. Beagle, author of the Last Unicorn, and Eric Flint, author of the 1632 series. In addition to the GOHs, other guests included Michael Swanwick,



Neil Clarke, Charles Gannon, and Sarah Pinsker. The convention was combined with Flint's Ring of Fire mini-con, since the original plan was for this to be held shortly after the DC Worldcon, rather a couple months before that convention. There were three tracks of panels, a reading track, and a gaming demos track. Capclave required people to be vaccinated.

Next week I will be attending Philcon. The convention was once the size of Balticon or Boskone but has been shrinking even before Covid hit. It is still usually much bigger than Capclave, but as of the Friday before the convention, the website had no schedule and no list of participants other than the GOHs. This is normally a bad sign of convention mismanagement or short staff.

Then, in a month, I will be attending [Discon3](#), the D.C. Worldcon, December 15 - 19. I am running the convention's newsletter (please volunteer to help) and have been involved in the planning of this since the 2017 bid. It's no secret that the convention has undergone some unique challenges. In addition to the Covid-19 situation our original hotel went bankrupt and various problems have led a large number of the convention's leaders, including both original chairs, to resign. We also pushed the convention's date from August to December in the hopes that more people will be vaccinated and more borders will be open. Still, I am confident that this will be the best convention possible under these circumstances. While much of the convention will be live, there will be some online content and some panels at the convention will be streamed over the Internet and there will be some Internet only panels so participants who cannot travel can still be on panels.



### ...Hanukkah Specials

Hanukkah comes early this year (well, technically it is the same day as always, the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month of Kislev, it just comes early on the Christian/pagan calendar). I've updated my list of Televised Hanukkah specials that deserve to be aired alongside the many, many Christmas specials. Who says the Jews control Hollywood?

**Rudolph, the Red-Skinned Potato Latke** - None of the other latkes, made from brown potatoes will let Rudolph, made from redskin potatoes, play their latke games. Dismayed, he ends up on the Isle of Misfit Dreidels. But when he is the last latke left in the frying pan, he learns a valuable lesson - that latkes of all potatoes are delicious when properly fried, especially when covered in applesauce or sour cream.

**How the Grinch Stole Hanukkah** - The Grinch steals all the Hanukkah menorahs, latkes, dreidels, and presents from the Jews in town. Undismayed and filled with the spirit of Hanukkah, the townspeople grab the swords and go off to fight the Grinch in the name of the Maccabees.

**Hanukkah Tokenism Special** - all the characters from television series that get one line in their series' Christmas episode about how they are Jewish, which is never mentioned again except in context of Christmas, get together to talk about how being Jewish influenced their lives. The show features the Epps family from NUMB3RS which went four seasons before the family's Jewishness received more than a casual mention even though the entire family was played by Jewish actors.

**The Great Hanukkah Debate** - Which topping is best for the Hanukkah potato latke (pancake) -- apple sauce or sour cream? Top chefs compete with their latke recipes to find the best latke and the best topping match. But what starts out as a debate over how to top a latke degenerates into a debate over how to spell Chanukah, Hanukkah, Hanuka etc.

**Year Without a Hanukkah** - The evil Snow Miser goes back in time and kidnaps Judah Maccabee and brings him to the present, a dystopia where everyone worships Zeus with no religious freedom at all. Can



Judah and his recruits from the local underground synagogue's pre-bar mitzvah class rally Jewish children around the world to fight for Hanukkah freedom, capture the Snow Miser's time machine, and use it to restore the timeline?

**How the Shamash saved Hanukkah** – Detective Shamash, the ninth candle of the Hanukkah menorah used to light the others, investigates when all the Hanukkah gelt goes missing. With his catch-phrase, “Let’s get lit!” the Shamash candle solves the mystery and saves the holiday.

**Hanukkah Doughnuts to the Rescue** – Magical donuts fight vampires that want to suck the jelly right out of them.

**International Dreidel Championship** – Teams from Israel, Europe, and the United States compete to spin the dreidels with enough gimels to win the pot. At halftime there’s a latke eating contest.

**Peanuts Hanukkah Special** – Linus and Snoopy teach Charlie Brown the true meaning of Hanukkah – beating the bad guys to win religious freedom.

**The Little Menorah Maven** – A young boy fights alongside Judah Maccabee and is given the honor of lighting the menorah in the Temple. But he can only find enough oil for one night. His only hope is for a great miracle to happen there.



### ...Status of Projects

I have decided that I need more intellectual stimulation in my life. So I am starting (or in some cases resuming) some projects.



**Project Shakespeare** – I have an annotated Shakespeare in three volumes and am reading the histories first with the goal of reading all his plays and sonnets at three scenes per day. I have finished the three Henry VI plays which were sometimes confusing keeping track of whose side everyone was on. I found the first play’s take on Joan of Arc, as a villainous harlot, to be rather different from the usual Saint Joan version. I liked Part II’s Jack Cade plotline as a rebellious peasant uprising made for a nice change of pace from the squabbling of the nobles. I found part III the least interesting as it focused on battle scenes.

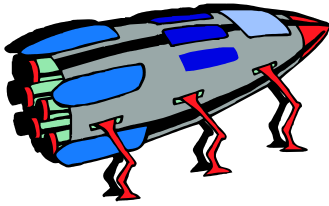
**Project Classics** – A decade or so ago I decided to read all of Charles Dickens as well as a bunch of other classic writers. I stalled for a year or so on *Barnaby Rudge* and then permanently stalled with *Dombey and Son*. I picked the book up again for another try, and am now almost halfway done. This is much further than I’ve gotten the last two times I tried to read this book. I was rather surprised, considering the book’s title, when the son died in the first third of the book. My goal is to finish it in November at a rate of 2 chapters or 4% if on a Kindle per day.

**Project History** – My goal here is to read two chapters a day and alternate between works of English history and other histories. I finished *Foundation: The History of England from Its Earliest Beginnings to the Tudors* by Peter Ackroyd covering pre-history to 1509. Obviously, covering this long period in a single book means including a quick overview of most of the events, not in-depth history. I plan on reading separate books focused on the War of the Roses and the Plantagenets. I thought the book could have used more dates and family trees. I did like how it alternated political history focused on the kings with social history and descriptions of the non-royal life. Interestingly, it turns out I had read this book before, but had no memory of doing so and nothing in it seemed familiar.

Next on Project History is *America’s Great Debate: Henry Clay, Stephen A. Douglas, and the Compromise That Preserved the Union* by Fergus M Bordewich. I



wrote my Master's Thesis on this period but that was 30 years ago, so I don't remember much. I have about 100 pages to go.



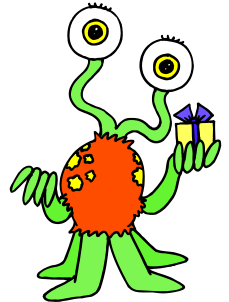
**Project Trek** – I was going to watch all of Star Trek in order but Netflix is no longer showing the original series. I watched the Star Trek movie (see review) and started watching The Next Generation with the goal of one episode per week. I found the two-part opening, Encounter at Farpoint, to be rather interesting. Everyone looked much younger than I remember them being. Data was actually a bit annoying but I liked how there was some friction between him and Riker. Troi was actually more useful than I remembered her and she actually wore something closer to a uniform than she does in the later episodes. I started watching The Naked Now but found it too painful. I'll have to go back and finish it however.

Yes, I have been accused of being ambitious and so far have failed to do all of these on any day.

### ...Review of Star Trek

I just rewatched the 2009 Star Trek relaunch film directed by J. J. Abrams. It is a fun film, although it doesn't feel like Star Trek and requires the viewer to turn off his/her brain completely because so much of it makes no sense. The Kelvin timeline used for the reboot movies branches off from the main timeline when the Romulan Nero travels back in time to get revenge for the destruction of Romulus. On emerging into the past, he destroys the ship on which Kirk's father was serving, killing him in the process. So Kirk grows up without a father, making him rebellious.

One big problem are the enormous plot contrivances to get Kirk to be Captain right out of cadet school. It makes no sense that Pike wouldn't have other officers who should be higher ranked than this raw cadet. At the end, it made no sense that Starfleet would make him a permanent Captain, jumping several ranks, even though he did save the Earth. And it stretches coincidence to have Scotty be on the same planetoid as the marooned Kirk and prime-Spock.



Another problem is the lack of defenses or ships around Earth and Vulcan. Yes, Pike was forced to give the codes to penetrate Earth's shields, but once Nero's ship started firing a digging laser at Earth (or Vulcan), someone should have sent a ship to investigate. There is also a big problem that the destruction of Nero's ship by a black hole so close to Earth, should have, at the very least, knocked everything in the solar system out of orbit.

One thing I did like was the actor who played Spock, Zachary Quinto, who I thought did an excellent job balancing Spock's logic with his emotional side. Chris Pine played James Kirk and showed Kirk's cocky side well but I don't think he managed to convey Kirk's serious side and dedication.

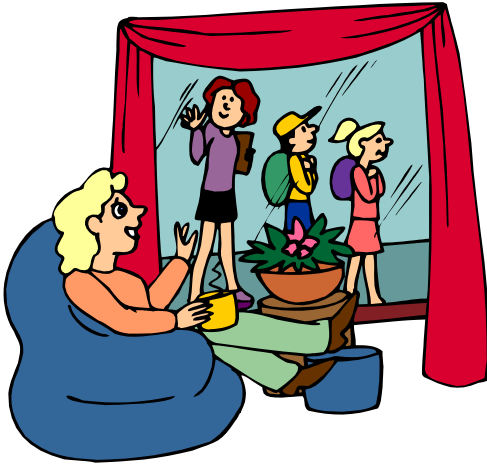
### ... Schools and Censorship



Local Republicans are making a big deal out of Critical Race Theory and over 20 states have passed or are considering legislation banning it from K-12 schools. But CRT is really a complex legal theory that says racism is so embedded in America that the laws and legal structures are built around this racism. It also says that race is a social construct and the laws help maintain racial discrimination and different treatment of whites and blacks. This is not taught in K-12. But Republicans are using the term to apply to any teaching about racial discrimination, even in history class, that makes whites feel bad. They object to anything that makes whites out to be oppressors and blacks into victims. By this definition, even an elementary school picture book about Ruby Bridges, the six-year-old

black girl who integrated a New Orleans elementary school, is CRT and so must be banned.

The problem of course, is that segregation and discrimination really did happen. Whites really did try to block blacks from attending their schools and the federal government really did send troops to force desegregation (not that the whites didn't find other ways to keep schools separate). To say otherwise, is to present a false picture of history. And yet, that's what our schools do. For instance, school history says nothing about the 1921 Tulsa Massacre, when a white mob destroyed a well-off black neighborhood. Instead, we teach myths that historians know to be false about George Washington and the cherry tree.



Part of the problem is that many people think the purpose of teaching history in the schools is to make children feel good about their country. That's not history, that's propaganda. Real history is to examine what happened and why, teaching and explaining the good and the bad. This means telling some things that people may not want to hear.

Closely related is the problem of censorship in schools. This came up in the Virginia governor's race since the previous governor, running for reelection, had vetoed a law that would have let parent censor the books taught in schools. One parent objected to her child being taught *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, who won the Nobel Prize for literature. While you wouldn't want this book taught in middle school, it is perfectly appropriate for an AP literature class, which is supposed to be college level. It is worth noting that censored books tend be

those about minorities, especially Blacks and Gays. Again we see people trying to eliminate the schools' teaching about people who are different. Unfortunately, in Virginia, the pro-censorship governor won by claiming that parents should have the right to protect their children from content (meaning ideas) they do not like or would make them feel bad.

*Samizdat is the work of Samuel Lubell and all opinions expressed here are his own, not those of any current or former employer, government, or client.*

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On the N3F

We are having elections. As I write, ten people out of the fifty eligible to vote who voted. I am advised that several of them have commented that they were voting but that there didn't seem to be any point to it, since there were no contests. We are currently at two hundred forty-seven persons being sent our newsletters electronically, and nine persons and archives being sent paper mail issues but not electronic issues. We actually have recruited some new members recently, but we have also purged a number of Public members whose electronic addresses are invalid.

The other club I belong to, AHIKS, put copies of its membership recruitment flyer up on several Facebook groups. In a week, they recruited nearly 3 dozen members. If you want a larger and more effective N3F, you need a club with more members. Please support the N3F by recruiting for the Federation.

Zine comments

Intermission: beautiful picture of the city. Thank you for the historical notes on Swedish SF conventions and clubs. The Anlara opera was if I remember correctly mentioned in Time Magazine. What was the need for extra rehearsals? The twelve-tone music?

Archive Midwinter: gamers with no skill are amusing. Their armies tend to end up dead in a great hurry. Your solution to the lifeboat problem was very clever. The protagonist simply killed the banker for making an unauthorized loan? Bizarre. Do you remember what the novel was? Was it by any chance "A Planet for Texans", that being a title I remember from sixty years ago. Thank you for your kind words on my writing and world creation.

Intermission: Interesting to read that Sweden is switching prime ministers. Sorry to read that the Swedish women's soccer team did not win the gold. Your contributions to fannish history are highly virtuous. Convention fandom in recent years has done a number of strange things. Different conventions have disinvited, if I recall correctly, Larry Correia and Toni Weiskopf because someone did not like their politics. The attack on John Campbell was entirely disgraceful. The Futurians were a pre-WW2 American fan group.

Synergy: having lived through it, I'm not stunningly interested in politics of the late 60s and early 70s. Once was enough. There are large numbers of fandoms, some of which might be viewed as fringe. Several commenters on Tightbeam are surprised that we have a Gourmet Bureau, or that we review anime. My understanding is that the Marvel people did not know what to make of Salvador Dali, and his interest in whatever he was actually proposing turned out to be fleeting. An interesting bit of science fiction written as a historical piece from Jeffrey Redmond. Sorry, but the typeface for giant eels was rather difficult to read.

The Contents Of A Good Life: you seem to have had an interesting time choosing a particular way to live. Interesting images of

some very old houses. I have seen a few of Rodin's works; they were quite impressive. With respect to UFO, the peculiar hairdos were purple or anti-static wigs, allegedly.

We are now returning to a serious interest in UFOs, notably the recent report emphasizing that the small percentage of sightings that cannot be interpreted are sightings of solid objects recorded with multiple sensors at the same time. There is also a reanalysis of some of the Air Force/intelligence work of the 50s. The quote I particularly remember was the discussion of the flying saucers seen over Washington in nineteen fifty-two, interpreted as the the time as temperature inversions, with the comment of the participant "we didn't think that anyone would actually believe that statement." It remains unclear what is being seen.

Ye Murthered Master Mage: I did indeed reset the price of all of my paperbacks to \$14.99. The effect on sales was rather limited.

Samizdat: I do recall Peter Beagle as a name, but I don't think I have read anything by him. There are truly large number of authors, and I seem to have less and less time for reading. I have read a fair number of Eric Flint's books, including the Belisarius series, and the start of his 1632 series. The 1632 series is approaching having generated as many novels as the Soviet *Metropol* series did.

## Adara continued

"Finally, Mistress Triskittenion," the Army attorney continued, "wouldn't you say that the golem was an enormously powerful and effective combatant, the most powerful you have ever faced?"

"Well, no," I answered. "Not even close. And if I'd known

its many weaknesses, I could have taken it down much faster." It was for sure not as dangerous as Great-Grandfather Worrow.

The Army Attorney bowed to the bench and returned to his seat. He seemed to be very good at asking off-the-wall questions to which he expected answers, just not the answers I gave him. Moore and Heath had both told me: Assume that when you get a question, the attorney already knows the answer you will give, and is looking to trap you in an error. This fellow was not following their rules.

"Your Excellency?" That was the Fourbridge Attorney. "Permission to question?"

We went over the later part of the combat, Harold losing his sword and then getting tapped on the head. I was afraid he'd asked why I'd made it a Death-Pride Honor duel, but he didn't. Of course, if he asked I'd start by repeating all the names Harold had called me, one at a time, slowly, but admitting the other reason would not be good.

His last question on the combat was quite different. "The *trelldiar*. The one you took from my client. Where is it?"

"I gave it to my attorney, Brother Moore, for safekeeping," I answered. "It's in a safe place. There's laws about property in Death-Pride-Honor duels. And if the court rules I should give it back, I'll happily return it." I didn't emphasize that, during the return, that *trelldiar* would be in a sealed container, and I'd be holding one of Triskittenion House's *trelldiars*, already fully powered up, so if the recipient tried something they'd be severely outmatched.

"We have questions." That was the High Justice of the Treaty Court. He was a much older man, old enough that his hair was starting to turn gray. The only relative I have with gray hair is great-great-grandmother Tweed, and he looked older. He might have fought in the Wars that established the Commonality and Outremer.

"As you wish, Great Lord," Merritt answered.

“Mistress Triskittenion?” the High Justice began. “Referring to the events in question, are you prepared to testify that you encountered a Class IV combat golem and destroyed it?”

“No,” I answered. “I have no idea what sort of construct it was, and no idea how to tell it was a fourth class device. I did destroy it.”

“But according to records of the prior session you heard Anthony Milano state that it was a Class IV golem,” he said. “Serial number 36.”

“Yes,” I answered, “I did hear Counsel Milano say that. I have no idea if he was right.”

The High Justice nodded politely. “And why did you plaster the wreckage with dispellation castings? That might have destroyed evidence.”

“It might have reanimated,” I answered. “That might have destroyed me.” I emphasized the *me*.

The High Justice launched into a series of technical questions, all based on Abstract Combat Magic, a topic about which I know much less than I would like. At some point I dropped into asking what his questions meant. I had no plan to drag out my interrogation, but I surely did.

“No more questions for her, Merritt,” the High Justice finally said.

I was chased back to my seat. I’d gotten tangled up in the High Justice’s questions, none of which I could answer, about the construct that attacked me. The remainder of the day’s session was tedious. Harold Fourbridge refused to testify. The High Treaty Court questioned Anthony Milano at great length about the golem, and announced it would meet again in Capital. There was a debate about Harold Fourbridge’s legal status, and how he managed to get back on campus.

We reached filings for claims of werégild. Brother Moore asked for a vast amount of money from House Fourbridge, and a death sentence against Harold Fourbridge. He had told me in advance that there was a reasonable

expectation: Fourbridge would pay a fixed large sum to cancel the death sentence. Dorrance Academy and the Army would get the bulk of the cash from Fourbridge. In return for not insisting that Fourbridge be beheaded, I would get a reasonable sum from Fourbridge’s House. They would also pay to recover the *trelldiar*, money that would mostly go to Triskittenion House.

The session finally ended. The two courts left to an orchestral recessional, a tune thick with loud brass instruments and snare drums. Harold Fourbridge was led away. The audience eventually rose and departed, leaving Moore, Gramps, and our family attorneys forming a tight circle around me.

“Is that it?” I asked. “When will we hear a decision?”

“You’re done,” Moore said. “There will undoubtedly be exchanges of motions and responses, then perhaps an appeal. There might be a decision by this Summer. “They’ll get Harold off from the death sentence, but the werégild will be quite dear for them.”

“I get asked about the fight,” I said. “Am I now allowed to say?”

“Yes,” Moore answered. He turned to the family Attorneys. “Unless you gentlemen see an objection?” Heads shook.

“You may,” Gramps said, “but you should bite your tongue. You’ve gained enemies, not your fault. The less they can learn about how dangerous you are, the safer you will be.”

I did not complain when Gramps took us to Junction for dinner.

## Trial Session 3

Second Semester was edging toward an end. My latest letter from Heath and Moore simply read “Expect the final trial session soon.” Another five-day break was approaching. That

would likely be the session. Unsurprisingly, it would be right after monthly exams, so I had entire weekend to do interesting reading and other things.

Indeed, the day before exams started, I received the formal summons. Once again, we met in the Dorrance Grand Theater. This time, I was a litigant, not a witness, so I got to sit in front. Justices Merritt, Rey, and Cyn presided.

“We are assembled to hear our findings. As there were criminal charges involved, the full recording of the trial was passed to an anonymous Panel of Reviewers, selected at random from the tax rolls of the Commonality,” Merritt announced. That was one feature of the trial I did not like. The other participants were Commonality citizens or organizations; I was from Outremer. Heath had assured me that it did not matter, but I was still a bit nervous.

“First, in the matter of Harold Fourbridge,” Merritt began, “we find as a criminal matter that he attempted thrice to murder Adara, Heiress-Third of House Triskittenion. This was a criminal charge confirmed by the Reviewers. The nominal sentence is death. However, in accord with precedent, as Adara Triskittenion lives, his House was permitted to pay weregeld as a substitute for his head. The amount, fixed by law, is...” Merritt rattled off a string of numbers. The total was quite impressive, though it went to the House, not to me.

“Second, with respect to the suits against Adara Triskittenion, we find that the destruction of the Campus Martius was part of a normal academic exercise, so she may not be charged. The destruction of the Army golem was part of a normal academic exercise, so she may not be charged. Possession of the House Fourbridge Treldiar was part of a Death-Pride Honor duel, which Adara Triskittenion won, so the artifact is hers. However, as there is dispute as to whether Harold’s Fourbridge’s possession of the *treldiar* was lawful, House Fourbridge has offered weregeld for its return, amounts fixed by law, including payments to House Triskittenion and to Adara Triskittenion personally, in amounts...” he rattled off an extended series of numbers,

with different laws contributing to parts of the charges.

“Third, with respect to Army claims against House Fourbridge for the destruction of the Golem, we find that the golem was an illegal construct, and therefore its value is zero. The Army may recover as its loss one iron penny.”

“Finally, as a resolution of the Death-Pride Honor duel, we find that Harold Fourbridge is legally dead whenever he is in Dorrance Academy or its contiguous spaces. He is exiled from here, and may not return, on pain of death. The two parties must agree that this ends their Death-Pride Honor Duel, Adara Triskittenion being the winner and Harold Fourbridge the loser. Harold Fourbridge, Heir-First of House Fourbridge, do you agree with this resolution?”

“I do, on my honor as Heir-First,” he said.

Adara Triskittenion, Heiress-Third of House Triskittenion, do you agree with this resolution?” Merritt asked.

“I do, on my honor as Heiress-Third,” I answered. Merritt had not emphasized that continuing the duel, after the resolution, had a single penalty, namely death by hrordrin. I was entirely happy that it was over. I was even more happy with the amount of money my House and I had just received. Even for a Commonality House as wealthy as House Fourbridge supposedly was, that must have represented a major financial loss.