

The Stf Amateur 20



NOVEMBER 10, 1986

18/20

Heath Zow

***The Stf Amateur* 20**
May 2025

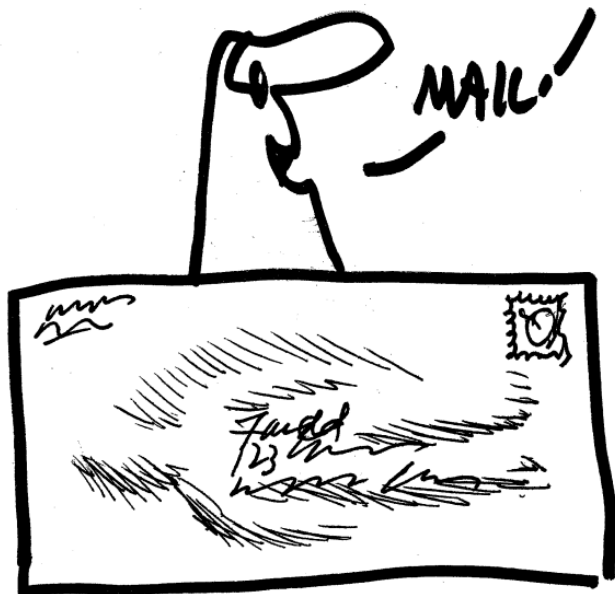
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If I publish my own artwork on the cover, especially juvenalia, that means I need to work harder drumming up cover art submissions. If you'd like to contribute a cover, let me know!

The Stf Amateur is a bundlezine published by Blasted Heath Row from an Undisclosed Location, kalel@well.com, 718-755-9840 mobile, 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for members of the United Fanzine Organization and select others, and is available via *eFanzines* (<https://efanzines.com>) and the Fanac Fan History Project (<https://fanac.org>)—as well as for the Usual. Letters of comment, cover art, and spot illustrations are welcome and desired—as are other contributions. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

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—William Rotsler

John Thiel

Long letters from Cy Chauvin and Bob Jennings. I almost thought Lloyd Penney wouldn't be in it. Noting that George Phillies is an AHF, I could have been right. But there's some fine, good letters in this one. What, you and Cy both seem to agree that the issue's a fix-up, whence the bundlezine? I think most readers will agree with your putting in the fix.

[I'm still thinking about whether *The Stf Amateur* is a fix-up fanzine. It's definitely a partwork, but I'm not sure it's a fix-up in the sense that some novels are. Besides, calling it a bundlezine parallels the mailed bundle nature of some still-active apae.—HR]

I don't hunt for what I want; I wait for it on a silver platter, and if it doesn't come it doesn't matter. I haven't played my recording of Franz Schubert's Unfinished Symphony for eight years, but I've been hearing it in my mind most every day lately, so either it is wanting to be played or its similarity to present conditions is bringing it forth. I hum along with it.

I was looking through my back issues for reprints for the annish that's just come up and found reprint drawings by David Moyer and wondered if the Glenn Moyer mentioned by Cy is related to him.

I'd say to Bob Jennings that the personalities of artists and writers are being much discussed these days, but all should be informed that creations often transcend people's art or stories because they are thought out but their lives aren't.

Oh, I see Lloyd doesn't always loc you. I could

have been right. I'll say to Lloyd that I missed all three Hobbit movies, but if they were available on the computer, I would have watched the first one.

[You're right; that was Lloyd's first loc to *The Stf Amateur*. He told me he'd write Real Soon Now when we saw each other at Loscon late last year, and he did! I appreciated the contribution. This lettercol is one of my favorite parts of the *Amateur*.—HR]

This is a loc; hope you'll use it, and it would be longer like those two gents, but I've got to get some other work done.

[Thank you for writing!—HR]

Cy Chauvin

You know, I wonder about using "Blasted" as a nickname—don't you think it's a little past tense? "Blast" would be so much more with it! It would sound even more like something out of the old pulps—"Blast Cartwright, Space Ranger, was on his usual patrol in the Asteroid Belt when he discovered a strange object—what was it? An Enchanted Duplicator?"

[You might be right! Or, "Blasting Heath," to communicate the forceful, propellant nature of my fanwriting. We are currently in the midst of actual blasting, right here, right now! Blast! Blast again! As I said last ish, the appellation is an homage to H.P. Lovecraft, who occasionally used the phrase "blasted heath." I still like it, so I'll keep it a while longer.—HR]

I don't like being on panels either, and gave it up years ago. We might be quick on the keyboard (in terms of writing articles and apazines), but being quick with your mouth when it comes to panels is something else again. I think the last time I was drafted to be on a panel, it was about Robert A. Heinlein, and whenever it came to me, I had nothing to say. I realized I hadn't read any Heinlein in years.

[Why did you agree to be on the panel, then?—HR]

But as Swedish fan Ahrvid Engholm has remarked, panels have become dull and tend to cover the same ground gone over many times before. He suggested prepared one-person talks, and, yes, I've found that as an audience member, I get more out of those. You know, perhaps a prepared talk might be something I'd consider for a con—after all, you could write those ahead of time!

[I think that's a fine idea, similar to the poster talks at academic and scientific conferences and meetings. I'd support such endeavors, and they might make for more structured, informative—informed, even—con programming! I think panels emerged primarily as a way to involve as many people in the program as possible.—HR]

Perhaps I should make clear re: my remarks on Neil Gaiman's short story "How to Pick Up Girls at Parties" that the girls in the story are aliens, on a tourist jaunt to earth.

[Spoilers, sir. Spoilers!—HR]

The L.A. Zine Fest sounds fantastic; were most zines being sold? Were most electronic, or paper? Did the zines you picked up focus on any particular subject? Was there any "angle" to the event—i.e., what outcome did the organizers hope to achieve? It certainly gives a positive and expansive view of fanzines that, in the minds of science fiction fandom, is contracting. How can the two be connected together, I wonder?

[I first got involved in mundane zine publishing in 1988 before getting involved in mundane amateur press associations. Some might contend that fanzines are a subset of zines, even if fanzines predate them. Most—if not all—zines at the Zine Fest were sold. All were paper. I was mostly looking for sf-adjacent materials so I could write about them in my apazines. Since *The Connection* ceased publication, I don't yet have an outlet for my non-fannish writing.

The Web site for the event indicates that the festival is a celebration of the do-it-yourself ethos and the "many facets of independent publishing." I'd contend that they met that goal; most forms of self- and small press publishing were represented.—HR]

I started writing fiction again, too! During the pandemic, I became really bored at times, and I found a box of my old typewritten and handwritten manuscripts. There were three in particular that seemed really good, so I started rewriting and typing them into the computer. I also started writing completely new stories, although some of those were based on ideas I had written down in notebooks years ago. It does seem to me that having a box or file of old writing to go to helps inspire me to write more, even now. (I actually found another file full of old stories recently.) Writing science fiction is the hardest of all; stories about the present day are much easier. The most fun yet is writing funny stories about other fans, friends, or family members. Doesn't completing a

story give you a lot of satisfaction? Sort of a self-derived egoboo, perhaps because you have actually accomplished something.

[I think that's a large part of why we do stuff like this: The kick felt when we put something out into the world for others to check out. (I'm about to feel that now myself. The lettercol is what I prepare last when preparing an ish.) I encourage you to send me some of your short fiction and faan fiction, in addition to your nonfiction!—HR]

(My favorite part of your story "The Search for Clown" was Xavier kissing the artist. I enjoyed your background about the story; it became more than a story, but part of your personal history. "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Beef" is funny! It made me think of James Tiptree Jr.'s "The Man Doors Said Hello To," which is funny, too—and about tiny women living in coat pockets.)

[I've been enjoying publishing my juvenalia, which Bob Jennings also remarks on below. Part of my motivation for publishing the material—even if it's not that good—is wanting to document the writing somehow before I dispose of it, recycling the paper on which it was written. I might scan the pages to capture my handwriting and other associated information. But it's been fun trying to identify what I might have been reading, watching, or otherwise experiencing that informed or inspired various references, names, and other elements.—HR]

I am very surprised that the post office delivered mail to you from thirteen years ago. If this was at a former address, I wonder if the resident at that address actually found it somewhere and put it into the mail again. I remember reading about someone who got an issue or two of *The Saturday Evening Post* from the 1940s in the mail, and there was a cry about the post office's inefficiency, but actually, someone had taken some old issues found in the attic and slipped them into a mailbox.

[I generally believe that the post office is one of our country's greatest miracles. (Public libraries, schools, and parks are also on that list.) That mail could still be delivered 13 years later bolsters that perspective rather than weakens it, in my opinion. It's amazing that such an old piece of mail finally reached me.—HR]

I've heard that chicory is a good coffee substitute—or, at the very least, a good coffee additive. A friend prefers coffee with chicory.

Palindromes are an admirable literary curiosity.

Your map of GDP concentration is not as distressing as you believe, since those orange areas are also the areas where the U.S. population is concentrated.

[You know, you're probably right!—HR]

There is no time travel involved in Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future*, so in that aspect, at least, there is no parallel with *The Time Machine*. I can't guess what Leigh Edmonds saw between the two books—I'm sure something worthwhile—but from my own viewpoint, comparing it with *A Torrent of Faces* by James Blish and Norman L. Knight is much more interesting. Perhaps it is the politics behind the "Ministry" that Leigh thought worth comparing. Ministry has a worthy cause, but novels should not be pulpits, and it is a bloated carcass of a novel.

[It's also possible that I inaccurately portrayed what Edmonds wrote. If that's the case, I apologize.—HR]

Bob Jennings

Thanks for sending along the latest *The Stf Amateur*. A few widely random comments come to mind.

You were rightly impressed by the annual zinester sell-a-thon you attended at the L.A. Zine Fest. I myself am still crogged that mundane fanzines have exploded in this new century. One would think that with the easy and cheap availability of Web space for blogs, personal Web sites, and podcasts, that the printed fanzine would have withered away, done in by murderous postal rates and the ever-increasing cost of paper/ink/mailling envelopes, along with all the other things that go with producing and distributing a print fanzine.

[I think we've seen both: An initial shift toward online publishing—I did the same thing, stepping away from print zines to focus on blogging in its early days—and a later return to zines as physical items. I was pleased to see that much of what was on display at the fest wasn't necessarily precious Etsy-style craft item publications, in which form is more important than function (or content), though that was also present.—HR]

But no, the whole zine scene has exploded with thousands upon thousands of the things being turned out all across the country, and almost none of them connect in any way with stf literature, fantasy movies, comics, role-playing or strategy war gaming, or any of the other things traditional science fiction fandom concerns itself with.

I find it astonishing, especially because in stf fandom, fanzines are ebbing away and are now primarily distributed in pixel format over the Internet. I finally gave up printing hard copies of *Fadeaway* this year, and I don't see myself going back to the print medium ever again.

[I'm on the fence. While my output is largely digital, I do print a small run for the United Fanzine Organization. As we plan to move, that's increasingly become a hassle, and I'm now several issues behind. (My apologies to the UFO!) While I prefer hard copies to soft copies as a reading experience, I don't need to acquire anything more—or work the logistics of donating the print materials to a worthy archive. That's mostly true for new publications. Older items I'll still acquire, mostly to find them a safe home for preservation.—HR]

The other thing that amazes me about the mainstream zinester phenom is that while most of them are available for trades, and often for legitimate locs, a considerable number of them sell for cash money, and a lot of the people producing them are getting paid for their copies. The turnout at your LA bash saw most of those displaying actually selling copies, not giving them away, something that continues to amaze long-time stf fans like myself.

It's a whole different world. I have sampled a small grouping of the mundane zines, and while about half were standard perzines—people talking about events in their daily lives—there was a good percentage that talked about specific topics, including regional history, archaeology, music, philosophy, economics, and pre-industrial age manufacturing, just to name a few that I recall. The people turning the things out seemed confident, intelligent, and well mannered, which is also a modest surprise considering the behavior of some science fiction fans over the decades.

I'm curious, did anyone respond to the thumb drives and the free APA-L printed zines you handed out at the gathering?

[I tend to get less response to hard copies of APA-L unless someone is already well versed in apae or sf fandom. Regardless, people appreciated the as gifts, which resonates with your remarks on the fanzine gift economy. In response to the thumb drives of my fanzines, I've received two emails in response from friends and acquaintances. For the most part, they're impressed by the number of options, pleased that people are still publishing such things, indicate that they're interested in the subject matter—ut don't necessarily indicate that they've read anything.

I think that's the biggest risk of PDF fanzines. Digital files are easy to not see, access, or read. Hard copies are *there*. You can hold them in your hands.—HR]

I was less impressed this time round with your short fiction. I wonder why you bothered to save so much of the fiction you wrote while in grade school.

[Mostly, I think my parents saved it, and I just socked it away as I moved from city to city in my adulthood. It is only now, in my 50s, that I find such excitement rediscovering that material, rereading it, and using it to piece together part of my personal history. As I mentioned above in response to Cy, I think that's why I've been publishing it—to document it before disposing of the hard copies, and to share my exploration of how it might contribute to who I am now.

I certainly don't expect that anything I wrote at 11 years old is very good. I'm also not at all embarrassed by it. I was a child. That said, a fellow participant in APA-L recently shared one of the stories with her grandson. If what I wrote as an 11 year old inspires another to write 40 years later, it was worth publishing.—HR]

Frankly, a lot of material I wrote in my youth, and on into my teens was so dreadful that I have been delighted to obliterate it whenever I come across it again (which is not often, because I've been trying to prune back my house full of stuff for most of this new century now, with mixed results).

You are the second person I've read who has done a long review of *How to Find Zodiac*. Guy Lillian did a long commentary about the book a year or so back. It is distressing to discover that a long-time actifan in our hobby might have been a murderer, an uncaught killer at that, but some time ago, I concluded that sf fandom contains some bad guys as well as the main flow of friendly, easy-going folk.

[Oh, for sure! We're just people. Not Slans.—HR]

We also seem to have more extremists from both ends of the political spectrum, along with a fair number of loud-mouthed blowhards and egomaniacs. We also seem to have had some actual criminals who got sent to jail for assorted crimes, altho the case of Walter Breen and the recent accusations against Neil Gaiman certainly stand out. I recall in the early- and mid-1960s, there were a number of otherwise pleasant and intelligent fans who turned out to be raging racists as well. Still, the idea that one of our own could be a deliberate serial killer is very disturbing.

[I'm intrigued lately by the idea that subcultures and similar attempts to self-organize alternative social systems might somehow create safe havens for narcissists and other people with borderline personalities. Groups that tend to be more inclusive or forgiving of personality and behavioral variety might occasionally welcome people that might be unwelcome elsewhere. That can be a boon and a bane, perhaps. My thoughts about that aren't yet fully formed, but it's an interesting area for inquiry.—HR]

The modern computer has indeed been a great benefit to fanzine writers and loccers, as well as for apa mailing comments. In past days, everything I wrote went directly onto stencil and there was no editing. My typos and misspellings were legendary. I usually (but not always) tried to think out what I wanted to say before writing it down, and mostly the words came out OK, but sometimes they didn't. I could never understand people who typed up their locs or mailing comments, and then retyped them in final format onto stencil or ditto master for the actual printing. It always seemed like a lot of extra, unnecessary work to me. I think that was probably the common situation with most of us old fans. It was read it, write about it, mail it out, and move on to the next piece of fanac. Who had the time for first and second drafts, let alone final edits? Not me, for sure.

[Me neither. Immediate writing, this.—HR]

While I was generally happy to send out free samples and swap my zines for other fanzines, I drew the line at apazines that had contained nothing but mailing comments and no other reference points.

[I try to produce apazines that will be of interest to non-participants as well as participants. Your mileage might vary!—HR]

I also didn't bother to trade with the people who produced poetry zines. I am not a fan of poetry. I don't get it, don't understand it, have no interest in it, and I never have. I also drew the line at religious-themed zines, and those publications that seemed more interested in screaming at people about politics than anything else. Not things I happen to be interested in. I was not going to bother reading that stuff, and if I send my stuff along to those people, they might send more of their unwanted publications back to me. No thanks.

[When I published my mundane zine review zine, *Karma Lapel*, my goal was to document everything I received in the mail. I read some brilliant writing. I

read some crap. At the time, I wanted to record that all of it had existed because it was so ephemeral and below the radar. Given that it was just me, I could not.

Now, because I focus on sf fandom, it's a smaller set. There's no way I can read, see, or experience everything, but I am interested in getting a sense of what most things are like so I can better focus my attention on what I really enjoy. I also want to experience the history of our literature so I understand the context in which what I like exists.—HR]

Lucky you. You have local handymen and contractors willing and anxious to do work on your house. I wish I could say the same in my location.

[I do have to say that our recent experiences have been aided by our realtor's recommendations of tradespeople. Our experiences when choosing such professionals ourselves in the past has varied.—HR]

Here, the contractors are swamped with jobs, charge really big bucks for anything, and take their own sweet time getting around to you. Even when they agree to do the work, a significant number of times they don't ever bother to show up at all.

A typical recent example: Back in early March, we had our usual awful March weather, including extreme winds to go along with the snow and freezing rain. I went to the warehouse, pulled my one book order of the day, filed some magazines, rearranged some stacks, cleared out some trash, and headed home.

[You have a warehouse? Shivers.—HR]

Not only was it very cold, it was extremely windy. I got home, moved back the trash containers that had been turned over and blown down the driveway by the high winds, and went inside to do some work on an article I was writing, hoping to also write an loc or even two to some zines I had recently received.

A few hours later, there was a tremendous crash from the front of the house. I ran to the front and looked out, thinking maybe there had been a car accident. No, it turned out that the high winds had ripped open my front door's storm door and slammed it against the iron railing on the left side of the concrete steps, hard enuf that the entire window pane section of the door was ripped loose and had landed on the frozen lawn.

Luckily, the panes are made of plastic, not glass, but this was a horrible situation. Without that storm door, the March winds cut right thru the front door with ease, and the temps inside the living room dropped noticeably.

Clearly, something had to be done. It was too late

to call anybody to get a new storm door installed (and because it was Friday in March, how many of those places were even going to open after the noon hour anyway?), so I got bundled up again and went out to see what could be done.

The entire glass section of a storm door is really heavy! I managed to manhandle it up the steps and to get the thing mostly settled into the grooves. Part of the inside frame had been bent and twisted by the accident, but I was able to get it all in anyway. Then I tried to tape it into place temporarily with Gorilla Tape, which is supposed to be super strong. Hahahaha. Right. Remind me to never believe any company's hype about how effective their products are supposed to be.

Still, it held, mostly because I got it sort of wedged into the remains of the grooves.

The next day, Saturday, I started checking possibilities for people to replace the storm door. Monday, I started making calls and discovered that getting anybody to actually do any kind of work at your home is (a) really expensive and (b) nobody really wants to do the damn work. There are excuses, there are delays, there are problems. Finally, I arranged a purchase and install thru the local Home Depot, indicating that I would really appreciate speed because this was a serious problem.

Hahahaha, again. Those considerations meant nothing. These folks have infinite power, and individuals such as myself who are not handy with their hands or lack knowledge of how to make necessary repairs on our own are at their mercy. I had to fill out an online form. Then I got an email back, telling me to call. I explained about my severe hearing/comprehension problems, got another email saying they understood, and to place a call.

Finally, I did call. It took several calls, but eventually I explained the problem, namely, that I needed another replacement storm door as soon as possible, and the sales rep started the process, making note of my serious hearing problem on the form. He also took my credit card info, explaining that a trained installer would come by and expertly measure for the door. I tried to tell the guy that I already knew the measurements, but no, that was a necessary part of their service, which would cost me an additional \$40. Right. Sure.

Five days passed. Thankfully, the temperature warmed up during the interim. A Home Depot rep emailed to ask if the measurement guy could come around the next day. I was happy. The measurement guy came the next day, confirmed the measurements that I had already made and said he would report his info at the end of the day—and that the Home Depot

lady rep would get back to me.

Six more days passed. The lady rep, a “blue apron specialist,” emailed me, wanting to help me with the style and cost of the storm door. I had already done the homework. It turns out that there were three replacement storm doors in the style of the busted one, but, guess what, all three were exactly the same, with exactly the same price, but all with three different catalog numbers. I passed along the info and got a telephone call back just to confirm what I had already sent out by email.

Five more days passed. Then I got an email confirming the details, again, and saying they were setting up the purchase and appointment. Three more days passed. Then I got a demand for payment, in advance. The installer will call me. I tried to send an email back reminding them of my serious hearing problem, but no reply came back.

Five more days passed. I emailed my concerns. No reply. Three days after that, I called and asked what was going on. There were apologies, but I was assured that the installer would get right back to me. Six days later, after yet another call of complaint, the guy finally called. He will be around tomorrow morning to install the storm door.

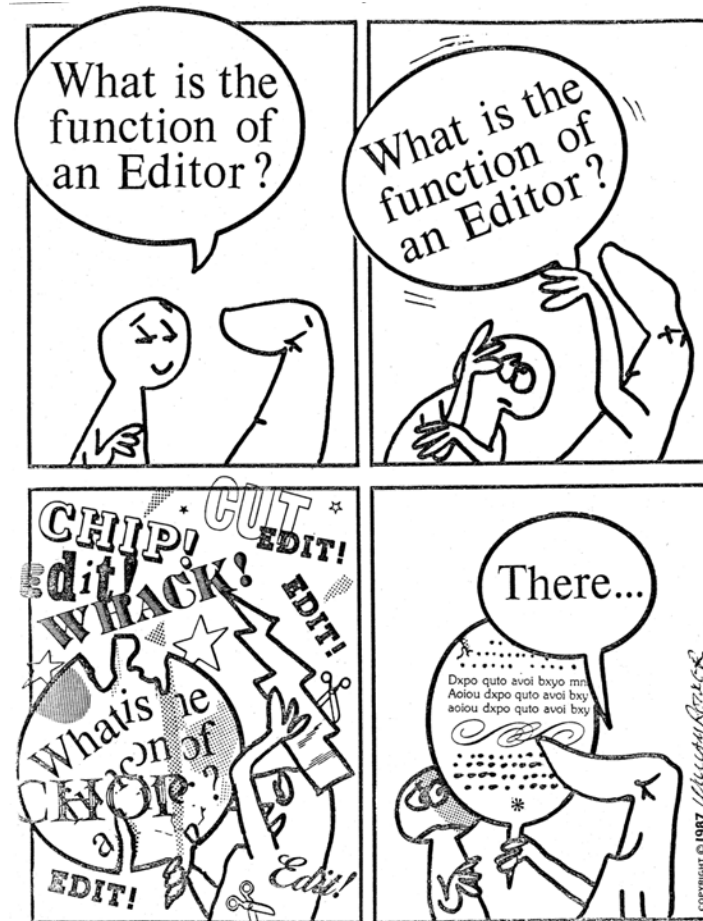
Total time elapsed, seven weeks and three days. That is not a unique situation around here, either. I have other things that need to be done around the house, but I might not live long enuf to get them fixed.

On that note of frustration, I will close out.

[Oof. What a grueling ordeal. May you live long enough, and prosper.—HR]

We also heard from: Mike Glyer, Perry Middlemiss, and R-Laurraine Tutihasi.

Call for Submissions



—William Rotsler

Do you write or draw? As *The Stf Amateur* continues to evolve from an interconnected assortment of standalone apazines to its current bundlezine format, it's only natural that it eventually becomes a proper genzine. Effective immediately, *The Stf Amateur* is open to submissions of all kinds.

The Stf Amateur is hereby requesting the following:

- sf, fantasy, and horror news
- fanart, illos, and fillos
- cover art
- poetry
- filk songs and lyrics
- short fiction
- articles and essays
- fanzine, book, movie, television, and other reviews
- con reports
- jokes
- letters of comment
- ... and other material

If selected for publication, material will initially be included in one of my apazines, as well as a monthly issue of *The Stf Amateur*. Cover art will be considered solely for *The Stf Amateur*. Contributors will receive the issue in which their material appears.

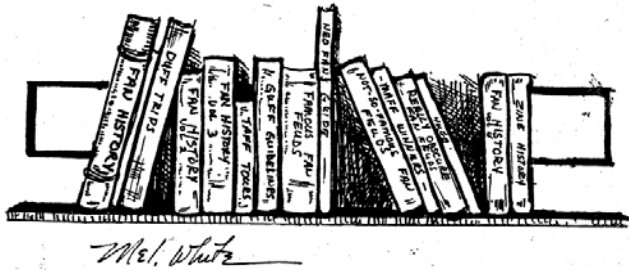
Send your contributions to Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; or via fax to 323-916-0367.

April 3, 2025

Last Week's Senryu

It's true! Otherwise, no comment.

In response to John Hertz's comments on the cover for APA-L #3107, cover artist Jose Sanchez replied via email in early March, "Ouch! ... He has a point. The robot's feet look a tad 'goofy.' That always beat me up, but I thought nobody would notice it. Aargh!"



***Dream Diary* #3 (Winter 2025)**

Topics that arose in Johnson's dreams include motorcycle gangs, a shootout at a hospital, a "cave locomotive," an indignant men's club, an obelisk, cat poop, apartment life, tattoos, office work, a living doll, nuclear disaster, and record albums. The dreams occurred between 2004 and 2021.

his creative use of panels is consistently impressive. The narrative text is deadpan and personal, and the creator considers a handful of “guest stars” in a page-long text piece before the review column, which draws on United Fanzine Organization (<https://unitedfanzineorganization.weebly.com>) member commentary in *Tetragrammaton Fragments*, the UFO newsletter.

Available for \$8 from Larry Johnson, LEJ Comics,
31 Greenbrook Road, Hyde Park, MA 02136; LewBrown1@verizon.net; <https://sites.google.com/view/larryjohnsoncomics/home>.

This 32-page black-and-white comic written and drawn by John Yeo Jr. takes place “somewhere in Ireland,” offering a fantastic origin story of the titular character. A mysterious figure, a wizard, pays several diminutive goblins for services rendered before checking on the status of an arrangement made with the Scarlet Gaze.

Dunnigan seems to be a drug-using motorcycle gang hanger-on, “totally gassed up on China white,” who wants to go home. Instead, her supposed boyfriend dumps her in the woods, risking an overdose. A voice in her head, “Declan,” offers to help her as she’s buried alive in an unmarked grave.

Waking to encounter a horned female demon “trapped here for 200 years,” Dunnigan’s life is extended, and she comes to on the couch of Declan, the paladin of the Winter family. He intends her to be his successor. While Yeo is a capable artist, the comic is relatively verbose, and the small typeface occasionally challenging to read.

Regardless, Dunnigan seems poised to become embroiled in the politics of warring families of wizards, and there are also gnomes involved. The scenes in which the reborn paladin rises from the grave to dispatch the motorcyclists, destroying an automobile with a gesture, are effectively action oriented, but overall, it's a slow, text-heavy read.

Almost a cross between Tim Vigil's *Faust* and Steve S. Crompton's *Demi the Demoness*, this is an example of good girl art gone bad. The issue ends with a thank-you list pinup and a two-page text piece, "The Long Road Here....," which details the series' history dating back to 1992. Reportedly, there's also a

family-friendly version of the issue available, but I'm not sure how this could possibly be sanitized thusly.

Available for \$5 from Screaming Monkey Comics, <https://www.screamingmonkeycomics.com/john-s-books>, screamerboy23@hotmail.com.

***Strange Times* #1-6 (2022-2024)**

This is Tom Fellrath's anthology or try-out comics project—similar in some ways to Robin Snyder's *Revolver*—and I've been letting the issues pile up since initially joining the UFO. Let's see what's inside before too many more issues are published, shall we?

The first issue is a 16-page black-and-white tale written by Fellrath, and illustrated and lettered by Alan Groening, who also provided the covers and pinups. From the cover alone, a stark image of a person in a gas mask, the reader can expect a post-apocalyptic or weird tale. After a page-long editorial explaining the intent of the book (it is indeed an anthology comic) and a monstrous detail pinup, the main story, "Run for Your Life," begins.



—Nola Frame-Gray

Definitely science fictional, the story concentrates on an astronaut "carrying a load of calcium crystals through the Vega system." Attacked by another ship with ill intent, he is pursued by strange creatures, doing his best to hide from them in the ship, always on the move, hiding food and water when he can find it. Procuring a weapon, he finally fights back but is unable to defeat them.

At the end of the nine-page piece, it becomes clear that his environment might have changed—and that the rules of engagement definitely have. It's a fun piece, and Groening's artwork, though somewhat rough, works well. The issue also includes "Real Headlines from Our Strange Times," shades of *Weekly*

World News or Chuck Shepherd's *News of the Weird*. It's a solid debut, intriguing enough to warrant a second look!

The second issue offers a change in format, a 48-page, full-color issue organized under the umbrella theme of "Who Are You?" This features the work of multiple contributors, several of them UFO members. Larned Justin contributes the cover, several portrait pencil sketches, and two two-page pieces written by Fellrath. The first comics story, "Two Men," also lettered by the editor, takes place in the Southwest in 1878, a first contact story about a settler and a Native American. What could have been the traditional Wild West narrative provides a surprising example of empathy. The second, "Ventura Highway," adapts the song by the musical group America. Mostly focusing on the lyrical content of the song, it's an interesting, cyclical depiction of vehicular freedom.

Joseph Morris contributes a one-page strip depicting the artist in the woods, with his partner, at work, drawing, eating a taco, and with his children. It's a pleasant, humorous look at one's workaday life. Guido Vision's two pages of pen illustrations offer delightfully scribbly, organic cloud formations with facial features. I'd welcome seeing more of his work.

In the three-page "I Never Wanted to Be a Man," Iestyn remembers a zine he produced in the late 1990s, exploring and challenging the traditional perceptions of masculinity. He considers employment, anger, and control before drawing on Michael Moorcock's multiverse and discussing the physicality of women and potential afforded by hermaphroditism. It's a thought-provoking piece.

Cutch Tuttle's "Dream Journals" provides three full-color pages of just that, drawing on dream journals the artist has kept since high school. Discussing the rich fodder provided by such journals, the panels depict scenes from dreams, including demons, as well as two entries from 2019-2020. A dying squirrel is devoured by three devils, becoming a ghost. And on an episode of *Swamp People*, an alligator hunter plies his trade. Tuttle's artwork is well detailed if darkly colored, and his depiction of the devils is wonderful.

In "Stray Toasters," Andrew Rosenbarger reinterprets pop culture incorporating... toasters. Over the course of six pages, an artist's statement of sorts is accompanied by multiple examples of his work. Inspirations include Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*, Godzilla, *Star Wars*, Wolverine, Batman, and other sources. Verl Holt Bond contributes the one-page, black-and-white "Me & My Stereo Types," which might not focus on what you expect.

Michael Waggoner considers the dichotomies of

identity in two painted pages. And Keith Newsome wraps up the issue with several prose poems inspired by his adult son's experiences with a brain tumor. Each piece is paired with a painting, or digital artwork, and the end result is quite emotional.

Strange Times #3 is a 60-page collection subtitled "Worlds of Walking Man," featuring the art of Matt Levin. Active in minicomics circles, Levin's work utilizes rubber stamps as illustration tools, offering an almost clip-art approach to page layout and panel design. After a piece discussing his creative approach, the issue reprints *Walking Man Comics Presents Special* #31 (May 2000), *Musicomics* #7 (November 2005), *Special* #56 (March 2005), *Musicomics* #4 (October 2000), *Musicomics* #13 (January 2003), *Musicomics* #35 (August 2003), and other issues, one dating back to 1996.

The multicolor approach to inking and the wide range of stamps available to Levin make for an interesting opportunity for storytelling. The end result is extremely natural and lyrical, as though Arn Saba dabbled in mail art instead of musical funny animal comics. The issue also includes other full-page features, longer-form stories, and headers from the *Facebook*. This is an issue to return to, to peruse and devour over time, and to meditate on. Truly impressive.

The fourth issue, then, is a 60-page edition subtitled "The Road Back," again returning to multiple contributors. Contributors include several included in previous issues, as well as Teri Sue Wood, whose piece remembers a friend—and a shared love of fireworks. Of the work included, I particularly enjoyed that of Levin, Morris, and Chuck Bunker. Several of the pieces incorporate elements of the fantastic, balancing the general approach to personal narrative. Also of interest was the combination of text and image, making *Strange Times* as much a zine as an anthology comic.

The next issue, #5, helps leaven the seriousness of the previous issue, focusing on the theme, "Here's My Best Joke..." The issue features minicomic stalwarts with more recent creators over the course of its 56 pages. Creators include Jim Mackey and Matt Feazell, Tony Lawrence, Jason DeGroot and Larned Justin, Nik Dirga, Teri Sue Wood, Larry Johnson and Larry Blake (a 1974 reprint), Molly Durst, Joe Ely Carrales III, Matt Levin, Keith Rogers, Alan Groening, Dale Martin, Tony Lorenz, Chuck Bunker, Iestyn, Tom Fellrath and John Muller, Simon Mackie, and Larned Justin alone.

This is another issue to return to and linger on, and I'm inspired by the wide range of artistic styles brought to bear to tell jokes. A wonderful—and

welcome—follow-up to #4, which was more serious in tone and content.

Finally, *Strange Times* #6, concentrating on the life and work of Keith Newsome, "Renaissance man." Another doozy of an ish, this 70-page edition combines words and images to explore Newsome's roles and work as father, makeup artist, cartoonist, and musician. An autobiographical sketch incorporating family photos addresses the creator's life, including his son's health scare and lengthy recovery.

Newsome's musical experience and guitar collection is detailed before the issue turns to his work in horror makeup, face painting, and bodypainting. Then the reader gets to his other art, including comics. A delightfully old and yellowed example of Newsome's early work is included, as is much superhero and fantastic fare—original characters and fanart alike. This is an impressive survey and summary of one creator's work. In a way, it offers a middle way between the title's single- and multi-creator issues because Newsome's active in multiple media.

Inquire via Tom Fellrath, Phoenix Productions, 8031 Griswold Drive, New Albany, OH 43054; <https://phoenixprods.wordpress.com/library/strange-times>.



—William Rotsler

Screened at the Globe: Movie Reviews

Devil of the Desert Against the Son of Hercules

Originally released as *Anthar the Invincible* in Italy in 1964, the movie was retitled for inclusion in Avco Embassy's syndicated television series *The Sons of Hercules*. That series featured edited versions of 14 peplum or sword-and-sandal flicks. On its own, there's little of the fantastic in the movie, though it is genre adjacent. As part of the series, however, if Anthar is a son of Hercules, we get a little closer.

The movie tells the tale of the evil Ganor seizing control of a kingdom after assassinating the sultan. With the prince imprisoned and the escaped princess sold into slavery—later rescued by Anthar—the usurper is able to prevent revolt among the sultan's former subjects.

NOW PLAYING HILARIOUS MIXTURE OF MISSILES AND MIRTH...IN THEIR FIRST FULL-LENGTH FEATURE!

THE THREE STOOGES

HAVE ROCKET, WILL TRAVEL

with JERRY COOPER • BOB LOE • BOB COLBERT
Written by HARVEY KURTZ • Produced by HARVEY KURTZ
Directed by ARTHUR LLOYD • Color • A Columbia Picture

AND...all except CORNELL

Out of that song — a fury of a movie!

THE LEGEND OF TOM DOOLEY

Starring MICHAEL LUNDON • BOB HOBBIN • JACK HOGAN • JEN LITVAK
Written and Produced by STAR DIRECTOR • Directed by TED POST
Near The Schlegel 10-0 song • A SUPERVIEW PRODUCTION • A COLUMBIA PICTURE

DOWNTOWN GLOBE MA 4-6272	Western-imp. RIO PL 4-2898	BURBANK CORNELL TH 2-5261	GARDENA PARK DA 4-4040	STARTS SEPT. 2
LA PUENTE STAR ED 6-2468	EAST L.A. CENTER AN 9-8332	GULVER CITY MERALTA VE 6-3432	VAN HUIS SEPULVEDA DRIVELAN ST 6-6520	
"Have Rocket Will Travel" and "The Legend of Tom Dooley"				PARADISE UNITED ARTISTS RY 1-6577
SOUTH GATE VOGUE LO 6-6000	DOWNEY AVENUE TO 1-5610	TUJUNGA TUNJUNGA JL 3-6953	HUNY PARK LYRIC LU 9-2677	WHITTIER ROXY OX 4-3859
		GARDENA TWIN-VUE DRIVE-IN DA 4-5127	ALHAMBRA CORONET AT 2-8475	

Los Angeles Times, Aug. 28, 1959

Anthar boldly ventures into the kingdom to rescue the prince, who then leads an attack by hill tribes still loyal to the sultan. A youthful deaf-mute character is

intended to provide a comedic counterpoint to the sword-and-sandal action but serves more as a middleman when the main characters aren't with each other or able to communicate.

At the end of the movie, there's one scene of visual note. Ganor has a hall of mirrors in which he can trap enemies and tradesmen he wants to manipulate or kill. That setup is visually impressive, and the scene in which he kills one such victim, stalking his prey through the maze, is quite effective. At the end of the movie, Ganor finds himself trapped inside the hall of mirrors with Anthar, who stalks him. That might be the best part of the movie.

The Ignorable Theme: Powerful Weather

"What's the most powerful weather you've ever experienced?" When I was younger, growing up in southern Wisconsin, I remember my family needing to gather in the basement during tornado warnings. We'd go downstairs and gather under the ping-pong table. If my father had to go upstairs to close windows or otherwise prepare the home, we'd be concerned until he returned. We always took such weather events seriously, even if the town I grew up in wasn't ever hit hard by tornadoes during my childhood.

In 1984, when I was 11, the town of Barneveld, Wis.—about an hour west from where I grew up—was hit by an F5 tornado. (<https://www.weather.gov/mkx/060884-barneveld-tor>) About 90 percent of the town was destroyed. Almost 100 homes were destroyed, and more than 60 were damaged. All but one of 18 businesses and public buildings were similarly ruined. So we always faced tornadoes with dire respect.

We'd gather under the ping-pong table, listen to a portable radio for news reports, play cards or read, perhaps play with action figures, and wait out the warning. We didn't even live in Tornado Alley. Or Kansas, in the heart of that area. In early April, a tornado made its way through Salina, Kan., accompanied by a wall cloud. No serious damage or injuries were reported.

I also experienced some powerful weather while at the 1985 National Scout Jamboree. Held at Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia in late July that year, the jamboree was hit by the remnants of Hurricane Bob. Heavy rain and high winds disrupted the jamboree, knocking over hundreds of tents and 50 portable toilets. I saw at least one troop's campsite lifted into the air, and afterward, we'd find remains of encampments and gear deposited far from their original location.

My parents had come to visit me at that time. I had gone to a trading post with fellow Scouts from my troop and remember standing in line as water gathered at our ankles and shins, the rain hard, the water rising.

When my parents arrived at our troop's camp, I wasn't there. They waited for me, and seeing me approach camp after the storm had passed has become a formative family story. Though I was just 12, my mother and father have said that they knew then that I was no longer a child, but a young man. I had weathered the storm.

During a more recent family vacation with my wife and son in Wyoming's Grand Teton National Park, we saw lightning strikes in the distance. It was beautiful seeing that natural electricity from afar, safely in our car. There were multiple strikes in several areas. We watched the lightning strikes as I drove, no rain in our immediate vicinity. We might have seen the strikes cause grass fires in the distance, as well.

More than anything else, perhaps, however, I enjoy and appreciate the strength of strong wind. Just the other night it was quite windy. Safely in our home, I lay on the couch reading, listening to the blustery gusts of wind outside. As a teenager, I remember standing in our yard, listening to a cassette of the musical group Samhain on my Walkman—while gusts of wind shook and sang high overhead. I remember the feeling of that sensation to this day, the emotional darkness and power of the music, the black of night, and the uncontrollable force of the wind high above. I felt alone, inconsequential. Then I hurried inside.

Comments on APA-L #3114

In *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #100—a spectacular milestone—**Matthew Mitchell** recognized his almost two-year stint in APA-L. I'm so glad you stuck with it, good sir. Here's to the next 100 issues. As I was preparing *The Stf Amateur* for publication and distribution earlier this month, I was struck by the issue number of *T&T* in comparison to my other apazines. It might be time for me to come up with a new title and start again. We'll see if and when I decide to do so.

Your discussion of preparing disclosure declarations reminded me of preparing my own income and expense declarations, schedules of assets and debts, and other financial records for our shared custody case. I always wanted to pay my fair share and never withheld any information, but I can't say the other party did the same. A friend is currently going through a divorce, and through their disclosure process, she's learned about all sorts of accounts of which she hadn't been informed previously. At one point, we had to assert and assume that the other party was earning—or could earn—at least minimum wage.

Thank you for reprinting "Whisperings from the Shadows" from the January 1998 *Intergalactic Enquirer*. The piece reminded me of an I recently

obtained, Studio AKA's chapbook *Logos of the Early UFOlogy Scene*, which contains logos, periodical banners, and other illustrations from early UFO publications. (<https://klassewrecks.com/collections/merch-zine/products/kfax12>)



Los Angeles Times, Aug. 28, 1959

Now that so much such information is freely available online and on television—*Ancient Aliens* and the like—I've been wondering where the real such conspiratorial information is being trafficked. Surely it's not on the public, commercial Web. While at the Conscious Life Expo in February, I asked long-standing UFOlogist Paola Leopizzi Harris which newsletters serious researchers were reading these

days. She referred me to her email newsletter. So it goes, I suppose. I still think there are dusty, poorly photocopied newsletters being traded through the mail, if not homemade, comb-bound documents.

I hope your cardiology appointment went well earlier this week. When watching *Seconds* (T&T #156), I initially mistook the protagonist's handler, the woman he met on the beach, for a second. I interpreted the situation and opportunity as similar to Ray Bradbury's "Marionettes Inc.": something generally pursued by men rather than women, bolstering the stereotype of the henpecked husband needing escape and release.

John Hertz's *Vanamonde* #1637 was literally riddled with short poems by Basho, Kana-jo, Chine, Kawai Chigetsu, and others. What beautiful brevity! I will share your feedback with cover artist Damon D. Brown.

In *Reflections from a Fish Bowl* #74, **Barbara Gratz Harmon** noted Matthew Mitchell and Joe Zeff's palindromic phrases. Have you been recovering your calluses since returning to the cello? That release seems another step in the right direction. It doesn't look like I'll get to Dark Delicacies even once before the store closes at 5 p.m., April 5. Regardless, I shall mourn its passing and miss it all the same.

When replacing a dual VHS and DVD player recently, I found a good source for such equipment: Porter Electronics. (<https://porterelectronics.com>) Based in Arizona, they specialize in refurbished devices. I recently sent two boxes of reel-to-reel tapes that I inherited from Marty Cantor to Eaton at UC Riverside. They'd sat in our garage for so long after I obtained them—reaching out to you then to assess whether I could play them in your home—that I'd forgotten about them. They were all folk music recordings from the 1950s and 1960s, some with Cantor playing washboard, jaw harp, and other instruments with musicians such as Mark Spoelstra. Cantor's time as a musician predated his involvement in fandom, but I hope it's adjacent enough to filking that Eaton keeps the tapes.



Los Angeles Times, Aug. 28, 1959

April 10, 2025

Last Week's Senryu

It rained briefly last week while printing APA-L, just enough to spot the sidewalks behind our house. By the time I took the pages inside to collate and prepare for mailing, that had dried.

Administrivia: APA-L Collation

In a few days, the movers will arrive to pack up our belongings. (All of this is happening more quickly than we initially planned, but it turns out that when you take steps toward a goal, the next steps readily present themselves!) We'll dispense of whatever remains that we don't plan to take when we move, and the house will be prepared and staged for listing and eventual sale.

We'll be staying in the Los Angeles area until the end of May before moving to the Midwest to be closer to family. But I will give my printer to Barbara Gratz Harmon, who's volunteered as OC, and I won't be able to print once the movers arrive next week.

While I would be able to continue collating APA-L for PDF distribution via email no matter where I am, the time has come for us to determine our next steps as an apa. Outside of our discussion in these pages so far, Harmon emailed me in mid-March expressing willingness to step up as Official Collator.

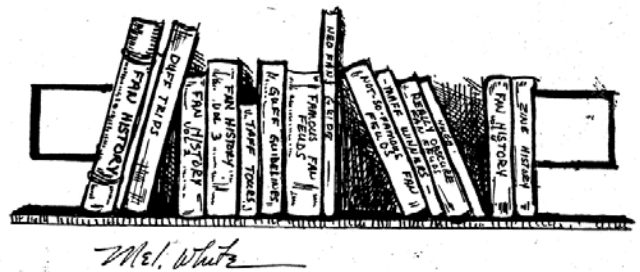
"I would be able to email out copies to those on the mailing list," she wrote. "I don't have a working color printer, although I have an excellent black-and-white laser printer. Mailing would not be a problem." (Giving her my printer resolves the color printing

If others are interested in continuing as a print apa—Harmon is still willing to serve as OC; we conferred this week—that looks like an excellent solution, and the path I'd recommend. Harmon for OC in 2025! I'd work with her through the transition, providing the materials I use to track cover submissions, printing and mailing costs, and participants' fund balances. (I'd also give her that money.) I'll also be able to provide the distribution roster and contact information for everyone.

Otherwise, consensus in our APA-L comments seems to be that another possible option would be *ellers* migrating to LASFAPA. People don't seem overly interested in trying to keep any aspect of the APA-L name were that to occur, so that transition could be easy indeed. (I also reached out to David Schlosser to check whether LASFAPA would be able to accommodate such a migration, to play all the angles. LASFAPA would welcome us, but Schlosser might not want to continue non-contributing subscriptions, so we'd have to work through that.)

I think Harmon serving as OC would be absolutely wonderful. I am delighted she has volunteered. We can always consider other options in the future, whenever that need arises.

I'll plan on emailing the April 17 distribution as a PDF to buy us some time to prepare appropriately. And so Harmon doesn't feel thrown to the wolves. Because wolves have the propensity to bite.



Saucers of the Illuminati by Jim Keith (Adventures Unlimited, 2004)

Before going to the Conscious Life Expo in early February, I started reading this 2004 reprint of Jim Keith's 1999 spiral-bound book about UFOs and their relationship with the New World Order. Inspired by our recent discussion of UFOs—primarily Matthew Mitchell's reprinted article—I finished the book late last week.

Keith was previously active as a publisher with the zines *Dharma Combat*, *Notes from the Hangar*, and other titles that focused on UFOs, radical politics, and

conspiracy theories. This book further concentrates on connections between UFOs, the occult, and a conspiratorial world government. The resulting synthesis is relatively wide ranging and loose, more intriguing than it is convincing. Regardless, multiple sources are referenced and cited, offering a number of fascinating rabbit holes and avenues a reader could pursue. Consider this a sort of conspiracy buffet.

Over the course of the 128-page book, the author suggests that a secret world government aligned with the Masons has been shaping world affairs based on knowledge gained from aliens in the Sirius star system. Contact with those distant visitors dates as far as the time of the Sumerians. Keith also explores alien elements present in ancient Egyptian civilization, as well as the Dogon and Bozo tribes of West Africa.



Los Angeles Times, Aug. 28, 1959

In addition to the connection with the Masons, he identifies parallels with the Ordo Templi Orientis and other esoteric, occult groups. One could infer that current interest in UFOs is a distraction from the possible terrestrial origin of such craft. It's more explicitly stated that the New Age movement is a pseudo-religion intended to enable social control.

Interestingly, the book features several southern California connections. Keith himself experienced a possible alien contact in Upland, and the book includes material focusing on Jack Parsons, founder of the California Institute of Technology and one-time leader of the Pasadena chapter of the OTO.

Keith devotes an entire chapter to Philip K. Dick, who wrote his Valis trilogy of books after a mystical experience in Anaheim. That section of the book also addresses subliminal mind control and the Sirius connection.

People already interested in such topics and ideas might find *Saucers of the Illuminati* an interesting assortment of loose connections. Newcomers might find it confusing and disjointed. In either case, the book is a thought-provoking stroll through multiple,

potentially related subjects: UFOs, mind control, MJ-12, Sirius, esoterism, international espionage, mass consciousness, and the creation of reality.

"Awareness is potentially a creator, and it can create freedoms and it can create limitations," Keith writes. "[Y]ou create your own reality, if you change your beliefs about what you can and can't do, can and can't experience, then you can change your reality."

And UFOs? They might be one of five things: alien encounters, spiritual or non-material entities, government military operations, hoaxes, or delusions—"fish stories."

Sometimes, fishing is a worthy pastime. Consider me, "gone fishin'."

Star Quest by Dean Koontz (Ace, 1968)

Before Dean Koontz became a best-selling author of suspense thrillers, he wrote about a dozen science fiction novels. Several of his books have even been nominated for awards such as the Locus, Hugo, British Fantasy Award, World Fantasy Award, Bram Stoker Award, Prometheus Award, and others. And Koontz's first novel, 1968's *Star Quest*, was published as an Ace Double, H-70, opposite Emil Petaja's *Doom of the Green Planet*. Koontz was 23 at the time.

I didn't read Petaja's contribution to the double because the e-book edition I read was sourced from a 2003 scan made by "BuddyDk." Used copies of the paperback generally sell online for \$35-\$95. That price point might make sense to collectors of doubles or Koontz completists. Otherwise, I'd seek more affordable options.

Featuring a wonderful painted cover by Gray Morrow that reminds me a little of Laser Books' consistent cover design—perhaps because of the placement of the face in the center, the 127-page novel was a surprisingly fun read. It's not a bad beginning for a notable author.

Since those early days, Koontz has appeared on the *New York Times* Best Seller list with 14 hardcovers and 16 paperbacks reaching No. 1. He's published more than 100 novels, selling more than 450 million copies of his work. I've yet to assess whether his pseudonyms—including David Axton, Deanna Dwyer, K.R. Dwyer, Leigh Nichols, and Brian Coffey—dealt with genre early in his career, but even his more recent works could be considered slipstream, incorporating elements of horror, fantasy, science fiction, and mystery.

As an Ace Double, *Star Quest* does exactly what it says on the tin. And then some. Two groups, the Romaghins and the Setessins, have been engaged in ongoing combat for a thousand years, disrupting the rest of their universe. A peasant on a backwater planet

has been abducted against his will, pressed into military service as a disembodied brain encased in an armored battle suit: Jumbo Ten. Because of a narcotic sedative malfunction—"a vial ... run dry before its time"—while attacking the Romaghin home world, the mind and pilot inside the Setessin technological warrior regain consciousness and self-awareness, realizing that he's not just a mindless fighting machine.

Tohm remembers the attack on his home world, his abduction, the abduction of his mate Tarnilee, and select subsequent events. So he decides to go AWOL. Decanting a new humanoid body—a convenient function of the battle suit, should it crash or become otherwise inoperative—he encounters Floating Library No. 7, on which he gets up to speed on current events beyond his homeworld before falling in with interstellar smugglers, meeting his first mutant, and putting together the pieces of where Tarnilee might have been taken, to be sold into slavery as a concubine, or worse.

The mutants, or muties, more commonly, are a third party of sorts, working against the Romaghins and the Setessins. Our protagonist, Tohm, travels to Basa II, where he expects to find Tarnilee at a slave market. The portion of the book in which Koontz details the disagreements between two political factions, the RadRi and the RadLef, might seem familiar.

On Basa II, after freeing a mutant from the smugglers, Tohm meets a group of mutants—also encountering another who's sort of a living psychedelic hallucinogen, generally feared—he becomes involved with the mutant rebellion. "[R]ebels also identified with the common people," Koontz writes. "You gain something when you lose normality..."

Jilted by Tarnilee, who's found that her new life is preferable to her former status as a backwater peasant, Tohm finds new love with a fellow, feline rebel. The discussion of family love being displaced by self-interest and, later, lust (personified by the living hallucinogens) is also thought-provoking. Also of note: the mutants' collective ability to physically displace entire cities and, eventually, almost an entire universe.

There are a lot of neat ideas in this first novel by Koontz: brains encased in battle suits, self-cloning, the floating library, diversity of mutation, and the transference of a universe through an interdimensional rent. The writing is relatively light, perfect for an Ace Double. Based on his later work such as *Whispers* and *Demon Seed*, I never would have imagined that a

23-year-old Koontz wrote such a thing. I'm glad that he did.



Los Angeles Times, Aug. 28, 1959

The Ignorable Theme: Spaceflight

"Have you ever seen a spacecraft take off or land?" I might have. And I definitely saw one on television. I don't remember the details, the when or the why, but at some point during my childhood, I acquired an astronaut action figure. I haven't been able to identify the exact toy, but it was more similar to Moon McDare than Jane Apollo, only from the 1980s: A hard white plastic figure with a potentially gold- or gray-colored helmet and breathing tubes. I also had a plastic Buddy L NASA Space Shuttle Discovery toy and a Monogram NASA Space Shuttle model kit, which I constructed. During a family vacation, my parents took my sister and me to Florida, to Disneyworld and perhaps Cape Canaveral and John F. Kennedy Space Center—where I'm most likely to have gotten such toys. While there, we might have seen some sort of launch, but if we did, those details are lost to time. I only have vague recollections of that visit. Freeze-dried ice cream was probably also involved.

I also watched the disastrous takeoff of the *Space Shuttle Challenger* on Jan. 28, 1986. I was in junior high, and one of my school's physical education teachers, Mr. Quinn, had—if I remember correctly—been a candidate to serve as the educator on that flight through the Teacher in Space Project. He was not selected, and Christa McAuliffe was.

My class had gathered in an empty classroom to watch the launch on a TV perched on top of a utility cart. I remember sitting on the floor and watching with my classmates, including the daughter of Mr. Quinn. It was very exciting to witness, especially with the connection we felt as students. When the *Challenger* exploded 73 seconds after liftoff, we were shocked—and mutedly relieved, for Bridget, that her father hadn't been selected for that flight. I don't remember what the rest of the day was like. And I never asked Bridget how her father felt afterward, though I've long wondered.

The Web site *Space Launch Schedule*, <https://www.>

spacelaunchschedule.com, offers a calendar of upcoming launches. Scheduled flights for the remainder of April include launches by SpaceX, Blue Origin, Arianespace, and others. Somehow, I find commercial spaceflight less interesting than non-commercial launches. I'd prefer Lockheed Space Operations Company or United States Air Force launches over SpaceX or Blue Origin launches, for some reason. And while manned flights are intriguing because of the human component, I'm not very interested in private, commercial spaceflight. More research, s'il vous plaît, sez me.

Is there still any focus on amateur or hobbyist spaceflight? (After all, you can scratch build a small airplane at home. Or a hovercraft.) Sure, there's model rocketry, but could someone build a spacecraft in their backyard or garage and send it into orbit? Five years ago, one subreddit posited that "[b]y the time you file for the launch operators license that lets you fly an orbital rocket, it is questionable if you could be called a 'hobbyist' still. I am also not entirely sure the FAA would be willing to issue a launch license to an individual, so you would likely have to form a company to do so."

In 2023, a team of University of Cambridge students in England hoped to become the first group of European amateurs to launch such a rocket. The Cambridge University Spaceflight Society hoped its *Griffin I* module would pass the Kármán line, the 100-kilometer boundary between Earth's atmosphere and outer space. It does not look like that launch ever occurred.

Regardless, amateur rocketry still seems to thrive. Last October, the USC Rocket Propulsion Laboratory's *Aftershock II* became the current record holder for an amateur spaceshot, or a non-commercial launch that successfully reaches or passes the Kármán line. Launched in Black Rock Desert in Nevada, the *Aftershock II* achieved a maximum velocity of 1,610 m/s and a maximum altitude of 143 km.

Luckily, experiences like that of Mike Hughes are rare. In February 2020, Hughes, aka "Mad Mike," died when his homemade rocket's parachute deployed prematurely, detaching during liftoff. The American chauffeur, flat-Earther, and daredevil who specialized in homemade steam rockets had been filming for a Science Channel TV series.

That drive and sense of adventure seems similar to those fueling hobbyists who strive for land speed records. I met at least one through Scouts. But that's another avenue for exploration entirely.

Here are some upcoming space launches:

April 10, 6:43-11:14 p.m. PT: Starlink Group

12-17, Falcon 9 Block 5, SpaceX, Kennedy Space Center, Fla.

April 12, 5:17-9:46 a.m. PT: NROL-192, Falcon 9 Block 5, SpaceX, Vandenberg Space Force Base, Calif.

April 13, 6:59-11:30 p.m. PT: Starlink Group 6-73, Falcon 9 Block 5, SpaceX, Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Fla.

April 14, 6:30 a.m. PT: NS-31, New Shepard, Blue Origin, Corn Ranch, Van Horn, Texas

April 21, 1:15 a.m. PT: Dragon CRS-2 SpX-32, Falcon 9 Block 5, SpaceX, Kennedy Space Center, Fla.

April 29, 2:15 a.m. PT: Biomass, Vega-C, Arianespace, Guiana Space Centre, French Guiana

This might be better than baseball! Maybe I should pay more attention to the National Space Society. (<https://nss.org>)

Comments on APA-L #3115

The table of contents this included two errors. Did you spot them? A good, old-fashioned Row Prize to them what did. (A Row Prize is a lot like the Marvel No-Prize, though you don't receive a pre-printed empty envelope.)

In *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #101, **Matthew Mitchell** reported on his first cardiology appointment. Good luck with your two weeks of heart monitoring next month! Your shareware reviews reminded me of two early experiences I had with our Apple computer. The first was with the company Beagle Bros., which launched in 1980 and ceased operations in 1991—except for a 30th anniversary reboot of *I. O. Silver* in 2014. The company focused on the home hobbyist market rather than commercial clients and used woodcut and 19th century artwork in its materials.



Paging through a PDF of the Winter 1980-1981 *Catalog & Tip Book*, I don't recognize any programs we had, but I was struck by the fanzine-like nature of the catalog. Yes, products are listed for sale, but there are also brief articles on Applesoft vs. Integer Basic, sample code, a funny "Don't drink and compute!" cartoon, and tips on using flash, machine code, ASCII codes, subroutines, and REM statements. There's even a contest. I eagerly awaited every item of mail we received from Beagle Bros.

I've also been fondly recalling *Softdisk* magazine, originally known as *Softdisk Magazette* and published 1981-1995. Each issue was a single 5.25" floppy diskette that had content on both sides. They were mailed in magazine-sized plastic casings along with a cover sheet. When floppy disks were more expensive, subscribers returned the previous month's disk when a subsequent issue arrived. I don't remember that, so we must have been latecomers.

The community of readers contributed most of the content for the magazine, lending a homegrown sensibility I appreciated. *Softdisk* wasn't the only disk magazine, however. For Apple alone, there were almost 10 other options. *Softdisk* was the only one I ever saw.

I will share your feedback with cover artist Joe Pearson. With the application of optical character recognition to APA-L back issues, it's a case of best as best can. I'm not going in to correct or clarify anything, just making sure anything recognizable is searchable. So there will be some gaps. It's still better than nothing.

We're still resolving the release of judgment lien. One party lived in Orange County, and the other lived in Los Angeles County, so a lien was placed in both counties—I have subsequently learned. I heard back from Orange County and have mailed the release of judgment lien, so that's in process. Our real estate agent indicates the LA County lien can be handled during the escrow process. So that's a relief. Regardless, I'd already written LA County to learn how to file and what the fee was. I was also going to call this week, but knowing we can handle it in escrow, I've not done so.

On Charlie Chaplin, in a word: Oof. When I first became a father, I lived in Massachusetts, where, if you assert paternity at all, you're responsible for child support even if you're not a parent. I was relatively careful asserting parentage until we took a paternity test. I was willing to contribute my fair share, and did more than that, but I wanted to be sure. That was such a challenging part of my life!

John Hertz's *Vanamonde* #1638 recognized Cesar Chavez Day and celebrated the life and fanac of Pat

Sims. *Mimosa* was indeed a wonderful fanzine. I was unaware of her involvement in the Orlando Area Science Fiction Society. I receive materials from that club, which remains active. Currently meeting at the Jean Rhein Central Branch Library in Casselberry, Fla., and online, in mid-April, they will discuss *The Mercy of Gods* by James S.A. Corey. In mid-May, they'll discuss *A Conventional Boy* by Charles Stross. I would welcome such shared reading in the LASFS! Thank you for sharing information about Sims's life.

In *Reflections from a Fish Bowl* #75, **Barbara Gratz Harmon**—Harmon for OC in 2025!—reported on the ways her surgery has improved her life. That is good news indeed. Thank you for participating in the Sierra Club's letter-writing campaign. My wife went to the recent Hands Off rally, but I did not because I'm overcoming a cold. She thought she'd overcome her cold, which preceded mine, but after the rally, it returned. It's looking like I'm on the way out of mine. Took a half day off work last Friday and was mush on the couch all day Saturday.



Los Angeles Times, Sept. 4, 1959

That bought me time to read some Dean Koontz (see above), and I've been enjoying Terry Brooks's *The Elfstones of Shannara*, as well as *The Shannara Chronicles* on TV. Caitlin and I agree that the program, like *The Wheel of Time* (T&T #107), could also be titled *Emo Boys Go to the Ren Faire*. Though set in a post-apocalyptic Seattle, the characters are just too good looking! I thought I'd seen some of *The Shannara Chronicles* previously, but I remembered little. I also remark on the show in T&T #107. When first watching, I think I was trying to get my son into Brooks.

And **Joe Zeff's** *Toony Loons* #793 updated ellers on Marcia Minsky's back surgery. I hope her post-op appointment last week went well and that she's on the mend. Your description of snow at 4 a.m. was lovely. Mostly because you could then just go back to bed! That it disappeared by 9:15 a.m. made me chuckle. You might not have known it had snowed had you not awoken!

Your mention of the delayed arrival of your distribution reminded me I should email people about

the “Administrivia: APA-L Collation” section above so folks don’t have to wait until they receive their mailings for that information. We’ll be in good hands with Barbara Gratz Harmon—Harmon for OC in 2025!—and I’ll do a PDF distribution, so the transition won’t be too abrupt.

I will share your feedback with cover artist Damon D. Brown. Did anyone else see the *Doctor Who* April Fool’s Day gag about the program being retitled *Dr Who* and moving to Amazon Prime Video, starring Harry Styles? (<https://www.doctorwhotv.co.uk/doctor-who-reboot-103704.htm>) As soon as I saw that in my news feed—and that it was April 1—I knew it was a joke.

In recent weeks, I have been loving my Kobo e-reader. Occasionally seeing low-cost collections (about \$30-\$50 for 20-100+ titles) of e-books in social media advertisements, I’ve been stocking up. Recent authors of interest include Dean Koontz (see above), John Grisham, Terry Pratchett, Douglas Adams, Daniel Silva, Robert Jordan (*T&T* #107), Robin Hobb (*T&T* #154), Tom Clancy, Philip K. Dick (*T&T* #112), Haruki Murakami, Jim Butcher (*Faculae & Filigree* #39), and Brandon Sanderson (*F&F* #39).

The ads are frequent, and the collection deals don’t show up on the two Web sites the ads seem to promote. The sites merely link to Amazon for single book sales. So far, I haven’t been interested in the other authors they offer, but I would welcome similar collections of Clive Cussler, James Rollins, Stephen King, Robert R. McCammon, Clive Barker, Piers Anthony, Frank Herbert, and Ian Fleming. That’s just off the top of my head and I’m not even really thinking of authors yet. Has anyone else encountered those ads?

Your comment on holding on to back distributions for COSine reminded me of another reality of moving. I’ll no longer be able to store all the back issues of APA-L and LASFAPA for redistribution at cons and otherwise. We’ve now got the full run of APA-L scanned (*T&T* #157) and David Schlosser has the full run of LASFAPA on hand to scan, so we don’t need them for our archiving any longer. The University of Iowa expressed interest in our APA-L archives, which I’ve shared with them, and I plan to help fill some gaps in their *De Profundis* collection that they’ve identified. James Van Hise doesn’t want the APA-L or LASFAPA back issues because he has Forrest J Ackerman’s.

So I’ll likely recycle what I don’t plan to take with me. That’s not too heartbreaking for more recent distributions, but those early issues are beautiful items indeed. I’ll also include this in the email this week, but if you’d like any of these, oh, so many boxes, let me

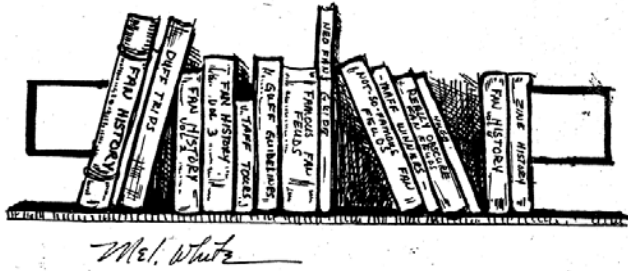
know, and you can come pick them up in the next week or so.

Los Angeles Times, Sept. 4, 1959

Faculae & Filigree #41

April 11, 2025

Faculae & Filigree is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to LASFAPA, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.



From the Reading Pile: Fanzine Reviews

Beam #18 (November 2024)

While *Beam* is available as a PDF, the unofficial, occasional journal of the Unusual Suspects also offers a small print run. I received a copy because I'd sent in a letter of comment (dated November 2022), included in this issue. Reading that missive several years later was an interesting experience in time travel. *Beam* #17 was published in October 2022. This has been a long time coming!

Edited by Nic Farey and Ulrika O'Brien, the issue opens with an editorial by Farey titled "Living in the Past." It addresses the Balkanization of the faniverse, fostered by marginalized subdivisions based on doctrine, rejection of new technology, and nostalgia. The piece sets the content for the issue to come.

O'Brien's "Bungle in the Jungle" explores her ongoing changes in political thought. Long voting Libertarian, she registered as a Democrat—still was at the time of this writing—but has since swung back to the right based on her social media posts. This essay offers a more nuanced view of that development, suggesting that it's less the result of support for President Trump and his administration and more a rejection of the first draft of history as reported by mainstream media.

Indicating that she's been "red-pilled," a conservative adoption of the phrase from the *Matrix* series of movies, she claims disinterest in being a conspiracy theorist but recognizes a tendency toward perceived heresy in some fannish quarters. Inspired by the writing of Matt Taibbi, she lists other writers she now follows, suggesting that they're liberal and lefty,

though some might claim they're right wing. Even if they're not entirely right wing, this "rogues gallery" does have right-wing tendencies and demonstrates an assortment of anti-vaccination, anti-liberalism, anti-Barack Obama, pro-Tea Party, media criticism (always a valid exercise), left-libertarian, evangelical Christian, and similar tendencies.

While not all of that resonates with me, the people she now takes inspiration from aren't explicitly on the far right but are more aligned with "progressive" third-party thinking. Which introduced its own spoiler effect in the most recent election. So I was surprised by her seemingly pro-Trump stances online.

I disagree with her lack of faith in professional journalism. "The purpose of the press is to spin plausible myths to support existing power structures," O'Brien writes. As a former newspaper reporter and copy editor, and magazine writer and editor, that was not my experience. If anything, the purpose of journalism is to portray the world as it is so people can make informed decisions. I don't believe it's possible to be purely objective—the press in other countries is more open about institutional political ideology—but in my experience, the owners and publishers of media (the business side) have the vested interest in supporting existing power structures, in most cases, free-market capitalism and pro-business forces.

One thing we can agree on entirely, "the landscape is a very scary fucking place." May we hike a trail of love and empathy instead of one of division and exclusion.

Rich Coad provides a borderline faanfiction story considering the importance of movie posters. Ian sales reports on three cons in three countries in four weeks, exploring the state of Nordic fandom. Lee Wood weighs in from Chickadoodle Farm in New Zealand, addressing local stock animals, tattoo art, and the generational divide.

In "The Peacock," Terry Karney continues the focus on wildlife, detailing the relocation of a lovesick bird. Jacqueline Monahan reviews David Langford's collection of con reports, *Don't Try This at Home*. William Breiding explores a memoir by Will Sergeant of the musical group Echo and the Bunnymen. Farey moves on from reading online news to honest-to-Ghu books, including work by Brian Aldiss and A.E. van Vogt.

And a 12-page letter column blends reader comment and correspondence with editorial response. Bob Jennings, Eli Cohen, and I continue the discussion of the fracturing and factionalization of fandom; Gary Mattingly disambiguates between being alone and loneliness; and those "also heard from" are quoted briefly.

Beam is a fun, wide-ranging, and thought-provoking read. It's a good reminder that science fiction and fandom occur in a context—the world is a system—and part of the value of participating in the community is learning how to walk alongside people with whom you might not always agree.

Inquire via Nic Farey, 2657 Rungsted St., Las Vegas, NV 89142; fareynic@gmail.com or Ulrika O'Brien, 418 Hazel Ave. N, Kent, WA 98030; ulrika.obrien@gmail.com. The fanzine is also available at <https://efanzines.com/Beam/Beam18.pdf>.



Los Angeles Times, Sept. 4, 1959

***Ditkomania* #97 (September 2022)**

While this issue is on the older side, it's the most recent—and likely to be of interest to comic book readers, fan of Steve Ditko, or those interested in the creator's approach to cultural and political commentary. Initially founded by Bill Hall in 1983, the fanzine was published until 1999. The current editor, Rob Imes, revived the fanzine in 2008. More than 30 issues have come out under his watch.

Released four years later than intended, this was also a long time coming. It opens with a news column focusing on then-forthcoming Ditko-related works and updates from sympathetic publishers such as TwoMorrows, the Ditko estate, Robin Snyder, and Rodney Schroeter. Bryan D. Stroud reviews *Tales of the Mysterious Traveler* #27, a Snyder publication, while Imes considers *The 32 Series by Ditko Vol. II: Opening Acts*.

Will Murray's "How Steve Ditko and I Co-Created Squirrel Girl" explores just that, focusing on a recently popular character that was introduced in 1991. Several articles examine the role of women in Ditko's comics, including pieces by Tom Peirce and Jason Sacks, who concentrates on Victoria Bentley from *Doctor Strange*. Thomas E. Simmons repurposes correspondence with Ditko in the form of a Socratic dialogue. And a seven-page letter column features a response to a missive from Dave Sim by Schroeter.

Ditkomania would be welcome more frequently and offers an excellent balance of new entry points to and context for Ditko's work. Available for \$3.50 postpaid from Rob Imes, 13510 Cambridge #307,

Southgate, MI 48195; robimes@yahoo.com. Select back issues are available for download at <https://unitedfanzineorganization.weebly.com/ditkomania.html>.

***Fanzine* #3 (2025)**

The result of a mid-2024 trip to central Europe chaperoning his son's Geography World Championships competition, this zine by Tom Fellrath is a beautiful, full-color collection of street art photography. It's a neat approach to a trip report!

Fellrath documents graffiti in Austria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Germany, including some text but often letting the imagery speak for itself. Fellrath and son also visit comic book and zine shops, showcasing promotional utility boxers while exploring other cultural interests while traveling.

A section is dedicated to murals along the Berlin Wall, and Fellrath lightly considers the relationship between street art and zine culture. This is the most substantial issue of *Fanzine* yet, and I enjoyed the combination of history, travelogue, cultural commentary, and photography. This would sit well next to other magazines and books devoted to graffiti writing and street art. Inquire via Tom Fellrath, Phoenix Productions, 8031 Griswold Drive, New Albany, OH 43054.

***Idea* #14 (June 2024)**

Nominated for Best Fanzine in the 2024 Hugo Awards, Geri Sullivan's welcome return to publishing yields an issue just half a year after #13, following a hiatus of more than 20 years. It's been a stellar return to fanzining, and the more recent issues are steps above and beyond her previous publications.

Part of that might result from the almost 25 years of maturity and experience between issues, and part might be an outcome of improvements in printing technology. *Idea* definitely benefits from printing on demand, which wasn't as widely available in 2000. In any event, this 172-page squarebound near-digest is an inspiring effort, and quite the enjoyable read.

Fronted by a 1987 cover contributed by Cecilia Ziemer, this edition includes several notable features. Peter Young's depiction of "My Worst Day at Work" considers the working life of an airline steward and the lingering, widespread impact of human tragedy during a flight. Sometimes, crises can bring strangers together in unexpected ways.

"There I was, filling this hole, Hole in the ground—," a poem by Sandra Bond, accomplishes a lot emotionally in a single page. Radoslaw Polanski contributes an item about the role stuffed dragons have played in European cons and fandom. And David

Dyer-Bennet documents the wedding and diamond anniversary of Arthur Hlavaty, Bernadette Bosky, and Kevin Maroney, which offers an alternative model to traditional matrimony. It was a pleasure to see photographs of Lisa Padol, Joe Siclari, Edie Stern, and Josh Kronengold among the gathered guests.

That's when things turn crafty. Liz Phillips explores the cultural importance of knitting and the tactile pleasures of yarn. Howard Whyte details the repair of a fannish wood carving. And Sullivan expands on her return to pubbing, her experiences with Kindle Direct Publishing in contrast to traditional collation and distribution, letters of comment, and Young's *Every Place I Read Your Goddamn Fanzine*, now on its eighth issue. He even read *Idea* #13 in Long Beach near the former site of Acres of Books, which I miss much.

But the highlights of the issue are twofold. One is the almost 70-page appreciation of and memorial for Deb Geisler, a Boston-area conrunner and fan who died last March. Also distributed as a standalone one-shot, the section celebrates the life and activities of Geisler, also an educator and artist. The outpouring of love and appreciation for Geisler is meaningful, and her jewelry work is beautiful.

Also of special note is the almost 35-page letter column. The correspondents featured are wide ranging, a veritable Who's Who of fandom, indicating Sullivan's strong interconnections and friendships. Letters thish are more recent, dated 2023-2024, and the lettercol is illustrated with multiple examples of wonderful fanart.

If you haven't recently read *Idea*, you're missing out on one of the strongest returns to fanzines I've ever encountered. Should Sullivan have received the Hugo? You bet. Recent back issues are available at <https://efanzines.com/Idea>. A print version of #14 is available for \$9.50 from <https://www.amazon.com/Idea-14-Geri-Sullivan/dp/B0D7CXPY5R>. Or inquire via idea@toad-hall.com.

***Taciturn* #4 (2024)**

This 60-page comics fanzine published by Kurt Erichsen exemplifies the potential possible when science fiction and comics fandom intersect. Sf fanzine readers will recognize at least Erichsen, who's long bridged both worlds, and fan favorites Brad Foster and Marc Schirmeister. The cover, too, perhaps aided by generative AI, is reminiscent of photographs of newsstands of the past, awash with comics.

Perhaps the highlight of the issue is Erichsen's *Valerian the Barbarian* piece from 1981, a humorous Conan the Barbarian homage drawn between the artist's first work for *Gay Comix* and his *Murphy's*

Manor comic strip. The introductory text that opens the issue sheds some light on the nine-page comic and its relationship to Erichsen's work for sf con art shows. (Dragons feature prominently in both.)

Erichsen also reprints several gag panels and illustrations drawn for various Worldcons and North American Science Fiction Conventions, incorporating propeller beanies, time travel, rocket ships, and other familiar imagery. His Detcon I wordless comic and parody comic panels for Chicon are especially notable.



Los Angeles Times, Sept. 4, 1959

Neil Riehle contributes the seven-page "The Museum," which features an imaginative young man amidst fantastic artwork. Most of the pages are overly enlarged, resulting in pixelated imagery, but it's still a clever comic. Larry Johnson's eight-page Lew Brown story, "Out of Sight," considers invisibility, an orgiastic urban cult, and unexpected nudity. And Riehle's "The Incredible Time Saving Device" explores the impact of the Robo-Can, a self-cleaning garbage receptacle. That piece benefits from cleaner reproduction.

Biographical sketches of contributors and an "Afterword" text piece add color and context to the collected comics. Overall, the highlights might be Erichsen's con illos and the gag comics by Foster and Schirm. A fun issue, and a fanzine I'll look forward to in the future!

Available for \$7 at <https://www.amazon.com/Taciturn-4-Kurt-Erichsen/dp/B0DJDSN3ME>, or inquire via Kurt Erichsen, 2539 Scottwood Ave., Toledo, OH 43610-1358; mail@kurterichsen.com. The fanzine, like *Idea* #14 above, is also a good example of the possibilities offered by printing on demand as an alternative to managing your own print runs and back stock.

***Tetragrammaton Fragments* #278 (January 2025)**

The most recent issue of the newsletter for the United Fanzine Organization (<https://unitedfanzineorganization.weebly.com>) is a 64-page digest of

assorted member columns, self-published comics how-to guidance, and reviews, largely concentrating on UFO activities.

Steve Keeter's "Quotations from Chairman Loathly" updates members and supporters on UFO developments, including membership changes and the production of T-Frags. Member columns feature a mix of personal news and updates, creative output, and other reports. Joe Ely Carrales III's "The Role of the Art Challenge as a Tool of the Sequential Artist" considers the importance of events such as Inktober, the Artist's Village Inc. Art Challenge, the Improbably Wonderful Art Challenge, and the Lion Gazette Art Contest, sharing his experience with each.



Los Angeles Times, Sept. 4, 1959

But the bulk of the issue is made up of comics reviews, both members reviewing the work of other members and UFO-adjacent titles such as *Yeet Presents*. If you'd like a second opinion on some of my comics and fanzine reviews, T-Frags will offer multiple points of view on the same or similar works.

Ken Bailey interviews his superheroine character EnergyGirl. Tom Fellrath and Larry Johnson discuss whether T-Frags and the UFO should be more inward or outward looking, in part inspired by my column in #277, which explained why I don't review UFO comics in my UFO column: I review them elsewhere for readers outside the UFO, as well as members. It's a fair cop. I'm a newcomer, most members have been involved for decades, and part of my intent as a UFO member is to bridge it and adjacent fandom.

New member John Yeo Jr. introduces himself to the comics co-op, outlining his self-publishing history and bonafides. In part, he found his way to the small press because of Elizabeth Watasin's *A-Girl*, which I hadn't thought about for ages. Inspired by *The Stf Amateur* #9, Kurt Erichsen briefly discusses his involvement in apae, including APA-5, CAPA-alpha, and others.

Meanwhile, in my column, I recount a couple of formative experiences as a youth: reading about a Wisconsin teenager's self-published comic book (David Werdin's *Silver Bullet* in 1983) and receiving two issues of Rodney Schroeter's—also a Wisconsinite—*Bat Comix*.

Amusingly, in Rob Imes's review of the *Amateur* #4, he suggests that I spend perhaps too much "time reviewing some stuff that [he'd] think beneath [me], like the *Batman Forever* movie." He continues: "No one can accuse him of being narrow-minded or elitist in his tastes!" Bob Jennings might suggest that I "slow down and be more careful of what you pick..." I can appreciate both points of view and admit to being a bit of a fannish dilettante. If it's related to sf, fantasy, or horror, I want to at least check it out. After all, my T-Frags column is titled "Dollar Box Dilettante."

I also appreciated Imes's attention to my occasional misspelling of names, color printing errors—the smears readers sometimes see on hard copies—and typographical oddities. It just goes to show that UFO members are active or attentive readers.

If you're looking for an entry point to the current state of self-published or small-press comics, you could do much worse than the UFO and T-Frags. Members' interests and items align or butt up against more general sf fandom, and sometimes, the comics can be quite inspiring.

Available for \$3.50 from Steve Keeter, 10118 Mason Dixon Circle, Orlando, FL 32821; stevekeeter@gmail.com.

This Is a Critique of the X-Files

Andrea Ferragotti's 20-page fanzine is a slim and slightly expensive exploration of topics and themes addressed in *The X-Files*, offering a unique point of view on the television series. (I bought mine at the L.A. Zine Fest. [*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #154]) Ferragotti begins by tempering her critique, which is occasionally pointed, with the statement, "I love *The X-Files*, it's my comfort show." It's entirely fair game to criticize and think critically about the pop culture and media we love.

Topics considered include the program's white-centric, upper middle class point of view; parallels between fear of aliens and white anxiety; female competition; complicated handling of adoption and blood relationships; and an unfortunate swing toward copaganda, or pro-police portrayals.

Ferragotti has clearly watched the show broadly and deeply. She incorporates episode references, dialogue excerpts, and other material to help make her case. Photographs of characters and actors appear throughout. And she ends the fanzine with "some praise" for the show, primarily focusing on the strong depiction of Dana Scully and the program's critique of government.

Though occasionally self-deprecating, this fanzine is an excellent, slim companion to watching the program. After all, the truth is out there. Available for

\$5 digitally or \$10 in print via <https://ko-fi.com/ferragottiar>. The fanzine can also be read online for free at <https://www.ferragottiar.com/zines>. Ferragotti's also on the socials at <https://www.instagram.com/ferragottiar> and elsewhere.



Los Angeles Times, Sept. 11, 1959

Comments on LASFAPA #578

Using one of the better search engines to find references to “Yog xipcode neblod zin”—sans quotation marks—yielded several interesting items. “Did you mean: yog zip code blood zin”? I did not, but that’s a reasonable interpretation.

In the Usenet newsgroup alt.horror.cthulhu, accessible via Google Groups, 1996 posts discuss the provenance of “Neblod Zin,” reportedly drawn from H.P. Lovecraft’s *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*. One posts suggests that “It’s either slightly garbled or variant Enochian (‘nobloh zien’ in [John] Dee’s text), meaning ‘the palm(s) of my hand(s),’ possibly

conveying some sort of religious sentiment, as in ‘in the hands of Yog-Sothoth’, kind of a cultic version of ‘if Allah wills it.’” Another indicates that it’s “[s]ort of like ‘Your brother in.’” So, your brother in ZIP codes?

It is in Arthur D. Hlavaty’s 1982 *The Dillinger Relic* #22 that we find the full phrase:

And whilst all this was going on, I picked up my impressive-looking bulk rate envelopes and then the printed copies of LINES OF OCCURRENCE (which came out very nice) and put the copies in the envelopes, then arranged the envelopes in Zipcode order and bundled them, and today I took them over to the PO, where the nice people weighed them for me, and so they are now on their way and all is well—oops almost forgot....

YOG-XIPCODE NEBLOD ZIN
YOG-XIPCODE NEBLOD ZIN
YOG-XIPCODE NEBLOD ZIN
YOG-XIPCODE NEBLOD ZIN
YOG-XIPCODE NEBLOD ZIN

That, Mr. Schlosser, is awesome.

In *It’s Still Rock and Roll to Me* #10, **Rich Lynch** commented on the recent wildfires, which are now well past, as well as his recent trip to New York. While the fires have ended, Los Angelenos are now navigating and coping with cleanup, reconstruction, insurance issues, and other aspects of the aftermath. The weather in New York City, however, continues to yo-yo between winter and spring. In the last week alone, a colleague told me mid-month that temperatures bounced between 20 and 80 degrees, resulting in some confusion.

Corflu kicks off today, running April 11-13 in Newbury, Berkshire, United Kingdom. I forgot I’d previously registered late last year, so ponied up again earlier this week, unsure whether I’d be able to join any of the Zoom sessions. I just signed in now, and things are well underway!

I shall have to return to “Timebinding with SFPA 204,” and I encourage you to put together *The Best of SFPA—1965*. Awhile ago, I scanned *The Best of APA-L* #3, and editions like that are wonderful.

Thank you for your remarks on the Dresden Files novels and television program. I’ve yet to see the show, but I have the DVDs. James Marsters reading the Dresden Files audiobooks sounds like a good way to experience Jim Butcher’s writing. It’s certainly an appropriate fannish connection given Marsters’s role in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel*.

In Mick Herron’s Slough House series, Jackson Lamb is quite similar to Gary Oldman’s portrayal in *Slow Horses*. More notable, however, perhaps, is that Diana Taverner might be depicted as even more

scheming and vicious than the character portrayed by Kristin Scott Thomas on TV.

David Schlosser's *Fool's Mate* #581 remarked on apahacking as being good preparation for writing letters to the editor and participating in online discussions. Such practices do serve similar purposes and draw on similar skills—and stem from a similar inclination to reach out to and engage with others.

Once we list our home for sale, I hope to have more free time to focus on applying optical character recognition to the scanned LASFAPA mailings. I recently stepped down as editor of *De Profundis* for the LASFS, and I'll be stepping down as official collator for APA-L next week, to be succeeded by another eller as OC. That should free me up for different forms of fanac. So will finishing the work preparing our home for sale, packing our belongings, dispensing of what remains, etc.



Los Angeles Times, Sept. 18, 1959

We'll stay in the Los Angeles area through May, staying in a nearby AirBnB before moving to the Midwest for a couple of months. Then, if our visa appointment goes well at the end of April, we'll move to Portugal. I'll keep folks informed of our whereabouts—and I'll certainly update my address with Mr. Schlosser once it's known. We should have an interim address in Wisconsin at some point.

Did you coin the term "Repugnican"? It's clever! Your spring training experiences sound pleasant. I've been following the Milwaukee Brewers so far this season. We'll see how soon my attention and interest strays. I've also started keeping track of upcoming spaceflight launches via *Space Launch Schedule* (<https://www.spacelaunchschedule.com>), even watching my first scrubbed launch. (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #159) One of the other viewers online who asked a question in the chat room was named Nick Smith, so I reached out to inquire whether it was our Nick Smith. It was not.

"Darn, I thought we'd gotten the last of those clones," Smith wrote.

"It seemed like the kind of place the real Nick Smith would be," said I.

"That's why the phonies show up: to establish themselves..."

In *That Flagon Last Night* #263, **Alva Svoboda** discussed Benjamin Labatut's *When We Cease to Understand the World*, which sounds like a fascinating

book. "[T]he needs of creation" is an intriguing phrase. Can one simulate struggle and strife? Pairing that book with Dino Buzzatti's *The Singularity* must have been interesting.

And Daniel Clowes's *Monica*? You've been reading such interesting books! Going into the home library momentarily to check, I can't say that I have a copy, but it's the sort of thing I'd buy. I'll have to check once our belongings are packed—and arrive in Portugal.

Nick Smith's *Labyrinthine Lines* dated March 2025 commented on Ben Grimm's religious affiliation and reported on the LASFS's plan to buy a new clubhouse. (That deal closed in late March; as Scribe, Smith should be able to share more information in the future.) Of course, that would happen just before I leave town. After I left the grade school I attended, they bought new playground equipment. When I left high school, they bought a new synthesizer and synthesizer woodwind instrument. After I graduated from college, the football team went to the Rose Bowl. And now, with a month-plus remaining in Los Angeles, the club secures a new clubhouse. I am mostly kidding. The new clubhouse is only a good thing, and I am thrilled silly for the LASFSans. Were we to live here longer, I'd do my best to wrangle my own set of keys.

Thank you for your report on Consonance. I was able to check out the last Corflu session today and have registered for WisCon—or WisCONline this year—in late May. (<https://wiscon.net>) That'll be my first WisCon, if I'm able to check out the online sessions, and effectively my debut in Midwest fandom. Though I grew up reading sf and fantasy, and playing roleplaying games, I didn't know enough to get involved in fandom in Wisconsin, Chicago, Boston (a true missed opportunity, what with the New England Science Fiction Association and all), or New York City—though that is where my fannish journey began. I've already met several Midwestern fen through apae and fanzines, as well as at Gallifrey One, and look forward to learning more about what's what in that neck of the woods—as well as in Portugal.

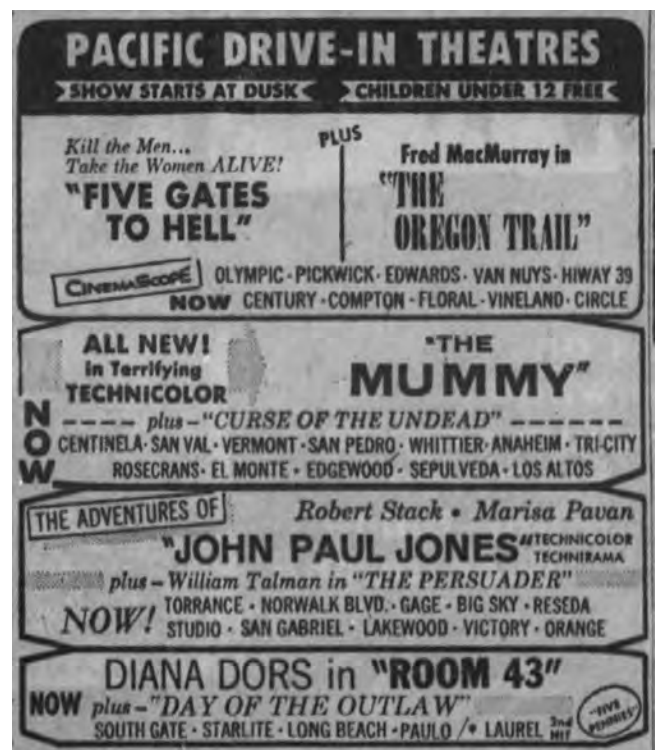
I enjoyed and appreciated your book and movie reviews. Those Citadel Press collections of Philip K. Dick are absolutely glorious. I prefer the cover designs of the earlier printings, but even the later editions are worth reading. I, too, enjoyed *Mickey 17* (*T&T* #157). I was entirely unaware of *In the Lost Lands*. I had no idea that a George R.R. Martin adaptation was going to be released theatrically. Based on your review, I'd have guessed it was a streaming release!

If you're interested in my report on the L.A. Zine Fest, check out *T&T* #154, which is collected in *The*

Stf Amateur #19. It was a lot of fun, and I recommend going—but perhaps going with friends or when you know friends are tabling.

In *The Title Goes Here* dated March 14, **Janice Morningstar** reported an unfortunate fall experienced by Chip. I can empathize with the concerns a fall brings. Years ago, my father turned his ankle or otherwise fell while walking, which led to a hematoma. My mother is now extremely attentive and anxious almost every time they go for a walk, which irritates my father to no end. I hope the effects of Chip's fall don't linger—and that he mends completely. I am curious about the Productivity Zero days. Why do they occur? Are they paid or unpaid days?

And **Alan Winston's** *Civil Twilight* dated March 16 arrived as a post-mailing. The title reminded me of the Weakerthans' song "Civil Twilight," which is worth a listen. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9Ev1KzZby0>) As discussed by you and Janice Morningstar above, I can empathize with the need to balance distraction by the accelerating decline of Western civilization—and working against said decline—and, well, just living one's life. Though occasionally facing challenges, you seem to continue to lead a rich life. I remain grateful to have you and other LASFAPAns to distract me from the distractions.



Los Angeles Times, Sept. 25, 1959

The Brass Hat Mind #11

April 15, 2025

The Brass Hat Mind is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to the Spectator Amateur Press Society and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Natter: Preparing to Move

This might very well be the penultimate fanzine to be addressed from the Globe, our domicile for the last 14 years in Culver City, Calif. The movers arrived Monday, and we're packing up our belongings to put into storage until we ship them overseas, divesting of what remains, and moving into short-term rentals until we relocate to Portugal. Saturday morning, a UCLA architecture student from Montana stopped by to buy a couple of unfinished bookcases. We sold a dining room table set I've had for about 28 years to an actress. Midday Sunday, we sold four more bookcases to a long-time science fiction fan whose favorite authors include Robert A. Heinlein and Piers Anthony; he'll be emailing me to learn more about the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society and APA-L. Between selling and giving away items, we've been meeting some interesting people.

We moved to the Los Angeles area in 2009 to be closer to my son, who then moved in with us after a child custody evaluation—and is now going to college in Tokyo. After two years renting in the Fairfax District of LA, we bought this wonderful home in Culver City in part because of the quality of the city's school district. It has served us well. It's been like living in a small town (pop. 39,000) surrounded by a big city (pop. ~3.8 million). Our adjacent neighbors have been top notch. The arrival of the movers has precipitated some early goodbyes.

We'll stay in the LA area, in a nearby Airbnb, until the end of May. Then we'll decamp to the Midwest to be closer to family for a couple of months. Our visa appointment is around the end of April—we booked the flight Monday—and if

that goes well, we'll move to Portugal by the end of July. Exciting changes are afoot. It's unnerving and unsettling, while also liberating. (We'll see how long my employer is willing to let me continue working there as we move and move again. I'm sure the vacation days this week and next will raise curiosity.)

The weekend of Corflu—I was able to dial in Friday evening—was spent making final preparations for the movers. My primary focus was preparing donations of fannish materials to several university archives and preparing what we need to have on hand during the transition—in the short-term rentals here and in the Midwest, and in order to move to Portugal.



—Nola Frame-Gray

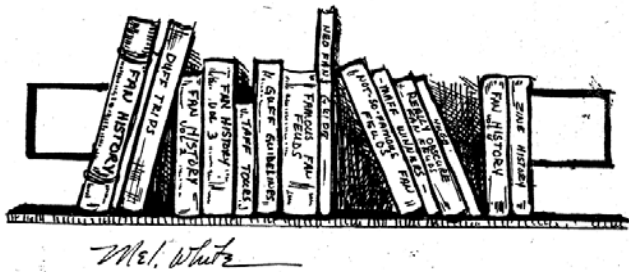
We expected the movers to be here perhaps Monday-Thursday the week of this mailing's deadline, but based on their progress Monday and so far today, I think it'll take three days. Arriving at 8 a.m. Monday, they worked until about 4:30 p.m., concentrating their efforts on the game room and library in the detached garage addition. That's where most of our books and my CDs, records, tapes, DVDs, video tapes, comic books, and magazines are stored. They almost finished both rooms.

Tuesday, they returned around 8 a.m., as well. They planned to send a truck and small crew to the storage unit to load up the boxes there, as well, but that'll likely occur Wednesday. The storage unit contains books, comics, magazines, and some apae distributions and mailings. I had received a notice in the mail that the elevators would be inoperative because of upgrades—a concern for this effort!—but when I visited Monday afternoon, I learned that the work hadn't

even started yet. We'll be fine. On the way, I stopped by the office to pick up a stray box of Baen paperbacks and two boxes containing Robert A. Heinlein's Virginia Edition collection, the latter a 50th birthday present to myself.

Once the movers are done—Wednesday will be a light day if it's just the storage unit and final details—we'll be able to breathe a little more easily, unless we pack something we need during the transition. Right now, that is my greatest fear, but I think we've prepared adequately. My wife was even able to find the permits for our recent HVAC work. If we didn't already have enough going on, the HVAC inspector also visited our home Tuesday to do the final check on that work. We can now consider that project done, three months after it started. Our cat Spooner hasn't liked being locked up in his portion of the house with all the comings and goings today.

Mr. Hooper, you should be able to mail #311 to the Culver City address. I'll inform you of my new address—in Wisconsin!—once that's identified. And I'll further inform you of our address in Portugal once that move occurs. We can reconsider my involvement in SAPS then if we need to. At some point, we'll also have a more permanent address in the United States.



From the Reading Pile: Book Reviews

The Elfstones of Shannara by Terry Brooks (Del Rey, 1982)

I first read *The Sword of Shannara* in 2008 but have revisited it at least once since then, I believe. In the midst of our recent, occasionally unsettling preparations to move—liberating, I try to remind myself—I've been seeking the comfort I find in the pastoral aspects of fantasy fiction, turning to the second book in Brooks's series and watching the 2016 TV series, *The Shannara Chronicles*.

To be honest, I occasionally mistake this book as the first in the series rather than the second.

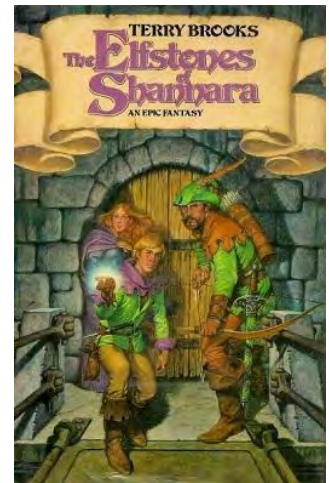
The TV series adapting the books starting with the second novel didn't help matters. So when I wanted to return to the writing of Brooks inspired by the program, which premiered on MTV of all places in 2016, I had to back up a book to get a running start.

According to the *Wikipedia* entry about the book, even Brooks had to back up for a running start on this book, as well. Writing *The Sword of Shannara* between 1967-1975, the author wrote three-quarters of a follow-up by 1977 but couldn't finish the thing. So he scrapped it and started over, focusing on the grandson of the first book's protagonist.

The result is a relatively standard fantasy novel—and series—with the notable difference that it's set in a post-apocalyptic Earth. I'm curious how people who live in the Seattle area respond to the series, because it takes place in that locale. There aren't many notable landmarks mentioned in this novel that I remember, though the opening titles for the TV show include imagery of the city—including the Space Needle, being destroyed—and at least one episode explicitly portrays the dangers of contaminated zones. In this book, I was curious whether the tower or slender mountain peak in the Hollows was the Space Needle, but I don't think it was.

Highlights include the portions of the book featuring the Rovers, particularly the character and love interest Eretria; the adventurers' foray into the Wilderun; Hebel and his dog Drifter; and the chapters set in the Hollows featuring the witch sisters Mallenroh and Morag. Having recently seen *Sleeping Beauty (The Explosion Containment Umbrella #29)*, those two characters were especially wonderful.

The primary storyline—taking a seed from the dying tree Ellcrys to Safehold so it can bathe in the Bloodfire before planting—is interspersed with portions focusing on the War of the Forbidding, in which the elves, dwarves, and



trolls—and perhaps gnomes—defend the elven city of Arborlon against demon attacks led by the Dagda Mor, all released from the Forbidding as the Ellerys dies.

Though watching the show in parallel, I made sure to always read ahead in the novel, finishing it having watched only five episodes. The program plays pretty fast and loose with the text that inspired it, features actors perhaps too beautiful to portray post-apocalyptic survivors in a low-magic world akin to the Middle Ages—*Emo Boys Go to the Ren Faire*, as my wife and I have taken to calling such things—and otherwise adapts the novel pretty creatively.

As is often the case, the book is better. *The Elfstones of Shannara* is heavily inspired by the work of J.R.R. Tolkien, applies some modern aspects given its publication in the 1970s and '80s, and is pretty enjoyable two books in. I recommend that you consider the series if you haven't yet read it—but that you avoid the TV show. *Emo Boys Go to the Ren Faire*, indeed. Hardly the stuff of pastoral fantasy.



—William Rotsler

Screened at the Globe: Movie Reviews

Final Destination 2

A couple of weeks ago, a friend and I watched this 2003 horror flick on video tape. Of the relatively recent horror franchises, *Final Destination* isn't bad. You don't really need to have seen *Final Destination* to understand what's going on in the second instance, but it's helpful, mostly because the presence of recurring characters will be more meaningful.

The gist of the series is that there's a tragic accident—in the first, an airplane disaster, in the second a multi-car accident—during which people who were “supposed” to die don't. Having cheated Death, the survivors are then targeted one by one to clean the slate and balance the books. An innovation introduced in the sequel is that the second wave of deaths occurs in reverse order rather than in the sequence they would have originally occurred. Ooh: Tricky!

Recurring characters include the sole survivor from the first movie—a final girl—who's sequestered herself in an insane asylum to seek isolation and safety. Tony Todd also returns, portraying a somewhat blasé coroner and at one point breaking the third wall. Also known for his role in the *Candyman* series, his presence is brief but notable.

Even more notable, however, is Michael Landes's role as a police officer investigating the aftermath of the accident. Landes had previously starred in the television series *Special Unit 2*. (*Emulators & Engines* #14)

Death is never visually portrayed in the movie, though it qualifies as supernatural horror. Instead, Death is represented by a confluence of signifiers and signs, or harbingers, such as a flock of crows. If you're able to recognize such premonitions, usually dangerous coincidences or accidents waiting to happen, you might be able to cheat Death once again.

Final Destination 2 is a light-hearted series of sequential impending dooms, some expected, some unexpected. There's not a lot of substance, necessarily, but it's a fun if dangerous ride. Rest assured, that *Final Destination 2* wasn't the final entry in the franchise. The series includes six films, 10 novels, and two comic books.

Interestingly, the first movie was based on an

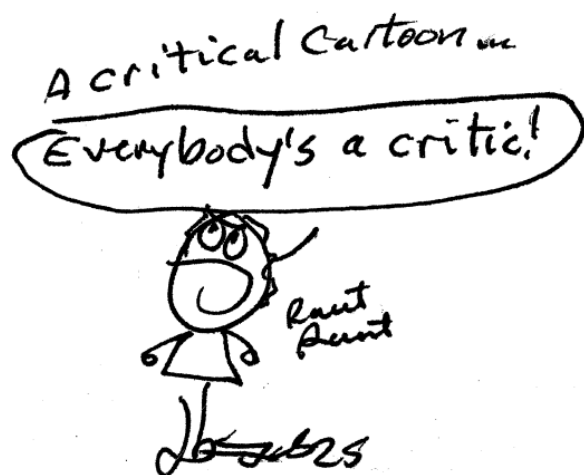
unproduced spec script for *The X-Files*. (*Faculae & Filigree* #41) Though the franchise has taken on a life—and taken lives—of its own, it's not a bad idea for an episode of *The X-Files*. It would have worked quite well!

Comments on SAPS #310

In *Dot-Fanzine: Comma*, **John D. Berry**, whom I saw online during Corflu, adjusted his fanzine title in order to be more easily identified and perhaps even voted for in the FAAn Awards, which were announced mid-month. I'm glad you were able to visit Charles Le Guin, even though his memory is failing. I can appreciate balancing feelings of friendship and sadness. I recently enjoyed rereading Ursula K. Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea*.

Thank you for your report on the memorial for Howard Waldrop, as well as on your trip to Maine and Massachusetts—including Cambridge and Somerville, where I lived 1996-2004. (The table I mentioned above was bought on Massachusetts Avenue.)

Steve Swartz has also been traveling! I appreciated his mention of Madison, Wis., and the Turbo-Charged Party Animal Amateur Press Association. I plan to reach out to that apa once I'm in Wisconsin.



—Nola Frame-Gray

Leigh Edmonds's *SAPS Time Again* dated Sept. 16, 2024, mentioned having to reread his contribution to the previous mailing. I had practically forgotten that SAPS was quarterly in between mailings myself, and was struck by how

old the fanzines so far seemed. They're not old; they're quarterly! I'm the one who waited until just before the deadline to read them. My, how time flies.

Given the recent political and financial activity in the United States, we're hoping that our home still sells quickly, easily, and with some financial gain. We also hope that our financial plans to move and eventually stop working are still realistic given the hit that our investments and retirement savings have taken in recent weeks.

Because I've been packing and mailing zine, fanzine, and apae back issues to various archives, I find your descriptions of research and organization heartening. Perhaps you—or people like you—will someday use the materials for which I'm finding homes. I enjoyed your photographs from 30 years ago!

John Hertz recently commented that science fiction and mysteries—crime fiction, perhaps—are both knowledge fiction. I'll have to refer back to recent issues of *Vanamonde* to see to whom he attributed the phrase, but a quick check online suggests that no less than Cyrano de Bergerac used the phrase “savoir fiction” (knowledge fiction) to describe his own sf writing.

In *Marana* #1, **Burnett R. Toskey** clarified the relationship between Phil Barker and M.A.R. Barker. I shall have to learn more about him! My copy of *Marana* might have some pages out of order, but I still enjoyed your book and movie reviews, including a mystery by Henry Kuttner. The Agatha Christie and Ellery Queen titles resonated with me. My wife and I have paused watching *Agatha Christie's Poirot* and *Columbo* for the moment. We're currently enjoying *Ludwig*, a 2024 series in which a reclusive puzzle designer takes on the role of police detective when his brother disappears. Starring David Mitchell, it's an excellent program.

Gordon Eklund's *Be Bop* #132 shared some early movie memories, inspired by the advertisements I include in my fanzines. Even though *Queen of Outer Space* might still be the worst movie you've ever seen, I shall have to seek it out at some point. After all: Zsa Zsa Gabor. I'm glad you've been enjoying Mick Herron's Slough House series. The books are really very good, aren't they? Buying seven of

them at a time is high praise, for sure.

Does anyone still read James Bond books? I do! At least, those by Ian Fleming. They're even still publishing James Bond novels, with at least seven released since 2008. I remember reading Jeffrey Deaver's 2011 *Carte Blanche* and enjoying it, but I haven't checked out anything since then. Anthony Horowitz wrote three between 2015-2022. At one point, I bought a bunch of Eric Ambler paperbacks, but I've yet to read them.

Your discussion with Andy Hooper about 1974 reminded me of an issue of *Remind* magazine I read last week. The January 2024 issue of *Remind* focused on the year. Genre-related highlights included material on *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Land of the Lost* (which premiered Sept. 7, 1974), and other movies and TV shows including *Planet of the Apes*, *Fangs*, *Shazam!*, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, and disaster flicks such as *The Towering Inferno*, *Airport 1975*, *Earthquake*, *Heatwave!*, and *Hurricane*. I made a playlist of songs mentioned in the issue (and then some) at <https://tinyurl.com/1973-1974Songs>.

Other items of interest in the issue touched on George Carlin's 1972 arrest in Milwaukee, Wis., the publication of Stephen King's novel *Carrie*, King's 1982 novella *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption*, and a children's horror anthology TV series with which I was unfamiliar: *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* That program featured a group of teenagers who refer to themselves as the Midnight Society, gathering to tell scary stories.

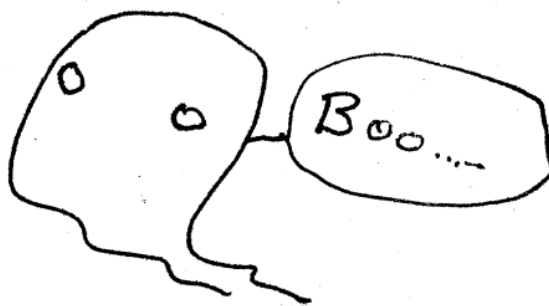
In *Lucubrations* #151, **Rocky Willson** reported starting his fanzine early. Not me! No way, no how. I hope those of you in the Seattle area have been able to meet at Third Place Books in Lake Forest Park, Wash. Once we move, I'll miss our local Village Well Books & Coffee, which I usually stop by after mailing items at the post office—they share a parking lot. But I look forward to finding other bookstores, used and new alike, the world over.

Your trip to Bainbridge Island sounds wonderful. I've been intrigued by the intersection between Mensa and sf fandom, though I've never

considered myself smart enough to look into Mensa. It looks like Mensa has a science fiction mailing list: M-SciFi. I'm curious whether there have been Mensa sf fanzines. A future research topic, perhaps! I'm glad you had a good time, though your motor home repair remarks reminded me of Michael Dobson's *Random Jottings* #22b.

Leigh Edmonds weighed in again with *Park Street* I. I hope your new home continues to be increasingly homey. Its proximity to the railway station seems ideal! Thank you for sharing the photos of your new home. As we pack up our belongings to move ourselves, I've been tempted to document the process—but haven't so far. It's a bit overwhelming, and the Globe is currently quite chaotic.

I hope your foot heals completely and quickly. I enjoyed your discussion of returning to *Star Trek*. I've been watching the original series again myself in recent months, though not recently. A day or so ago, I refiled the DVD I'm in the midst of so it can be shipped with the rest of the DVDs in their binders. The episodes written by writers such as Harlan Ellison and Robert Bloch are indeed excellent.



—Nola Frame-Gray

Oof. *Footrot Flats* is from New Zealand, not Australia? Indeed! Murray Ball is from New Zealand. Well, I put my foot in my mouth again in my introduction to ANZAPA. We'll see who pipes up in response to the gaffe there! (Thank you for setting me straight.) Once we've relocated, I might adjust my apae participation somewhat. When reading ANZAPA most recently, I realized that Gary Mason is CM for CAPA-alpha—in which I once participated. I shall consider returning in the future once I figure out mailing logistics in Portugal. (Submitting via

email will be possible in most cases, and we'll see what overseas postage is like when the time comes.)

You're not nit picking at all when you request that I call you Leigh or Dr. Edmonds. My use of the occasional "Mr." is mostly intended as a bit of archaic fun, but if it's irritating, that's definitely cross-purpose. I shall be more mindful of the practice, though if I forget, I'll appreciate your kindness and grace.

In *Dot-Fanzine: Apostrophe*, **John D. Berry** announced that Steve Swartz plans to join SAPS on his own. Welcome, good sir! I look forward to your participation. I've enjoyed Swartz's contributions to Berry's fanzines. Your description of Ellis Peters's Brother Cadfael mysteries is intriguing, though the repetitive aspects might be off putting.

If you were 24 in 1974, Gordon Eklund 29, and Andrew Hooper 12, I was 1. Well, no "if" about it, I suppose. My memories of 1974 are few and far between, though I was old enough in the late 1970s to encounter some TV shows from the time period, at least. Thank you for sharing your memories of *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*.

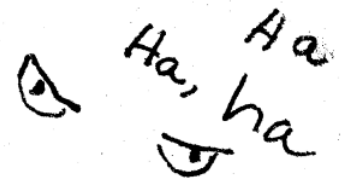
And **Andrew Hooper's** *Henchman* #22 commented on Anthony Doerr's novels *Cloud Cuckoo Land* and *All the Light We Cannot See*. The idea of a doomed generation ship fascinates me, as does the concept generally. I'll have to check out Doerr's writing!

While you indicated that you comment on SAPSazines "in an entirely random order," I reply to them in the order in which they appear in the envelope. I think I use the same approach for every apae in which I participate, though I'll have to use a different method for ANZAPA—because I couldn't get all the way through the mailing last time! So I'll prioritize participants I missed in my previous ish, and then return to the others as time allows. Given the size of ANZAPA mailings, I think it'll be challenging to contribute more than a commentzine, but I shall do my best.

Since my previous issue, I've obtained at least one or two additional books by George Sterling—and at least one about him and similar writers—so I do plan to return to his work. The books have been boxed, however, so it might not be until our belongings arrive in Portugal that I'm

able to do so. As you said, "[h]is connections with other notable literary figures of his era are dizzyingly numerous." Definitely an author to explore more fully.

Thank you for your suggestions of additional characters for my "dead/not really dead celebrity monster jam." Walt Disney, Ralph Williams (new to me!), and William Rotsler would likely fit right in! Similar to your experience with the *Seattle Times*, I find that the *Los Angeles Times* has also become a best-of print publication that often prints stories that appeared online a week or longer ago. I still find the print edition the most effective way for me to engage with the news. The Internet is a bottomless pit. Daily newspapers are finite and assist in serendipitous learning, which I might miss out on when reading online.



—Nola Frame-Gray

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #160

April 17, 2025

Telegraphs & Tar Pits is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row from an Undisclosed Location; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to APA-L, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Last Week's Senryu

My last APA-L
printing, somewhat bittersweet.
Scent of warm toner.

Last week's distribution was my final print edition as Official Collator. This week's distribution, my last as OC, will be emailed as a PDF. More information on the transition below!

Natter: Preparing to Move

Since Monday, movers have been at the Globe packing and loading almost everything we own onto a truck. Our belongings will be kept in storage until they're shipped overseas in a 40-foot container when we relocate. We're selling or giving away what now remains in the house, and some items have been set aside to donate to various locations: Goodwill, Big Lou's Toys & Collectibles Mall, Cinefile, Giant Robot's free shelf, and a nearby veterinarian. I've also got at least three boxes prepared to mail to various university libraries.

Monday's efforts largely focused on the game room and home office, and the library behind the garage: books, comic books, and magazines. Tuesday finished the detached garage and moved into the house. Wednesday completed work in the house and then shuttled to the storage unit for more boxes of books, comics, and magazines. I have accumulated quite the library, which I look forward to spending more time with once I stop working. Our time at the storage unit ended midday, and other than what remains in the house—folding tables and chairs, a desk, a bed frame, nightstands, a couple dressers, and remaining kitchen goods—our home is relatively empty. I slept on our son's old mattress in the television room Wednesday night, and Caitlin slept on the couch. We'll dispose of those just before we vacate the house.

I took a few days off work this week in order to oversee the packing. Even though I didn't do most of the work, it was exhausting, and we're now experiencing a rare moment of calm. Our visa

appointment is at the end of next week, so if I'm able to submit a fanzine, that'll happen before we head to the airport. When we return at the end of the month, we'll move into a nearby Airbnb so the house can be cleaned, painted, and staged for sale.

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BALBOIN PARK EDGEWOOD DRIVE IN ED 9-1179				
WILBUR SAN VAL DRIVE IN TH 2-1177				

Los Angeles Times, Sept. 25, 1959

Administrivia: APA-L Collation

This week's PDF distribution will be my last as OC. This issue of *T&T* will be the ultimate edition published from the Globe in Culver City. I've already removed the mailing address from the indicia. After this week, I won't have a stable mailing address until we make arrangements in the Midwest for the near term. I'll keep others informed about where we rest our heads once we sort that out.

APA-L, however, will continue under the watchful eyes and able hands of Barbara Gratz Harmon, who

Slow Mail Boat (cont.)

In addition to the delayed pieces of mail received at home—as detailed in *Snow Poster Township* #20 (an item mailed in 2012) and *T&T* #156 (one mailed in 2011)—I also received an even older piece of mail at my former office in New York City.

Mailed in October 2008, a Priority Mail envelope from the World Future Society (<https://www.worldfuture.org>), to which I once belonged, arrived at my former workplace in late March this year. A colleague still based there—I left New York in 2009—forwarded it to me, and I picked it up at work today.

It is interesting to me that an even older piece of mail was delivered in New York City. That suggests that the mail delay wasn't necessarily located in the Los Angeles area. And I found it delightfully ironic that an item sent from the World Future Society—Priority Mail—arrived almost 17 years later. A colleague who works in the mailroom at my current office suggested that the piece was sent by time machine, and the late delivery was a targeting error rather than a delay. That could very well be.

In the Priority Mail envelope were several items: a welcome letter (apparently, I'd joined the WFS in 2008); the November-December 2008 issue of *The Futurist* (which is no longer printed); special reports titled "55 Trends Shaping Tomorrow's World," "The Art of Foresight: Preparing for a Changing World," "Exploring Tomorrow: Keys to Success in a Rapidly Changing World," and "Future Careers: The High-Potential Jobs of Tomorrow;" a forecast document titled "Outlook 2008;" "Technology's Promise: Highlights from the TechCast Project;" and a promotional brochure for WorldFuture 2009, held midyear in Chicago.

Almost 20 years later, the items and their contents seem almost quaint, and it'll be interesting to gauge how accurate the WFS' forecasts were given this late vantage point. Will I continue to receive such late-arriving mail? Only time will tell.

The Ignorable Theme: Book Formats

"Do you prefer hardcover, trade paperback, or paperback books?" While I own many of each, I much prefer mass-market paperbacks over other print book formats. Hardcover books have always felt overly expensive, and there are few authors for whom or books for which I can't afford to wait until a paperback edition is released. Hardcover also take up more room and weigh more, both of which I'm especially attuned to given our recent packing to move.

Very few mass-market paperbacks seem to be published these days, as many publishers have

embraced trade paperbacks as the preferred paperback format. Perhaps people are more likely to buy them. Maybe they feel more substantial. Regardless, I prefer mass-market paperbacks. They're more portable, they shelve more easily, and they've historically been less expensive.

As I turn my attention to my personal library rather than buying new books, I'm pleased to have boxes upon boxes of such paperbacks. I even find their cover design and artwork more aesthetically pleasing, particularly when reading older books.

While scanning the science fiction section at Village Well Books & Coffee a few weeks ago, I took note of how many mass-market paperbacks were shelved among the mostly trade paperbacks. There were maybe a handful of such books on display, including work by Brandon Sanderson and Seanan McGuire, as well as another book I'd refer to on a shelf in our bedroom had it not already been packed. (I forget the author and title, but it was the second book in perhaps a two-book series.) I shall encounter that mass-market paperback in the future.



Los Angeles Times, Oct. 2, 1959

Comments on APA-L #3116

In *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #102, Matthew Mitchell updated letters on legal form updates. Your employer's remark about the value of learning new languages late in life resonated with me. My wife and I look forward to learning Portuguese—

and the mental sprightliness we hope such efforts bring.

Your reprint of “The Man Who Shot Captain Crunch” was a lot of fun. From John Draper, William Gibson, and cyberpunk to *War Games*, Kevin Mitnick, and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, the piece tripped a lot of triggers—in a good way. While the movers were working at the storage unit midweek, I read about two-thirds of Jon Sharpe’s *Bounty Hunt* (Signet, 2013)—the 377th novel in the Trailsman series. There’s very little (okeh: no) hacking or cybercrime in the novel, but it’s an interesting western series.

Published since 1980, the Trailsman series was created by John Joseph Messmann and written by a number of ghostwriters. Messmann, who also wrote Nick Carter books, wrote the first 200. Of similar western series—the last four such series including the Gunsmith, Longarm, Slocum, and the Trailsman (which ended with #398 in 2014)—the Trailsman’s protagonist, Skye Fargo, is known for his lusty nature and sexual prowess.

That means that each of the slim novels—12 a year!—includes a number of sex scenes. They’re relatively short and fleeting, but everyone involved seems to find what they’re looking for. In this edition, for example, Fargo beds a mother and her daughter, though not at the same time. The sex scenes hardly seem necessary—they are, in fact, gratuitous—but I suppose the series had its audience, and that the racy nature of the Trailsman helped differentiate it from its competitors. I finished the book later that night.

I will share your feedback with cover artist Jose Sanchez. If DALEK were an acronym, what would it stand for? While I’ve never encountered a left-handed bacon stretcher, I imagine it’s similar to a left-handed smoke shifter. Effectively, an object for a snipe hunt or fool’s errand.

Barbara Gratz Harmon’s *Reflections from a Fish Bowl* #76 recognized her recent birthday. Happy birthday to you, belatedly. Your celebratory dinner sounds wonderful, especially the innovative cake! I’m glad your recovery from surgery continues to go well. I’m sorry to hear that you missed your cousin’s first-alternate spaceflight. “I wouldn’t have made the same decision now,” resonated with me.

I will share your feedback with cover artist Jose Sanchez. I no longer need to use your reel-to-reel tape player; I’ve sent the reels to UC Riverside. Honestly, I’d forgotten about them entirely and was surprised when I found them again in our garage.

In *Toony Loons* #794, **Joe Zeff** updated ellers on medication, side effects, snowfall, and upcoming medical appointments. You know, I think that Doctor

Who/Marge Simpson slash illo was more risqué than the cover to APA-L #3115!

John Hertz’s *Vanamonde* #1639 commented on some interesting coins recently received. After our movers finished packing up our belongings, I expected to have at least two coffee cans of stray coinage to sort through. A couple of times, they’d set aside items they couldn’t pack: electronics with lithium batteries and money. I’d been consolidating the spare change and foreign currency on top of my dresser, and after they’d finished packing what we were taking from the bedroom—including what was on and in my dresser—I was surprised that they’d packed that money. So I only have one coffee can of rolled coins to address. An assessment yesterday indicated it’s about \$80. I will share your feedback with cover artist Al Sirois.

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CALIFORNIA Burbank TH 5-1507 S. Loren-Tab Hunter THAT KIND OF WOMAN YOUNG CAPTIVES	STATE Long Beach HE 7-2721 Weird! Terrifying! THE BAT SPY IN THE SKY
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ENCINO Encino ST 4-8238 C. Grant-D. Reynolds, NO. BY NORTHWEST MATING GAME	ATLANTIC No. Long Beach SA 2-3161 Disney's Latest Hit! DARBY O'GILL DEVIL'S DISCIPLE
RESEDA Reseda DI 4-0153 S. Loren-Tab Hunter, That Kind of Woman YOUNG CAPTIVES	BROADWAY Santa Ana KI 2-4737 S. Loren-Tab Hunter THAT KIND OF WOMAN YOUNG CAPTIVES
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PARADISE Westchester SP 6-0300 C. Grant-D. Niven, NO. BY NORTHWEST ASK ANY GIRL	GARMAR Montebello PA 6-1219 S. Loren-Tab Hunter THAT KIND OF WOMAN YOUNG CAPTIVES
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GRAND Torrance FA 8-6300 J. Lewis-D. Day DON'T GIVE UP SHIP IT HAPPENED TO JANE	STAR La Puente ED 6-2463 Disney's Latest Hit! DARBY O'GILL DEVIL'S DISCIPLE
PARK Gardena DA 4-4040 Kim Novak-P. Newman MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT Young Philadelphians	

Los Angeles Times, Oct. 2, 1959

April 21, 2025

Last Week's Senryu

I sent transition notes to Barbara Gratz Harmon late last week. I also sent Matthew Mitchell transition notes for *De Profundis*. We'll be in good hands, and it'll be fun to return to being a participant and member rather than OC and editor.

[illegible]

Space Platform by Murray Leinster (Shasta, 1953)

Originally published by Shasta Publishers, a specialty press run by sf fans T.E. Dikty, Melvin Korshak, and Mark Reinsberg, the book was subsequently published by Pocket Books. It's the first book in Leinster's *To the Stars* series, which also includes *Space Tug* and *City on the Moon*. *To the Stars* is also considered the Joe Kenmore series, which focuses on the protagonist of the three books, a master machinist who dreams of going into space.



Kenmore is brought in to help build and install the pilot gyroscopes, and when they're damaged, he stays on to repair them and work against the saboteurs. He befriends a little person who advocates for people of his stature serving as astronauts—spacecraft could be smaller and lighter, and crews would use less food and oxygen—and a Native American who enlists his colleagues to join the anti-sabotage efforts, as well.

The protagonist is also selected as an alternate crew member, which helps set up his presence in the subsequent books, which—I'm guessing from the titles—take him to the space platform and the moon. While reading the novel, *Space Platform* didn't strike me as a young adult novel—all of the characters are adults, which isn't a requirement for adult fiction or a hindrance for YA or juvenile fiction—but I can picture this being read by fans of Robert A. Heinlein juveniles. They were published around the same time.

Overall, it was an enjoyable read: not excellent, but not disappointing. The technical discussion about construction and rocket fuel seems plausible for the time, but the characters are pretty thinly portrayed. I illustrated this review with I. Heilbron's cover artwork for the first edition, but Earle Bergey's cover for the Pocket paperback—also published in 1953—is worth seeking out.

I've also started reading the Joe Sanders-edited collection of essays *Science Fiction Fandom* (Greenwood, 1994), which I ordered because Hank Luttrell contributed a chapter on cons. The table of contents offers an impressive array of contributors, including Juanita and Robert Coulson, Sam Moskowitz, Robert A. Madle, Art Widner, Harry Warner Jr., John and Bjo Trimble, Richard A. Lupoff, Jack Gaughan, Howard DeVore, Joe Siclari, and others. You couldn't ask for a better master class on the topic. The book was written by *fen* for *fen* and mundanes alike. No detached, distant academia here!

In the preface, Sanders suggests that the book is the “first to attempt a comprehensive survey of fandom” and indicates that the essays view fandom through several lenses: a fandom that “exists to encourage the

possession, production, and appreciation of SF;” that’s “based on the personalities of the fans” and “stresses individual satisfaction through social interaction;” and that offers “ways to make sense of my liking for SF” and “healthy directions for my personal drive toward self expression.”

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Los Angeles Times, Oct. 2, 1959

Other than the preface, I read Bernadette Bosky’s piece, “Amateur Press Associations: Intellectual Society and Social Intellectualism” late last week. In that chapter, which made for excellent reading after emailing my final distribution as OC of APA-L, she discusses the origins of apae and their similarities and differences with mundane “ajay” activity.

Describing apae as “organization[s] for sharing and critiquing writing, as a substitute encounter group or support group, and as a cocktail party by mail,” Bosky suggests that the development of mailing comments, which were introduced in the Fantasy Amateur Press Association in October 1937 prioritizes dialogue over monologue. Similarly, fanzines stopped modeling themselves after prozines relatively early in their history. “[I]n the 1940s they began to concern themselves less with science fiction than with the lives and interests of SF fans,” she writes. “[I]nstead of focussing on reactions to science fiction stories, the writers focused on each other.”

Bosky mentions that at least three apae published Langdon charts, but doesn’t name them. I know LASFAPA is one; I wonder what the other two are! Other highlights include the proposition that contemporary fandom is “dominated by conventions rather than fanzines;” that fanzines are overtly literary and covertly social while apae are overtly social and covertly literary; a reference to “No comments in, no comments out” and “You’ve got to give comments to get comments;” and how apae trend toward inclusivity rather than exclusivity. “If you don’t like it, you don’t have to read it.”

She also suggests that, because apae are “very forgiving of failed attempts,” they can produce writing of “a kind seen nowhere else.” In fact, “[a]pas encourage the development of a gestalt impression of a member, gleaned from reading all that person’s work over time.” One Big Fanzine, indeed. After all, “all knowledge’ is contained in fanzines.”

The essay ends with some comments on the structure, process, and management of apae. Numerous and elaborate rules are “unfannish.” If mailing comments are consistently critical or writing is ignored, participants might leave. Apahacks often participate in more than one apa. And the general trend has been from general apae to specialized apae— either in terms of topic or location.

There’s a lot to recognize in the essay. Bosky knows what she wrote. A member of the Esoteric Order of Dagon and FAPA, and an educator, she’s married to Kevin Maroney and Arthur Hlavaty. (See *Idea* #14 as reviewed in *Faculae & Filigree* #41.)

There’s also a lot to consider in terms of how well APA-L is upholding the ideals of apae. How much

writing do we share in addition to mailing comments? How much do we critique and support each other? Do we welcome experimentation? Do we do our best to include each other and newcomers? Are we occasionally too critical?

I quite like the idea of apae being cocktail parties by mail. There are a lot of seats in our living room. May they all be comfortable—and the refreshments plentiful!

Natter: Preparing to Move

Admittedly, I got a head start on this because we fly to San Francisco on Thursday afternoon for our visa appointment Friday morning. Much of this edition of *T&T* was written late last week during a quiet work day. I didn't want to bump up against the deadline.

After the movers finished their work midday last Wednesday, things were a little more calm and quiet at the Globe. I went into work last Thursday and Friday, finally over my cold (see below), and Caitlin hosted a director and producer she's been working with on a documentary project.

Friday morning, even though I didn't have to mail APA-L, I went to the post office all the same to mail several boxes of zines and fannish material to at least two university libraries. On the wall along the parking lot between the post office and the building that houses Village Well Books & Coffee was a new painted sign indicating that the parking was not for Village Well. Harrumph!

Saturday morning, I took photographs of multiple items for us to list for sale or giveaway. People stopped by to pick up some cube shelves from the laundry room and Caitlin's office, as well as a couple of rugs, a lamp, and an assortment of card games. That person also bought a folding table and folding chairs we hadn't even listed yet.

After getting laundry going, I ran errands to drop off and donate items far and wide. Five bags of clothing and one bag of media went to the nearby Goodwill. I dropped off some Alcoholics Anonymous literature at the Marina Center. And I swung by Lee Gold's house to pick up a couple of editions of *Alarums & Excursions* from under her doormat.

Returning home to reload the car, I took some items for the free shelves at GR2 Art Gallery in the Sawtelle neighborhood. They were closed installing the next exhibition, so I left the bunkobon volumes of Masakazu Katsura's manga *Video Girl Ai* and *I's*, the *Neon Genesis Evangelion* editions I reviewed last week (*T&T* #160), and another book outside. After dropping off some empty DVD cases at Cinefile, Eric Nakamura had texted me back, so I stopped by GR2 again on the way past to say hello. The parking gods

were with me! Nakamura had seen my son at a gallery opening in Tokyo a week or so ago.

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CALL THEATRES FOR SHOW TIMES

Los Angeles Times, Oct. 9, 1959

Home again to reload the car once more, I took some stuff to Big Lou's Toys & Collectibles Mall. He bought some unopened Kiss figures and monster-oriented model kits for \$40, gave me \$100 for several video game consoles—including an Atari 2600, a Nintendo 64, a Sega Genesis, and a Playstation 1—and assorted games, and cashed in an old \$130 credit slip for \$60. He didn't want a bag of assorted action figures, Matchbox cars, and other items, so we'll see if someone else wants them, along with some random non-sports trading cards I'd been using as mailing inserts.

On Sunday, I ventured into the garage to begin photographing and documenting the camping equipment and other outdoor activity gear for listing to give away or sell. There wasn't as much as I'd expected—I'd been dreading the effort—and it was all a reminder of a life richly lived. Over the years, we've spent so much time at the beach, swimming, hiking, camping, and backpacking—as a family as well as with the Scouts. Going through the gear brought back so many wonderful memories. Hopefully others will be able to pursue such rewarding activities with some of our equipment, which is still in good shape.

I wasn't successful connecting with Barbara Gratz Harmon over Easter weekend, so I was unable to drop off the reams of paper and other APA-L materials. Hopefully, she'll be able to stop by this week while we're working to pick them up. We had a quiet Easter as a result, with a co-worker of my wife's stopping by to work on their project for several hours. I washed and folded laundry while watching anime and a movie. The closest we came to celebrating was not eating meat on Friday, baking Pillsbury orange rolls for Sunday breakfast, and talking to family.

Monday afternoon was partially spent assessing our moving inventory to calculate insurance. Were we to insure the belongings we're shipping overseas by the pound (~30,000 pounds because what we own is primarily books, magazines, and comic books), we'd have to insure the container overseas for about \$360,000 in value. That is a bit expensive. So I tallied how many boxes of books, comic books, magazines, roleplaying and board games, compact discs, records, audio cassettes, DVDs, and video tapes were recorded on the packing inventory—in order to more accurately value our belongings.

Without accounting for incorrect labeling by the movers (there are no DVDs listed, for example, and I'm suspicious some magazine boxes were labeled as books—or comics), the inventory indicates seven boxes of video tapes, 14 boxes of compact discs, 28 boxes of magazines, 146 boxes of comics (which is 50 percent greater than my count while cataloging, so

magazines have definitely been mislabeled comics), and about 350 boxes of books. Come to think of it, graphic novels might have been labeled comics or books, as well.

The valued inventory form we need to use to claim a value for insurance isn't really designed to align with how the movers recorded our inventory, so we need to take a slightly different approach. Luckily, we've cataloged many of our books, and I've cataloged the comic books, DVDs, CDs and other recordings, and most of my roleplaying game items, magazines, and other such media.



Los Angeles Times, Oct. 16, 1959

The Ignorable Theme: The Common Cold

"When was the last time you had a head cold? What did you do to recover from it?"

I'm finally over my recent cold, so you can probably guess what inspired this question a few weeks ago. My wife got sick first, I picked it up, and even though she thought she'd gotten better, she got sick again after the Hands Off rally earlier this month. We've both been under the weather since.

It wasn't too bad—congestion and a sore throat—but I'm sick so rarely that it's always a little bit mysterious and fun. I took half a day off sick from work a couple of Fridays ago and lounged around to recuperate that Saturday. I didn't take any over-the-counter medication during the day other than Airborne for vitamin C—I didn't even really need cough

drops—but at night I took NyQuil LiquiCaps so I didn't wake coughing or sneezing. That seemed to help a lot, and between the two of us, we worked our way through most of a box.

People at work have said that there's been something going around, so our experience might not have been uncommon this spring. Caitlin reached out to our doctor, who told her that it was most likely viral rather than bacterial, and that it'd run its course in eight to 10 days. That was pretty accurate.

I still cough occasionally but was well enough to return to work after several vacation days mid-last week. Caitlin's not far behind me. She was much more ill than I was, and we're both relieved to be feeling better again.



Los Angeles Times, Oct. 9, 1959

Comments on APA-L #3117

Thank you, **Mark Bondurant**, for such a wonderful cover, my last as OC for APA-L. Ned the Wonder Horse made me think of other such steeds, including Gene Autry's Champion the Wonder Horse, Tom Mix's Tony the Horse, and Hopalong Cassidy's Topper the Horse. Apparently, four horses portrayed Champion the Wonder Horse: Champion, Champion Jr., Television Champion, and Little Champion. Champion Jr. and Television Champion appeared in Autry's postwar films, and Little Champion was featured during personal appearances.

In *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #103, **Matthew Mitchell** shared photographs of the demolished Fry's Electronics in Burbank, as well as personal memories about shopping there. I never went to any of Fry's locations. Other than the UFO folly, I was unaware that they were themed. Now I wish I'd gone there! (File along with Dark Delicacies, I suppose.) I have not heard the word "herb" pronounced with a hard H. It's been a while since I've discussed herbs with someone, though I did once have a letter published in the magazine *The Herb Companion*.

Your remark on pharmacy locations resonated with me. Every time I have to fill a prescription, the first option is a pharmacy in Venice, where I no longer work. I always have to change it to the second option,

which is at the grocery store near our home. It's irritating every time, but apparently not enough to delete the original location.

Didn't the penny come up recently in the news? According to an opinion piece in *Deseret News*, President Trump suggested in February that the United States stop minting pennies. Jay Evensen writes that only Congress has the authority to coin money and indicates that it costs 3.69 cents to mint each penny, 13.78 cents to produce each nickel, and 5.76 cents to mint each dime. He suggests that the Federal Reserve "lost" \$85.3 million last year by minting pennies.

That's not really true. The cost of a coin just means it has to be spent more than once to earn back its cost. Kind of like successive video tape rentals earning back the tape's original cost. Each successive spending is effectively amortization, or something similar. Spending a penny four times makes back its cost. Spending a nickel three times makes back its cost. Every use beyond that is gravy—or frosting.

I can understand your confusion about our upcoming moves. Here's the itinerary: We're in the Los Angeles area until the end of May. (We'll spend May in a nearby Airbnb.) Then we'll move to Wisconsin, to a short-term rental, to be closer to family for a couple of months. We'll move to Portugal by the end of July. Some time needs to pass between our visa appointment and moving overseas. Our belongings will remain in storage until we relocate to Portugal, and we'll eventually find firmer footing in the United States, perhaps in the Chicago area, in order to spend time in both countries.

We'll see how long my employer wants me to keep working through those moves. My hope is that I can at least transfer to an office in Wisconsin to keep working in the near term. Longer term, once we move to Portugal, we'll likely stop working.

"[D]on't believe everything you read," is good advice indeed, especially when reading about UFOs and conspiracy theories. It still makes for fun reading. Even *Mad* magazine published a computer program. Featured in #258 (October 1985), the program was offered for Apple, Atari, Commodore, and IBM computers. Readers were encouraged to mail a printout of the results to the magazine. You can see the programs and outcome at <https://meatfighter.com/mad>.

Quentin's selection of soft drinks looked wonderful. Charles Lee Jackson II would approve! Since the movers packed up our belongings, Caitlin and I are trying not to buy too many new groceries but work our way through what we have in the pantry and refrigerator. Having finished our sparkling water, we're down to drinking filtered tap water, and we have a carton of oat milk I've been using to finish the last

Barbara Gratz Harmon's *Reflections from a Fish Bowl* #77 shared some memories about *Five X Five*, the monthly print fanzine of the Carboniferous Amateur Press Alliance. *Fancyclopedia* 3 suggests that the original members included Rick Sneary, Len Moffatt, Art Rapp, Ed Cox, and Roy Tackett—and their wives, associate members. In 2017, members included John L. Coker III, Harmon, June Moffatt, Ray Nelson, and Jon D. Swartz. I've had the pleasure of meeting, knowing, or corresponding with every one of the later members except for June Moffatt. Among my papers donated to the Eaton collection at UC Riverside was a kind note from Len Moffatt, which he sent after I mailed him the National Fantasy Fan Federation fanbook—written by Swartz with an introduction by Nelson—that I edited.

Congratulations on finding the beautiful tortie you adopted. I'm sure she'll eventually seek you out. Sometimes cats need to take time to decide that they'll accept our love. Thank you for sharing "Halloween Night" with your grandson. Maybe he'll decide that he, too, can write stories!

Joe Zeff's *Toony Loons* #795 updated ellers on his health. May your energy levels improve! Almost every time I'd go to hang out with Marty Cantor, I replenished his supply of Boost. (I'd also buy a sandwich so I had something to eat while we sorted stuff.) I'd never bought Boost before, and I've never tasted it.

I could have added this to the Natter section above, but I'd already dropped in illos, so I will include this as a separate item. Tuesday morning, I dropped off several boxes at the post office to ship to the Eaton collection at UC Riverside (fanzines and related materials), the CSU Dominguez Hills zine collection (mundane zines and labor organizing- and political activism-related materials), and the Philosophical Research Society (spiritual periodicals and ephemera). I still have a box to send to the University of Iowa (apae-related materials), but they are "recovering from a broken water pipe crisis," so I've held on to it until they let me know it's okeh to ship. I also procured a couple of money orders for our visa appointment later this week.

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T&T 161-6

The Explosion Containment Umbrella #30

May 1, 2025

The Explosion Containment Umbrella is an apazine published by Blasted Heath Row from an Undisclosed Location, kalel@well.com, 718-755-9840 mobile, 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to eAPA and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Natter: Preparing to Move

As documented in the various apazines that will make up the forthcoming *The Stf Amateur* #20—expected to publish in the days to come—my wife and I are selling our house in the Los Angeles area and moving to Wisconsin before relocating to Portugal. We've packed up our belongings to store and ship overseas; we're selling, giving away, or throwing away what remains; a crew is staging our home for sale; we've moved into a nearby Airbnb; and the sale listing goes live tomorrow.

At work, I've requested a transfer to an office in Wisconsin, where I'll work for a couple of months—if approved—before immigrating to Europe. Toward that end, we had our visa appointment in San Francisco last Friday. Caitlin and I flew up last Thursday evening to spend the night at a hotel within walking distance of our appointment that Friday morning.

We'd prepared our financial documents, proof of residence in Portugal, and other materials, including reference letters from local friends. Those three letters are among the most meaningful documents we submitted. Our hotel was located south of Market Street downtown, near where I worked for the *San Francisco Examiner* in 1994. (I lived briefly in San Mateo while working there.)

In fact, we ate dinner at an Irish pub, the Chieftain, that I believe is located in the former location of the newspaper bar down the street from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. I can recommend their corned beef panini. The evening was chilly enough that I even bought a beanie for the walk back to the hotel and the rest of our stay in the area. The beanie I usually wear while traveling is in my laptop bag, which I hadn't brought.

Having reviewed the materials we'd prepared before going to bed, our appointment was first thing Friday morning. The VFS Visa Application Centre is located a mere 10-minute walk from our hotel, on Harrison Street. We arrived when instructed and only waited a short while before our appointment number was called. We both had scheduled individual appointments back to back; when that occurs, they can

see you at the same time. However, there wasn't enough seating at the counter for both of us, so I sat in the nearby waiting area while Caitlin discussed our applications with the clerk.

After roughly an hour, we were done. We won't know whether our visa was approved for about six weeks, but we feel optimistic. After the appointment, we returned to the hotel to collect our small luggage and head to the BART to venture into Berkeley. Having installed the Clipper app on our mobiles the night before for the BART ride from the airport to the city, we were well prepared for public transportation.



Los Angeles Times, Oct. 30, 1959

Early Friday morning, long before it was time to wake, I remembered that a friend, Nick Mamatas (<https://www.nick-mamatas.com>), lived in the Bay Area. I hadn't made plans to see anyone while there because we were traveling for family business. Regardless, the writer, editor, and bookseller responded to my 3 a.m. message expressing interest in meeting for breakfast. So we took the BART into Berkeley, meeting Mamatas at La Note on Shattuck Avenue for a late morning meal.

We enjoyed spending time with Mamatas—if I haven't met him face to face before, we've been friends for a long time and have several mutual friends. Over eggs, pancakes, and other comestibles,

adapted by Bong Joon Ho, whose movie ably captured the BD's storyline about a post-apocalyptic "rolling ghetto," the escape of a lower-class passenger who joins forces with an upper-class sympathizer to confront police state-like oppression. "This is the Snowpiercer with its thousand cars, the last bastion of civilization," or a variation of that sentence is used throughout the BD.

Seen as a novelty, the escapee is led toward the front of the train, while his benefactress is threatened by some of the more lascivious passengers. An aspect not incorporated in the movie is that the escapee might be carrying a contagion that threatens the health of the upper-class passengers. As in the movie, they make their way through the train's numerous cars, seeing various aspects of its self-contained environment. Soldiers play more of a role throughout the BD than in the movie, and the BD also incorporates a religious element that's only touched on in one scene of the movie: "The Brotherhood of the Engine." (That aspect reminded me of *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*.)

Le Transperceneige is an excellent read. Apparently, Titan Comics reprinted all four volumes shortly after the movie's release in 2014. The series was reprinted again in 2020 to coincide with the TV show. Somehow, I missed both of those occurrences. I'll have to keep my eyes open for the subsequent volumes!

***Lost in Time: Labyrinths* (NBM, 1986)**

After reading an English translation of *Le Transperceneige* (see above), I explored some other BD I've accumulated over the years. Among them was the first volume of the *Lost in Time* series written by Jean-Claude Forest and drawn by Paul Gillon. Forest had previously created



Barbarella for *V-Magazine*. Introduced in a 1964 edition of the French comic *Chouchou*, *Les Naufrages du Temps* eventually resulted in four volumes. The NBM edition translates a publication issued by Les Humanoïdes Associées; it had been serialized in *Metal Hurlant*.

The English edition features an introduction by Alex Toth, written in 1986 in Hollywood—on the day before my 13th birthday! Toth's appreciation of Gillon's artwork lends interesting context to the book,

a science fictional tale of a man from the 20th century resuscitated 1,000 years in the future. The protagonist Christopher is looking for his friend Valerie in a hedonistic, futuristic city, running afoul of the upper echelon and encountering various people, androids, and aliens whom he might not be able to trust.

He's manipulated into killing a general armed with an electric whip, meets a half-naked woman who reminded me slightly of Lubna from the series *RanXerox*, and seeks the assistance of the Boar, who is effectively a humanoid tapir. The artwork is excellent, the futuristic setting richly detailed even if somewhat confusing, and the various characters interesting enough—Baby, the partially clad woman, proves quite formidable—that the first volume makes for a very interesting read.

Eventually, the hero's journey takes him into space, where his benefactor's ship is threatened by dragons. The 63-page volume is interesting enough that I'll seek out subsequent editions, including *Lost in Time: Cannibal World* (or *Cannibal Universe*), which was published in English in 1987. *The Sleeping Star*, *The Creeping Death*, and six other volumes written and drawn by Gillon don't seem to have been translated.



—William Rotsler

Screened at the Globe: Movie Reviews

Snowpiercer

Inspired by watching several episodes of the anime *Galaxy Express 999* and *Mickey 17* (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #157) recently, it was time for me to finally watch *Snowpiercer*. I don't know how—or why—I avoided seeing the 2013 movie for so long, but a train-related movie directed by Bong Joon Ho seemed like a natural next step in that progression.

Snowpiercer is an excellent, excellent movie. I don't know what I thought it was about other than a futuristic train in the snow—I had very few expectations beyond that—but I was ill prepared for how wonderful the movie is. First of all, the cast is stellar. In addition to Bong's wonderful directing, there are solid performances by Chris Evans, Tilda Swinton, Ed Harris, John Hurt, and Jamie Bell. The latter I mistook for Tom Holland, and Bell brings his own fannish bonafides: *King Kong* (2005), *Jumper*, *The Adventures of Tintin*, and *Fantastic Four* (2015). Additionally, Kang-ho Song also portrays an intriguing character.

While I was aware that the movie subsequently inspired a television series—*Snowpiercer* aired four 10-episode seasons between 2020-2024—I was not aware that the movie, on which the TV show is based, was in turn based on a bandes dessinées. *Le Transperceneige* (see above). That BD, written by Jacques Lob and illustrated by Jean-Marc Rochette, was published in 1982 by Casterman in France. Three volumes were to follow: *The Explorers* (1999), *The Crossing* (2000), and *Terminus* (2015), utilizing various creators. That publication history and source material somehow make the movie more worth watching, in my estimation. Similar to *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets* (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #141), the movie's connection to comics could have been made more explicit in its promotion.

Having seen the movie before reading the original BD, I can say with confidence that the flick can be enjoyed as its own experience without any connection to its inspiration. Set 17 years after an unsuccessful attempt to combat climate change—a stratospheric aerosol injection leads to a new ice age that kills most life on Earth (the presumed to be sole survivors are all on the train)—the movie takes place on a self-sustaining train that follows a continuous track around the world. In addition to the generation ship-like elements of the train, its passengers are segregated economically, with the upper class oppressing the lower class, shades of the 1997 *Titanic*.

Lower-class children are occasionally abducted to serve an unknown purpose, rebel leaders are injured in

an attempt to make them less effective, and about eight years after an unsuccessful revolution, the passengers at the rear of the train rise up against those in the front of the train to end that oppression. There's an addictive hallucinogenic drug, Kronole, derived from industrial waste, that also plays a role.

As the lower-class rebels make their way to the engine in order to confront Wilford, its engineer and inventor (portrayed by Harris), they progress through various sections of the train. Some are utilitarian—food production and storage facilities—and some are hedonistic. That aspect of the movie—the exploration of the self-contained environment—reminded me slightly of the second season of *Severance*: train as ecosystem instead of workplace as ecosystem.

That ends up being the point of the movie. The train is an ecosystem that occasionally gets out of balance, which requires steps to correct that. In addition to the unfolding of events on the train, the occasional depictions of what's outside the train—the snow-covered landscape, frozen escapees, and the snow-covered ruins of cities—are visually wonderful.

Bong championed the project after discovering the BD in a bookstore, reading the entire series upon encountering it. The resulting movie is absolutely wonderful, and well worth seeing—just as its source material is worth reading.



Los Angeles Times, Oct. 30, 1959

Comments on eAPA #252

In *In the Meantime* Part 10, **William McCabe** updated eAPAns on his health and recent appointments. I wear a night guard when sleeping to mitigate clenching my jaw and grinding my teeth. In fact, my wife and son do, too. I wonder what it is running through the family that leads to such behavior. What causes the grinding of teeth? What drives one to gnash and tear so? I hope your dental care goes well.

I was sorry to hear about your trash collection woes. Your building's garbage has been there since Christmas? That could continue until summer? Even though it's May Day—International Workers' Day—it seems like such a labor dispute could be resolved more easily. Regardless, perhaps it'll inspire you to read J.G. Ballard, perhaps *High-Rise*. Where does one take their garbage if it's not picked up at home?

Your comments about Thomas More and *Utopia* reminded me of John B. Calhoun's behavioral sink research—including Universe 25. He experimented with rat utopias in which inhabitants received unlimited food and water, leading to population explosions. That growth in population eventually led to overpopulation, a breakdown of the social order, and societal decay. (Shades of *Snowpiercer*, above!)

Perhaps I should, but when considering plenitude, I don't often think about the risks and impact of overpopulation. When positing futures in which there's a universal basic income, unrestricted leisure time, and other aspects, I generally consider the positive outcomes. Perhaps utopia leads to decline!

Thank you for reminding me about the eAPA archives on *eFanzines*. Those date back to 2004, so distributions have been preserved since the founding! Well done, you lot. Thanks, also, for "just keeping time" here. I'm glad you stick with it!

Henry Grynsten's *Wild Ideas* #58 took on the topic of hippies. It looks like "Mozart's Sister" aired as an episode of *Secrets of the Dead* in the United States. Thank you for sharing the URL. I'll have to look for the program. While I've never measured how quickly I read, I do read quite quickly. I've long considered that a blessing. With the ongoing move toward podcasts and online video, I often get frustrated. I would much rather confront a text!

If you didn't write something in an essay, no wonder I didn't notice it when reading the essay. (We can all tell who didn't revisit the piece before making that comment...) "58% of all statistics are made up on the spot"? Citation, please. (Just kidding.) I enjoyed reading your lively response to Ahrvid Engholm, largely disagreement and debate.

Aren't there already examples of artificial habitats

experiencing or encountering decline? Biosphere 2, for example, failed because of a combination of scarcity, animal and plant loss, internal social tensions, external politics, and power struggles. "Artificial habitat" might not be the best phrase for the kinds of systems I'm thinking about, because it could also apply to jetties, wharf pylons, and shipwrecks. Those seem to do just fine on their own. Regardless, the Second Law of Thermodynamics holds that systems trend toward entropy. Perhaps human nature generally trends toward chaos.



Los Angeles Times, Oct. 30, 1959

Okeh, "Hippie for a Day." Like you, I've been interested in the forces driving the modern-day sanitization and romanticization of the counterculture of the 1960s. I, myself, have long romanticized it. I tend to romanticize most social movements and alternative cultures, warts and all. They might be seriously flawed, but they're all fascinating experiments and efforts: exercises in world and system creation.

Your invocation of the medieval *mundus inversus* reminded me of movies such as *The Purge*. No good will come from a day without laws, except in smaller communities in which anarchistic principles can be mindfully and lovingly applied. As anarchy scales, it decays. Your mention of king-for-a-day rituals evoked Philip K. Dick's *Solar Lottery*, in which a leader is selected randomly. In the case of that novel, it's more about the elevation of the low rather than the lowering of those on high.

I haven't done adequate research to bear this out, but one of my pet theories—to be explored in the

future—is that what we saw happen with the hippies was the introduction of drugs to a once-legitimate and threatening political counterculture. That introduction drew attention away from the power of protest, disrupted efforts to organize, and distracted its participants with self-destructive substance use and abuse, positioning the countercultural activists as increasingly lazy lampoons. It's hard to march or build bombs when you're high.

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Los Angeles Times, Nov. 6, 1959

Books such as Fred Turner's *From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism* make the connection between the hippies and the early days of the Internet—which resonates with your argument about the middle-class nature of the movement. I'd be interested in studying the demographics of hippies and 1960s activists. How many were blue or white collar? How educated were they? Was there a change over time? (One hypothesis could be that early hippies were largely middle class, but that that changed over time to include people from more diverse economic statuses as it became popularized.)

I've been reading more, lately, about how the New Age movement and similar subcultures offer an appealing home for narcissists. Hippies could have also attracted such borderline personalities, which might have contributed to the negatives you detail. My wife and I have long joked that Free Love and the call to "not be so uptight" generally benefit men more than women.

Your suggestion that the elevation of Trump is a backlash against liberalization definitely resonates with the topic. Trumpism is definitely a reactionary response to increasing egalitarianism in terms of racial demographics—even as the class divide remains. The economic excess of the 1980s could also be seen as a backlash against the 1960s. I'll have to return to the piece to give it more thought, but I'm glad you changed topics midstream—there's plenty to dig into here.

In *Intermission* #153, **Ahrvid Engholm** contends that President Donald Trump could be a Russian asset. I think that's a reasonable suggestion. As you said, "if he isn't a Russian agent he surely acts like one." If it quacks like a duck... My apologies to the ducks. Just recently, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the board of Tesla is seeking a CEO to replace Elon Musk; soon afterward, Tesla denied doing so.

Most of the time, when I see food delivery robots like the one you spotted in Stockholm, it's stationary, navigating pedestrians, street corners, and traffic with difficulty. Given the option, I will never order food to be delivered by robot. I've not been impressed by their mobility and can only imagine that their delivery times are worse than human delivery. Perhaps that comparison has been done.

I'll have to seek out KAJ's "Bara Bada Bastu." The photograph was also appealing. Today, I am looking forward to the release of the new album by Propagandhi in Canada, *At Peace*. That record comes out May 2, so I don't have much longer to wait. I've only used a Nordic sauna once, either in Finland or Sweden. I remember drinking a lot with my hosts,

enjoying the sauna, and then running outside into the snow. The memory could be apocryphal.

Congratulations on selling a story to *Kvällsstunden*! I enjoyed the History Corner's ongoing consideration of sf in Czechia. I would hesitate to impose any structural restrictions when determining the first fanzine. It's reasonable to think that early fanzines mimicked the format and content of professional magazines, though that tendency weakened over time. Fanzines, after all, are fan magazines, made by fen for fen, within the context of a fandom.

I thought that the United Kingdom's history of football fanzines might have led to a precursor to the sf and comic book fanzines, but no. According to a brief search of the Internet, the first "recognizable" football fanzine, *Foul*, wasn't published until 1972. Did any other sports foster fanzines?

What about music, which predates print media? Again, no, what some consider the first "dedicated" (whatever that means) music fanzine, *Mojo Navigator*, a contemporary of *Crawdaddy!*, was published in 1966. (Those could arguably be considered recorded music or rock 'n' roll fanzines, not music fanzines.) Even fanzines focusing on precursors to pulp fiction such as the story papers seem to come even later.

If the first public Kinetoscope demonstration took place in 1893, were there early moving picture fanzines that predated or were contemporary with commercial movie fan magazines like those we saw in the 1950s and 1960s?

Another intriguing question might be: What was the first fandom? *Wikipedia*—not the best source, but a starting point—indicates that the earliest fandoms might have concentrated on Jane Austen, perhaps the first such fandom subculture (<https://www.wired.com/story/the-pride-and-prejudice-of-online-fan-culture/>); Sherlock Holmes (<https://www.wired.com/2009/04/pl-brown-6/>); and even... trains. Did those fandoms produce fanzines? Holmes fen produced fanfiction as early as 1897. If such fanfiction was printed non-commercially, by fen for fen, those might qualify as fanzines unless we apply other structural requirements.

In Bob Jennings's letter of comment, I appreciated his mention of the impact that the cancellation of the Third Class Matter postal rate had on fanzines and similar periodicals. When donating materials to university libraries and archives, I've long benefited from the less-expensive Media Mail rates, though those are more favorable when applied to larger packages rather than single pieces.

Rich Zellich's question "why absolutely everyone doesn't just say 'No' to everything they're illegally

ordered to do," is one I've also asked. A colleague and I were just discussing that during lunch earlier this week. The mistaken recognition of asserted authority contributes to the situation we're in here. Ooh, Garth, can I have the list of old passwords? I'd like to bulk up my local collection of eAPA distributions. Meanwhile, Ahrvid, I shall look for affordable copies of your short story collections, including *Rumtidsenligt*.

Garth Spencer's *I Never Got the Hang of Thursdays* #232 opened with an appreciation of April Fools' Day jokes. The "Canadian Counterproposal" map made me chuckle. "Tallberta?" Too funny. In addition to the books you recommend, I'd offer the RE/Search publication *Pranks!* I've never liked practical jokes, which occasionally unnecessarily aggravate the target as a victim. I don't want them done to me, so I don't do them to other people. This year, the only April Fools' jape of which I was aware was related to *Doctor Who*. (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #159)



Los Angeles Times, Nov. 6, 1959

Your news items were welcome, especially the item focusing on Canadian Nebula Award nominees. Since we moved out of our home and into the Airbnb, we haven't been eating too healthfully. (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #162) I can't keep that up for the next month, and your reprint of the *Men's Health* article resonated with me. I don't eat a lot of meat, but I love breads, baked goods, sweets, and dairy. I'll have to return to that article!

I don't think eAPA should merge with another apa. I think we should recruit more participants from around the world. One per country! What we have going for us: Serious global diversity compared to other apae, PDF distribution, and a monthly schedule. The next closest example is N'APA from the National Fantasy Fan Federation, which brings its own baggage—as well as meaningful history. Several of us already overlap there.

A thought I just had: Minimum activity requirements could also be a barrier to participation. We could consider revising our activity requirements to remove or loosen the minac rules: "Members are expected to contribute activity at least once every other distribution. Missing three consecutive distributions will cause the member to be dropped

from the active roster; he or she will no longer be able to contribute to distributions.” Once a quarter? Once a year? (APA-L has no minac, and several people who don’t contribute receive it; that hasn’t led to a substantial free-rider problem.)

Similarly, the password aspect of eAPA might also be a hindrance. We already offer one open issue a year. What if we just sent out eAPA to anyone who requested it? Or anyone who contributed something in the last 12 months? Or anyone who sent us \$20/year? (I don’t know what we’d use that money for, but we could donate it to the fan funds.) More participants participating infrequently could be interesting, as well as few participants participating frequently.

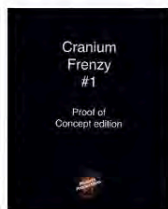
While packing our belongings for storage and shipment overseas, I located the book I’d been reading about utopia. I think I set it aside with the materials I have on hand in the Airbnb, but I’ll have to look. Eble ni ĉiuj proponu niajn fanrevuojn en Esperanto, la angla, kaj nia gepatra lingvo, se alia.



Los Angeles Times, Nov. 20, 1959

The UFO Checklist

The United Fanzine Organization (UFO) is a group of small press creators who come together to support and encourage each other, and to promote higher standards of quality in small press. Applicants may contact Chairman Steve Keeter/ 10118 Mason Dixon Circle/ Orlando, FL 32821 (stevekeeter@gmail.com) Check out the Official UFO Website at <https://unitedfanzineorganization.weebly.com> and the United Fanzine Organization Facebook group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/tfrags>



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IMPROBABLE GIRL & WONDER KITTY #13- JOURNEY TO THE MASTER OF THE WORLD (\$10 USA or \$15 Canada PayPal to jecarrales@yahoo.com, or email marisolinskikitty@gmail.com, or contact Joe Ely Carrales III via FB Messenger) The Improbable Girl and the Wonder

Kitty find themselves headed for the naval base in San Diego, and encounter a powerful submarine under nefarious control! Humor and adventure combine – and this start of a 3-story arc promises much more to come! Also, the amazing Teri S. Wood contributes a beautifully illustrated backup strip!



MANTRA #13 (\$4.00 postpaid via PayPal to stevekeeter@gmail.com or by mail – address above) An electrifying color cover by Keith Newsome (who also has a 3-page strip in the issue) sets the stage for a new issue of MANTRA. Steve Keeter presents a mixture of text, comics and artwork, including contributions from Gary Keeter, Allen Freeman ("Garbage Treasure", an affecting fiction story), Chuck Bunker, Larned Justin, and more!



THE STF AMATEUR #12, #13, and #15 (\$6.00 each postpaid from Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230, PayPal to kalel@well.com or @HRow . Outside US rates require via email. Free PDF Available @<https://efanzines.com/HR/index.htm>).

The most recent issues of Heath Row's amazing and informative apazine feature articles, artwork, reviews and more! In #12, the question is raised: "are you a library or a bookstore person? In #13, the definition of fanzine is discussed, and in #15 there is discussion of the comics and music zines in Portugal (with photos). Tons of great reading and commentary, along with superb artwork by Larry Johnson, Verl Bond, and others!



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