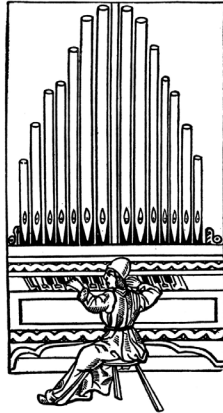


# THE OBDURATE EYE #41



*Love is in the Air*

THE OBDURATE EYE #41, July 2024, a personalzine from Garth Spencer, 6960 Doman Street, Vancouver, BC CANADA V5S 3H7, Email [garth.van.spencer@gmail.com](mailto:garth.van.spencer@gmail.com) or [hrothgarweems@gmail.com](mailto:hrothgarweems@gmail.com) . Garth acknowledges that he does this on the unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, səliłwətał, and skwxwú7mesh peoples.



*The organ of no clique or party*

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## Art Credits

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pp. 1, 11, 15 .....	clip art
p. 3, "This Is not a Drill" .....	Brad Foster
p. 10, "Crawler" .....	José Sanchez

## Frances Skene (December 18, 1937 – June 17, 2024)

My friend Fran Skene died abruptly in the small hours of June 17, 2024. I am still trying to process this.

Fran was born in 1937 in Kelowna, BC. When I met Fran Skene, a fan in Vancouver, BC, she worked as a librarian at the Greater Vancouver Public Library. She graduated from the University of British Columbia with a Bachelor's in Library Science in 1970.

She was also one of the best-known fans in Vancouver, active in the local BC Science Fiction Association and the long-running general-interest VCON, and editor of her fanzine *Love Makes the World Go Awry* from 1979 to 1983.

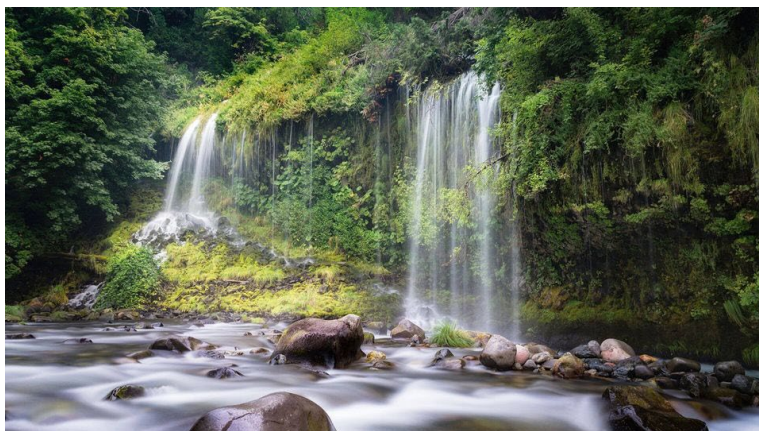
Fran edited *BCSFazine* from 1975 to 1976. In 2016 she participated in VCON as a member of the Puppetry Renaissance Troupe. She also chaired [Rain Cinq](#) in 1983, [Westercon 30](#) in 1977, [V-Con VI](#) in 1978, [V-Con 9](#) in 1981, [Rain Finale](#) in 1984, and [VCON 14](#) in 1986. She was one of the leaders of the [Vancouver in '84 Worldcon bid](#) and was a founding member of [BCAPA](#) and VANAPA. She also edited two of the anthologies of the BCSFA writers' workshop, titled *Fictons*. In 1987 she was nominated for an Aurora Award for fan achievement.

Fran was a Guest of Honour at MileHiCon 10, held October 27-29, 1978 in [Denver, CO](#); Westercon 35, held July 2-5, 1982 at the Phoenix Hilton, in [Phoenix, AZ](#); and both Ad Astra 8 (Toronto) and Keycon 5 (Winnipeg) in 1988. Fran was also the 2019 Canadian Unity Fan Fund delegate, representing western Canada to the [Can\\*Con](#)/Canvention in Ottawa (October 18-20, 2019).

In her retirement, Fran was active in writing circles. She was a member of the Brockton Writers Series (a bimonthly reading series based in Toronto), and contributed stories to the shared-world anthology *Windship* (2018), along with Lisa Smedman and Guy Immega. Up to 2024 she contributed poetry to *Polar Borealis* (R. Graeme Cameron ed.), and was active in the online BCSFA writers' workshop and the online Shut Up and Write writers' circle.

Fran is survived by her three children, Sylvia, James, and Dana.

(*Fancylopedia 3*, [brocktonwritersseries.wordpress.com](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Science Fiction Awards Database](#), [File770.com](#), [Canada411](#), [cdnsfzinearchive.org](#), [goodreads.com](#))



# What You Know That Ain't So

I have questions, so many questions ...

The guest article in this issue is from Steve Davidson, who makes a point about a stereotype sometimes applied to science fiction fandom as a whole. I question the stereotype.

So I ask myself: Just how many fans are neurodiverse, on the spectrum, more or less normally-functioning autistics? I think it's always been a minority, and the basis of the stereotype is a good deal smaller now than, oh, fifty years ago. But stereotypes persist a lot longer than fifty years.

Why should that be? Probably because anyone who wants to make generalizations about any group that they really don't know has to reach for the nearest visible characterization – which usually means a stereotype.

It's a process much like mansplaining. I am familiar with it, because I grew up with people who persistently indulged themselves at the dinner table by settling the affairs of the world with broad mansplaining generalizations, citing no sources or evidence whatsoever. It was like growing up in Archie Bunker's house, if any of you remember the TV series *All in the Family*.

Do bureaucracies, both public and private, make policy decisions based on stereotypes and mansplaining, more often than anyone cares to admit? This is probably a baseless suspicion and I can do better, given the amount of demographic research that many ministries and corporations have to undertake, as a matter of due diligence. Nevertheless ...

§

No possums were involved in composing this fanzine.

§

I have not seen the Northern Lights in my latitude. Missed my chance.

§

I tend to read one book at a time, and reread my dog-eared fiction paperbacks rather than my nonfiction books. Until my last tablet died, I would usually reread fiction on that device, rather than my paperbacks. I have now replaced the tablet, but the replacement doesn't have ReadEra (and there's some problem with it getting online).

§

This spring and early summer in Vancouver have been rather colder than usual, contrasting with the fairly mild winter just past. But in mid-June, provincial temperatures started rising over 20°C. I have to wonder what this portends. (Besides this year's wildfires, that is.)

§

Trying to maintain the Canadian Unity Fan Fund is difficult. Most fan groups and conventions in Canada, so far as I can establish, are about anime or comics or costuming or gaming or some media franchise or other. There is still an outside

chance that I can rebuild the fund, and that a convention will respond to my overtures and offer to receive a fan fund delegate.

I should be more concerned about paying off my credit card and my back taxes. More work should be coming in soon. I hope.

§

Fiction writing has stalled while I get over my first experience of a critiquing workshop. Evidently I need to keep in mind that I want to write for my own fun, not so much for editors' or readers' expectations, and keep the locus of control within myself. This is not easy for me.

Learning to finish a story, envisioning a climax, doesn't come naturally. Completing the scene setting and the logical progression of scenes is the kind of rewriting I have to do.

§

Defining life as a series of tasks has a shortcoming: I can't always get to things or take care of them as soon as I expect. My social obligations and my website project both get postponed a lot. Probably I assigned myself too much to do, in an attempt to lend a sense of richness and variety to my life. (Anybody here remember the Beatles' "Nowhere Man" song, and the peculiar character living in an unmarked white space, in the *Yellow Submarine* movie?)

§

Attempts to expand my social interaction by holding either fannish or heathen get-togethers has not worked. There's something less than effective about the way I go about this. It is as if I had negative charisma points. Shall I use this power for good, or for evil?

§

Occasionally I speculated about constructing an issue of *Obdurate Eye* entirely from locs to zines received – and then cutting the paragraphs apart, and pasting them into coherent articles about the several subjects that emerge in entirely different fanzines. It would be a lot of work, though.





# People Talking Without Speaking

## **John Bartley, June 5, 2024**

I seem to recall within the past few months someone objected to your use of Belgians as a comic foil. Well, if I do recall that correctly, and if folks are still catching *[sic]* about your use of Belgium, I have a suggestion for an alternative: Elbonia.

<https://dilbert.fandom.com/wiki/Elbonia>

Elbonia is also used by 'gun Jesus', AKA Ian McCollum, in his well-regarded 'Forgotten Weapons' series on YouTube as well as his eponymous website, when explicitly naming the country using a particularly poorly designed or otherwise inappropriate weapon would result in political problems.

[https://www.reddit.com/r/ForgottenWeapons/comments/jz39tj/the\\_history\\_of\\_elbonia/](https://www.reddit.com/r/ForgottenWeapons/comments/jz39tj/the_history_of_elbonia/)

His videos are entertaining, even if he does excessively focus on French firearms.

*((Oh, wow, I simply have to use “Elbonia” as one of the countries in an alternate world, where I can set stories about the misadventures of Vulgaria.))*

## **Cathy Palmer-Lister, June 6, 2024**

I wanted to mention the cover is really IMPRESSIVE!

*((That’s Alan White’s work – he’s known for it.))*

About dreams, I recently woke up from a dream in which I had written a poem that dream-me thought worth remembering, and I woke wondering if it fit the criteria of a haiku. In the morning, all I remembered was the last line: Thoughts written on a feather. It's been haunting me ever since. What thoughts? Why a feather?

*“You asked if anyone else remembered a motion picture feature showing a boy carving a toy canoe, complete with a little figure wielding a paddle, and the adventures of the little canoe wending its way through the Great Lakes, and eventually down to the sea. Yes! I remember! I think this was a well-known Canada Film Board production in the 1960s.”*

Before the film there was a book – I remember it well. It was read to us by the teacher and we followed the route on a map of Canada. It's weird, but I remember it better than I remember books I read a month ago. I must have read it again myself because I remember being really impressed by the illustrations.

## **Lloyd Penney, June 23, 2024**

I have received *The Obdurate Eye* 40, and thought I'd get some comments to you as soon as possible. Time to refer to my notes, and see what I might have to say.

My loc...Anime North is past, and sales in the Artists' Alley (secondary dealers' room) were great again, but the convention was newly laid out, and bigger than ever. So many people lost, and many who were looking for us couldn't find us. It was hectic and very noisy. I think will rely on smaller events for the rest of the year, and we will be making a decision on whether we want to return to AN next year, or sacrifice our sanity, and hearing. We did submit our Aurora Award ballots, but I think both our ballots were nearly blank. We are urged to vote on what we were familiar with, and we recognize so few people on the ballot.

Your review of *FanActivity Gazette*...editor Mindy Hunt asked to subscribe to our Pubnites e-mailer newsletter, especially for our list of conventions at most a day's drive away from Toronto, and she publishes the rest of the newsletter, too. We don't mind; if someone is thinking of coming up to Toronto for a visit, it will be worth it.

It has been a busy weekend...large party on Friday, fannish brunch gathering on Saturday, and getting everything done at home Sunday, especially the things we weren't able to get done the previous two days. This week will be a little less busy, so we can pause from time to time in preparations for upcoming fun. Thank you for this fanzine, and I am sure more will follow.

### ***Mark Nelson, June 26, 2024***

An update on our door handles. (In forty years of writing locs, a topic I have only broached in this and my previous loc to you.) Eventually, our friendly neighbour was able to secure the right kind of Allen key from her son. I was at work when she came round to explain how to tighten up the door handles. (One of them had been completely detached thanks to our son.) As I was away, my wife is now the expert at how to do these jobs. And you know what? That's the way I like it.

I mentioned last time that my wife considers my involvement with fanzines to be an indicator of zero common sense skills. On mature reflection I'm certain that she considers many of my other hobbies to indicate a similar lack of common sense.

Data Korra'ti's article put me in mind of the following story. Sometime in the late 1950s Marvin Minsky asked a bunch of students if they could write a program to play chess. Eventually, they came back to the Professor with the news that they had written. Furthermore, he could play a game against it. So, he started to play and was impressed by its play. But eventually he became a little suspicious. There was something about the way in which the program's moves were erratically echoed onto the screen that did not ring true. He took the cable that connected his computer to the computer hosting the program and followed it back to the adjoining room... where he discovered that he was in fact not playing against a chess program, but against one of his students...

I have now used ChatGPT three times. The first time I needed a technical definition. Trying a search on both google and google scholar didn't lead me to a definition. ChatGPT gave me an easy-to-understand definition for the application I needed it for. The second time I couldn't remember how to spell a word, but I could define the word and I knew that the word I had in mind started with the letter g. (I couldn't spell the word sufficiently accurately to find it through a google search.) The third time I used it was this afternoon. I had five students taking a class. The package that the university

uses for storing student marks calculates the average and the standard deviation. One of the students didn't turn up for my half of the subject and ended with a final mark of 7%. I wanted to know the mean and the standard deviation if that student's mark was ignored (not that it's really meaningful...). I thought it would be quicker to ask ChatGPT to do this then to do it myself by other means...



**John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St. No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057, USA, June 28, 2024**

On the cover of *Obdurate Eye* #40, maybe the girl is obdurate?

*((I thought that was a pretty obdurate expression she's wearing. People have remarked on how obdurate she looks. They said, "My God that's an obdurate naked woman." Must be a pretty obdurate woman to walk her drakes around the neighbourhood without leashes.))*

About "the majority don't have any stake in fanzines": once upon a time, more or less everyone in SF fandom did more or less everything. Fanziners invented SF con Art Shows. Costumers appeared in fanzines. As the SF world expanded, fragmentation became possible. Tempted to look only for people like ourselves, we narrowed our horizons as soon as we could. This may at first seem beneficial, but in the long run it's stultifying.

*((Maybe our lack of venturing outside a small circle is a sign of our growing old.))*

We fanziners complaining about how nobody loves us reminds me of the Two Churchgoers story: one said to the other, "I won't pray in that church. They have sinners there!"

*((“First it was the Hatfields, and first it was the McCoys. Or maybe it was the other way around ...” I can't untangle who offended who first, mediafans or allegedly fanzine fans, and by this time the point is lost in prehistory. The bottom line is that we can't motivate people to take an interest in things they're not interested in. At least I know I can't. I have tried, over and over.))*

From my own life, for some years I had breakfast every week with a man decades older than I. One morning he said, "All my friends are dying." I said, "When was the last time you made any new friends?"

*((Point taken.))*

We also heard from: Scott Betson, George Phillies, Perry Middlemiss, Heath Row, David Langford, Taral Wayne ("I'm not David Langford"), and Rob Jackson



## According to the Cry of It

**Polar Borealis #30** is now published online and available for free download. It contains:

Cover art by Derek Newman-Stille.

Poems by J.D. Dresner, Jameson Grey, James Grotkowski, Guy Immega, Kellee Kranendonk, Michèle Laframboise, Melanie Marttila, Rhonda Parrish, Larissa Peters, and Jean-Louis Trudel.

Stories by Tommy Blanchard, Michèle Laframboise, Lene MacLeod, Elis Montgomery, Lee F. Patrick, Timothy Quinn, Danny F. Santos, Shane Williston, and Monica Sagle Zwikstra.

<https://polarborealis.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/POLAR-BOREALIS-30-May-2024.pdf>

R. Graeme Cameron, June 5, 2024

I was going to run some news about how to vote for the Aurora Awards this year, but this issue was delayed until the day before the voting deadline (as usual, by trying to characterize the fanzines I received by the showing the locs I would have sent them). Maybe I should just list the fanzines and build *Obdurate Eye* around the ideas that received fanzines give me.



## Two Ways to Look At It

(from Steve Davidson, publisher of *Amazing Stories*)

*On Facebook, June 6, 2024:*

I happened to watch one Youtube video on "The HISTOREEEEE of S C I E N C E F I C T I O O O O N!" (stentorian tones) that pissed me off (casual, factual errors are made), which prompted me to look at a couple more, those mostly focused on "Classic" vs

"Modern" "Sci Fi," and I am having an interesting thought on the (OK, I'll be nice) "evolution" of the genre.

One major change that they all seem to point out is that Classic Science Fiction (old, moldy, classics that you probably don't want to read because their ideas of social norms are DIZ GUSTING), unlike good, modern SF, focused on gadgets, on the tech, on the "changes" wrought by something, and paid little to no attention to characterization, the development of a character through an arc, etc.

This is no doubt true in broad stroke – except, of course, for the negativities associated – but it doesn't really tell us anything about "why." Sometimes they evidence a little knowledge of the field by mentioning that classics were under both the constraints of pulp publishing, not to mention the society the pulps were being sold into, but I think that's missing an overlooked aspect.

We are often told that the community of readers (without whom those pulp magazines would not have sold) and the people writing the majority of that fiction were societal outcasts: bookworms instead of athletes, too intelligent for their own good, desirous of reading Greek plays more than comic books, etc.

These were the nerds and geeks of society before those terms were invented, and before there was any appreciation for the things they could contribute to society – which we seemed to enjoy for a brief period during the 60s and 70s.

What's another characteristic of "nerds and geeks", even unto today?

Many, many of them were "neurodiverse." Just as many in science fiction fandom are today.

Interestingly, Silberman notes in his examination of Asperger's and autism (*NeuroTribes*)<sup>1</sup> that if the neurodiverse were to create their own society, the one thing in our contemporary world that would most closely resemble it would be science fiction fandom.

A community where we are generally more interested in the latest developments of the Alcubierre drive, or what the history of the locomotive that's pulling the Amtrack train we're riding in is, than we are in whether or not "Harry met Sally"; a community where those first being exposed to it are often cautioned that "Fans may be socially awkward, cut them some slack."

The conclusion I'm groping towards is this: the change in the literature may be owing more to the fact that the audience consuming it and many of its creators are NOT neurodiverse; instead of reflecting on the things that appeal to nerds and geeks, the literature now seeks to appeal to the neuro-mainstream.

In terms of an industry, this makes sense. There are far more "normies" out there than otherwise, and catering to their tastes is necessary if you want to get sales.

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<sup>1</sup> Silberman, Steve. *NeuroTribes: The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity*. New York: Avery Publishing Group (Penguin, 2016).

But the joke may be on everyone, as the number of neurodiverse people being born every year continues to increase...

## **ON THE INCESTUOUS PRIVILEGE OF ELITES**

*(Den Valdron, Facebook, June 2024)*

Scarcity. There is only so much power to go around, not everyone can be a Corporate Vice President or a Senior Manager or a Director of this or that. There's only a limited number of spaces for the privileged, for artists and writers, for doctors and lawyers, engineers, for managers and important people.

It's important to keep the peons – the rest of us – out.

Education is how the privileged screen everyone else out.

In my home province of New Brunswick a few years ago, I found out that articling students (lawyer's internships) were unpaid. Let's be very clear – law firms bill out their articling students' hours, they make money from their articling students. So why unpaid?

Because that makes it harder for the wrong sort of people to become lawyers. It restricts the field to the sons and daughters of the privileged, to those who, or whose families can afford to subsidize a year or so without working.

Tuitions have gone up, student loans are more egregious, entry level wages have gone down, and unpaid internships are up.

It's all about excluding the non-privileged, and ensuring that the right jobs and positions go to the right people, the self-appointed "elites" the upper middle classes and wealthy. Eliminating and excluding the competition ... because really, these "elites" are just like everyone else – mediocre.

It's also about reinforcing that sense of privilege and entitlement, leaving the upper middle class desperately treading water, scrambling and struggling to maintain their place, which means toeing the line.

And indoctrinating entitlement – as you get some asshole punk rich kid who got a brand new car for their 16th birthday, and subsidized European years, moan about merit and how they worked for everything they had because they did an internship without pay back fifteen years ago and had to work really hard – so clearly, they earned their place in life.

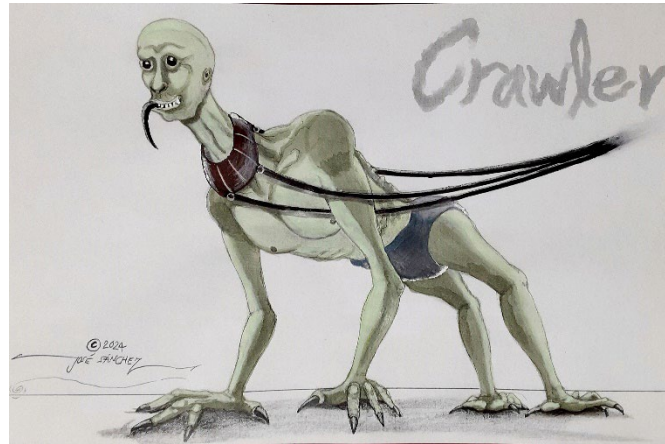
That's the Brett Kavanaugh life text book. Elitist entitlement, a life so smooth he didn't even have to fight for so much as a parking spot, signified by a career as teen rapist, frat boy, "good ole boy" hijinx and credit card debt, stunning mediocrity all the way onto the Supreme Court and an infantilized breathtaking sense of entitlement.

The "elite" are closing ranks, the rest of us are not invited on the human adventure, and instead, we are to be lead by a class of self-absorbed, self-satisfied narcissists, whose subculture trains them to eschew all but the most shallow and performative empathy.

A social class of entitled pricks of astounding shallowness and mediocrity, a diverse range of viewpoints from A to A(1), endlessly congratulating each other on their brilliance and excellence, while ceaselessly working to rob the rest of us because we don't count.

This is the world that they want to make for the rest of us. Don't you want to just burn it all down?

Don't worry – these self-aggrandizing, narrow-minded, preening, shallow twits will eventually burn it all down. They're not capable of anything better. They'll just make it hell over everyone else first.



## Everyday Complexity

Even before the last time I had to get my tax return done by H R Block, I have been thinking about the different levels of complexity in our everyday tasks. It is clear that some things are too damn complicated, such as the inner workings of television sets and computers, although some people can handle their own automotive and radio and even computer repairs. I find automated telephone trees for bank and hospital services are frequently frustrating and misleading. You may have other examples of things that are too damn complicated, and to add insult to injury, servicepeople who can straighten out your problems occasionally talk to you as if you're simple-minded.

Now, there's complicated, and then there's *really* complicated.

Let's assume that a majority of people can remember the alphabet and the succession of months in a year, perform arithmetic, read a nonfiction book with at least some technical terms, and understand directions, either from a map or from a local resident in the neighbourhood you're navigating. Let's assume that a majority of people retain some idea of the size of the continents and where different countries are, although they may be confused about recent history, the order of the planets in the solar system, or the difference between stars, galaxies, and other astronomical objects.

A very long series of items, such as stanzas in a song, we might call a *First Level* of complexity. Probably only a few people have difficulty with this level; nevertheless, there are rhymes and other mnemonics to help us keep track of items on this level – even now, in sciences ranging from astronomy to biology to biochemistry.

When we deal with systems whose elements aren't just added to one another, as in cooking or chemistry, we meet what might be called a *Second Level* of complexity. Some of the most basic equations in mechanical physics give this away: the fact that mass, velocity, time and temperature have different relationships, whether in engineering or astrophysics; or the relationship between voltage, amperage and resistance, in electrical engineering.

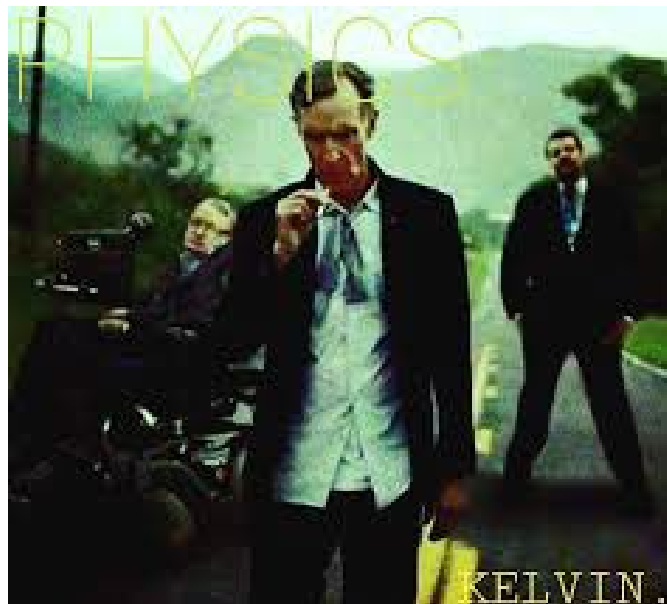
How many examples of Third, Fourth, or Fifth-Level complexity can you cite? Sometimes I think that human language – any language – is a Third-Level system. And, indeed, the ways in which language changes over time makes me wonder if anyone, anywhere, grasps their language entirely; so often a whole category of words, or phrases, or how to construct speech is obviously not passed on to a new generation

I would put it to you that people live in and depend on systems of even higher degrees of complexity, from soil biology through information systems to economics, *which surpass general understanding* partly because of feedback loops – e.g., clearing forests leads to altered weather patterns which change rainfall patterns which can undermine farmland productivity – and partly because of the compounding effects of numerous, and interacting feedback loops.

My point, and I do have one, is that we face certain potential threats to our well-being, as a result of depending on systems too complicated for us to understand. And by “us,” I include legal, financial and industrial policymakers.

It may or may not be helpful to field people from journalism, history, scientific, and more backgrounds as candidates for public office, instead of drawing almost exclusively from legal, financial and promotional professions. It may be more helpful to limit the abstraction of financial derivatives from actual production and consumption statistics.

Now show me how full of it I am.





## Responding to Fanzines Received

**The STF Amateur** #9, bundlezine published by Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for members of the United Fanzine Organization and select others, 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).

Perhaps you have the same impulse I have, to save one's previously published fanzines in case they contain some brilliant deathless prose. Good on you.

Your friend Bill Breiding describes what I keep banging my head against – the loss of a common set of expectations in fandom, specifically about fanzines. So, I'm not surprised he struggled with the idea of fanzines as gifts, in the sense of trading for gift fanwriting and fillos. For that matter, a few people have asked to be taken off my mailing list, which is fair enough; but I am surprised to hear that any people were *affronted* by receiving fanzines unasked. Clearly my expectations are not shared.

Like Bill, I have started to find myself with nothing to say about some fanzines I receive, good or bad. Time after time I feel like making up a loc to a fictitious fanzine completely unlike the one I'm responding to, just to confuse and bamboozle the readers.

It would be great to find people who were actually engaged with *The Obdurate Eye* – in the sense of finding or making up neat ideas, seeing what they can tie into, maybe even generating something useful in the mundane sense – but I realize now that relatively few people are on that wavelength.

**This Here...** #75 is (mostly) written, edited and produced by: Nic Farey, published on *efanzines.com* by the Grace of Burns. Locs & that to: 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, or Email [fareynic@gmail.com](mailto:fareynic@gmail.com).

Interesting dreams you have! I wish that mine had more story structure and resolution.

Congratulations on you two winning the Corflu 50 Fund!

Have you any suggestions about fundraising, and about popularizing a fan fund?

Glad you got the parking ticket dismissed – the total fee dismays me, and leaves me wondering if I was smarter than I knew, never having a driver's license, much less a car.

You asked about the correct plural for "deinotherium": I think it's "deinotheria," but then I'm making an assumption about which class of nouns the word belongs to. (Not to mention I only studied Latin, and most of these species names are pasted together from Greek roots.)

Your use of "DoBFO" for surpassingly obvious things reminds me: I want to itemize all the assumptions that are supposed to be obvious, but I Just Don't Get. Or I think they're Not Necessarily So. Or I tell myself "Now I know just how alien you humans are." Make a list, please?

Or maybe this is learned helplessness on my part. I keep thinking, though, that a surprising number of people are like me – for whatever reasons, they Just Don't Get the Word about how to complete tax returns or get the damn computer to work again.

I'm surprised you didn't know the term "the old sod" until it was explained; I came across it in the title to a Leonard Wibberley novel about a leprechaun. But most often, the term I heard from my father and others was "the old country."

I enjoyed Kim Huett's anecdote about the bear trying to get on an intercity bus! When did Australia acquire bears, and when did they acquire literacy?

**Christian New Age Quarterly** 26:3, Spring 2024, Catherine Groves ed., PO Box 276, Clifton, NJ 07015-0276, U.S.A., [info@christiannewage.com](mailto:info@christiannewage.com).

I was interested to see how Matthew Striegel's lead article defined fact and truth. He took a while to make a distinction, as on page 2 (second column).

Joanne Winetzki's article "Finding Happiness" started, instead, by examining the word "freedom." Eventually I arrived at the definition that freedom is the ability to get to your goal, not unlimited freedom of movement (as seems to be the standard assumption in North American cultures). Of course, this begs the question of what anyone's real goal is ... which is worth asking, and exploring. But it's uncomfortable to dig up our assumptions for examination.

I read the rest of this issue of CNAQ with interest, but I don't think you have enough space for me to respond to everything adequately.

**Pablo Lennis** #439, June 2024, John Thiel ed., 30 N. 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Lafayette, IN 47904, U.S.A.

Your story "Omnis Vivandi" was ... not exactly gripping. In fact I couldn't tell when the story started to lead somewhere, and I kept being thrown off by the odd way your characters were talking. Perhaps this story needs workshopping?

Jeffrey Redmond's story "The Hero's Wives" also read oddly, because it was told in the mode of a folktale, rather than in the dialogue of the characters. Maybe it was meant to emulate sword-and-sorcery adventures, or even folktales and sagas.

**Vanamonde**, selected apazines from #1465 (Sept. 20, 2021) to #1590 (April 16, 2024)

The great things about *Vanamonde* are a) these are zippy little one-sheet zines (for APA-L, a weekly Los Angeles APA), b) they're full of ideas and curious bits of forgotten lore, c) they're by John Hertz, one of the best-educated and most literate writers in LASFS, or indeed in English-language fandom. In the April 16<sup>th</sup> edition: a sort of review of Tim Powers' 2023 novel *My Brother's Keeper*, so allusive and elliptical I simply must buy the book; and mailing comments, in which John cites a 1926 story by Rudyard Kipling which appears to describe a microscope ... appearing three centuries before any microscope is recorded in history. Makes you wonder how much science fiction Kipling wrote!

***The N3F Review of Books Incorporating Prose Bono*** May 2024; published by the National Fantasy Fan Federation,, PO Box 143, Tonopah NV 89049 and is distributed for free to N3F Members and archival sites., Editor: George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609, [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net). Where N3F members are invited to submit reviews of new and recent SF, fantasy and horror, and many book reviews are here. In this edition, Prof. Phillies also invites all interested fans to submit their fanfiction to N'APA, the N3F APA. How can I resist?

***Perryscope* 44**, May 2024, is an issue of a personalzine published mostly monthly by Perry Middlemiss, 32 Elphin Grove, Hawthorn, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3122. E: [perry@middlemiss.org](mailto:perry@middlemiss.org).

*Perryscope* gives a very lively, very personal look at the life of a retired SF fan in Australia. The more you read this, the more impressive is the scope of Perry's interests and activities (traveling, reading, meeting local SF fans, Australian wineries and all that oenology entails; reviewing mainstream, SF and mystery books and TV series; and producing podcasts), the scope of his contributors' knowledge and occupations (Julian Warner on the changing magazine publishing scene, Martin Fields on the London scene in the 1960s). Plus letters!

***Space Cowboy's Accretion* #9**, May 2024, author / editor Jean-Paul L. Garnier, 61871 29 Palms Hwy. Joshua Tree, CA 92252 [spacecowboybooks@gmail.com](mailto:spacecowboybooks@gmail.com)

All I know about Joshua Tree, California is that Jean-Paul Garnier runs a bookstore there, he is also a very active participant in the local writerly/SF scene, and he not only produces a podcast as well, he self-publishes fiction and produces this frequent newsletter. Like, wow.

***FanActivity Gazette*** July 2024; e-mail to [mindyhunt@scifi4me.com](mailto:mindyhunt@scifi4me.com) or [jphunt@scifi4me.com](mailto:jphunt@scifi4me.com)

Mindy Hunt asks about a regular convention column, and I answer YES, I would like to know about upcoming conventions. (Particularly Canadian ones, but I've been doing the online research and keeping her informed.) This issue features a lengthy review of "A Martian Odyssey," one of the first SF stories with a markedly alien character, and a profile of the author, Stanley Weinbaum.

***Tightbeam* #357**, June 2024. "We are the N3F literary fanzine, not the novel and anthology fanzine, but the fanzine that tries to cover all tastes in fandom, such as anime, comics, cosplay, films, novels, biographies, poetry, music, short stories, food, ... The Editors are: George Phillies [phillies@4liberty.net](mailto:phillies@4liberty.net), 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, and Jon Swartz [judgeswartz@gmail.com](mailto:judgeswartz@gmail.com)."

Entertaining reviews of, well, everything. Good, light reading.

**My Back Pages** #30 – articles and essays by Richard Lynch, P.O. Box 3120, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20885 USA; [rw\\_lynch \(at\) yahoo \(dot\) com](mailto:rw_lynch@yahoo.com).

As Mr. Lynch points out in his editorial, this collection of articles (reprinted mostly from File770.com, otherwise from other fanzines) has a common theme of summer, with the secondary motif of SF conventions. I was engrossed by his conreport on the 2019 Worldcon in Dublin.

**This Here ...** #76, Nic Farey ed., Locs & that to: 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, USA, or Email [fareynic@gmail.com](mailto:fareynic@gmail.com)

With this issue: a “Wingnuts” collaboration by TEDDY HARVIA! and BRAD FOSTER!; Nic Farey reveals the political opinions he usually keeps to himself; lost secrets of the soul music scene REVEALED!; Nic Farey and Bill Breiding explore the critical differences between fans and fanwriting in APAs, fanzines, and especially genzines; the woes of presenting a chronic illness to the American medical system, even with the most sympathetic staff; and The Usual Suspects.



# Littera Scripta Manet

## NEW BOOK RELEASES IN JULY 2024

White Dwarf Books aka Dead Write Books

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Abbreviations: hc = hardcover, tp = trade (oversized) paperback, [UK ed] = British publication, [CDN ed] = Canadian publication. Default is US publication.

Other Titles: Please note that this listing is not exhaustive; we have many more (several hundred more) titles coming during this period.

### July 2024 New Fantasy and Science Fiction Releases

Aryan, Stephen. THE BLOOD DIMMED TIDE. [THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE FALCON #2]. Angry Robot, 24.99 tp.

Asaro, Catherine. THE DOWN DEEP. [SKOLIAN DUST KNIGHTS #1]. Baen, 37.00 hc.

Bacigalupi, Paolo. NAVOLA. Knopf, 39.99 hc.

Bannen, Megan. THE UNDERMINING OF TWYLA AND FRANK. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Barclay, Linwood. LOOK BOTH WAYS. Morrow, 12.99 pb.

Briggs, Patricia. WINTER LOST. [MERCY THOMPSON #14]. Ace, 39.99 hc.

Buba, Gabriella. SAINTS OF STORM AND SORROW. [THE STORMBRINGER SAGA]. Titan, 23.99 tp.

Buckell, Tobias & Dave Klecha. THE RUNES OF ENGAGEMENT. Tachyon, 22.95 tp.

Buehlman, Christopher. THE DAUGHTERS' WAR. [BLACKTONGUE]. Tor, 38.99 hc.

Cameron, Miles. BREAKING HELL. [THE AGE OF BRONZE #3]. Mobius, 35.00 hc.

Carey, Jacqueline. CASSIEL'S SERVANT. [KUSHIEL'S LEGACY #4]. Tor, 24.99 tp.

Carey, M. R. ECHO OF WORLDS. [THE PANDOMINION #2]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Carpenter, Shawn. THE PRICE OF REDEMPTION. Saga, 25.99 tp.



Casey, Brendan. SHE THAT LAY SILENT-LIKE UPON OUR SHORE. John Murray, 26.99 tp.

Caves, S. B. HONEYCOMB. Datura, 24.99 tp.

Chu, Wesley. THE ART OF DESTINY. [THE WAR ARTS SAGA #2]. Del Rey, 25.99 tp.

Clare, Cassandra. SWORD CATCHER. Del Rey, 27.99 tp.

Cox, Greg. LOST TO ETERNITY. [STAR TREK]. Pocket, 25.99 tp.

Dawson, Juno. QUEEN B: THE STORY OF ANNE BOLEYN, WITCH QUEEN. Penguin, 24.95 tp.

Dimova, Genoveva. FOUL DAYS. [WITCH'S COMPENDIUM OF MONSTERS #1]. Tor, 23.99 tp.

Dixon, Ruby. BOUND TO THE SHADOW PRINCE. W by Wattpad, 23.99 tp.

Djuna. COUNTERWEIGHT. Vintage, 23.00 tp.

Dramis, Kate. THE CURSE OF SINS. [CURSE OF SAINTS #2]. Sourcebooks Casablanca, 26.99 tp.

Durst, Sarah Beth. THE SPELLSHOP: SPECIAL EDITION. Bramble, 39.99 hc.

Eve, Laure. BLACKHEART GHOSTS. Quercus, 19.99 tp.

Flynn, Michael. IN THE BELLY OF THE WHALE. CAEZIK SF & Fantasy, 25.99 tp.

Frost, Gregory. HOODE. [RHYMER #2]. Baen, 37.00 hc.

Gallagher, Elaine. UNEXPLODED REMNANTS. Tor.com, 22.99 tp.

Gong, Chloe. IMMORTAL LONGINGS. [FLESH & FALSE GODS #1]. Saga, 25.99 tp.

Gordon, Marianne. THE GILDED CROWN. [THE RAVEN'S TRADE #1]. Voyager, 23.99 tp.

Gornichec, Genevieve. THE WEAVER AND THE WITCH QUEEN. Ace, 25.99 tp.

Green, Simon R. FOR LOVE OF MAGIC. Baen, 12.99 pb.

Grossman, Lev. THE BRIGHT SWORD. Viking, 48.00 hc.

Harkness, Deborah. BLACK BIRD ORACLE. Ballantine, 42.00 hc.

Harris, Charlaine. ALL THE DEAD SHALL WEEP. [GUNNIE ROSE #5]. Saga, 24.99 tp.

Hearne, Kevin. A CURSE OF KRAKENS. [THE SEVEN KENNINGS #3]. Del Rey, 12.99 pb.

Holborn, Stark. NINTH LIFE. Titan, 22.99 tp.

Hur, Anton. TOWARD ETERNITY: A NOVEL. HarperVia, 24.99 tp.

Islington, James. THE WILL OF THE MANY. [HIERARCHY #1]. Saga, 29.99 tp.

Johnson, Les (ed). THE ROSS 248 PROJECT. Baen, 12.99 pb.

Keetch, Sophie. LE FAY. [THE MORGAN LE FAY SERIES #2]. Random House Canada, 24.95 tp.

Kim, Sophie. THE GOD AND THE GUMIHO. Del Rey, 24.95 tp.

King, Stephen. FAIRY TALE. Pocket, 14.99 pb.

Klune, T.J. RAVENSONG. [GREEN CREEK #2]. Tor, 26.99 tp.

Leede, C. J. MAEVE FLY. Nightfire, 24.50 tp.

Liar, Benjamin. THE FAILURES. [WANDERLANDS]. DAW, 37.99 hc.

Long, H. M. BLACK TIDE SON. [THE WINTER SEA #2]. Titan, 23.99 tp.

Low, P. H. THESE DEATHLESS SHORES. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Lyons, Jenn. THE SKY ON FIRE. Tor, 39.99 hc.

Macdonald, Helen & Sin Blanche. PROPHET. Penguin Canada, 23.00 tp.

Martin, George R. R.. A SONG OF ICE AND FIRE 2025 CALENDAR: ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDDIE MENDOZA. Bantam, 24.95 cal.

Mckinney, Chris. SUNSET, WATER CITY. [WATER CITY TRILOGY #3]. Soho Crime, 23.95 tp.

McMyne, Mary. A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME. Redhook, 25.99 tp.

Milas, John. THE MILITIA HOUSE. Holt, 23.99 tp.

Modesitt, L. E. Jr. CONTRARIAN. [GRAND ILLUSION #3]. Tor, 19.99 pb.

Napper, T. R. GHOST OF THE NEON GOD. Titan, 23.99 hc.

Nix, Garth. SIR HEReward AND MISTER FITZ: STORIES OF THE WITCH KNIGHT AND THE PUPPET SORCERER. Voyager, 23.99 tp.

Ogundiran, Tobi. IN THE SHADOW OF THE FALL. [GUARDIANS OF THE GODS #1]. Tor.com, 27.99 hc.

Okosun, Ehigbor. FORGED BY BLOOD. [THE TAINTED BLOOD DUOLOGY #1]. Voyager, 24.99 tp.

Pechacek, Jared. THE WEST PASSAGE. Tor.com, 38.99 hc.

Priest, Cherie. THE DROWNING HOUSE. Poisoned Pen, 24.99 tp.

Reeves, Keanu & China Mieville. THE BOOK OF ELSEWHERE. Random House Canada, 38.00 hc.

Rozakis, Caitlin. DREADFUL. Titan, 23.99 tp.

Sagas, L. M. GRAVITY LOST. [AMBIT'S RUN #2]. Tor, 24.99 tp.

Saint, Jennifer. HERA. Flatiron, 25.99 tp.

Sanderson, Brandon. THE FRUGAL WIZARD'S HANDBOOK FOR SURVIVING MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. Tor, 26.99 tp.

Sangoyomi, O. O. MASQUERADE. Forge, 36.99 hc.

Shatner, William. BOLDLY GO: REFLECTIONS ON A LIFE OF AWE AND WONDER. Atria, 25.99 tp.

Sibley, Brian. THE MAPS OF MIDDLE-EARTH: FROM NUMENOR AND BELERIAND TO WILDERLAND AND MIDDLE-EARTH. HarperCollins, 45.00 hc.

Song, K. X. THE NIGHT ENDS WITH FIRE. Ace, 39.99 hc.

Srivatsa, Prashanth. THE SPICE GATE. Voyager, 37.00 hc.

Thomas, Cari. SHADOWSTITCH. [THREADNEEDLE # 2]. Voyager, 24.99 tp.

Tidhar, Lavie (ed). THE BEST OF WORLD SF: 3. AdAstra, 23.99 tp.

Tingle, Chuck. BURY YOUR GAYS. Nightfire, 35.99 hc.

Trias, Fernanda. PINK SLIME: A NOVEL. Scribner, 33.00 hc.

Vee, Julia & Ken Bebel. BLOOD JADE. [PHOENIX HOARD #2]. Tor, 38.99 hc.

Wells, Martha. WITCH KING. Tor.com, 24.99 tp.

Wendig, Chuck. BLACK RIVER ORCHARD. Del Rey, 25.99 tp.

Wexler, Django. MEMORY'S WAKE. [DUNGEONS & DRAGONS SPELLJAMMER]. Worlds, 39.99 hc.

Zahn, Timothy. THE ICARUS CHANGELING. [ICARUS SAGA #4]. Baen, 37.00 hc.

### **July 2024 New Mystery and Crime Fiction Releases**

Abell, Stig. DEATH IN A LONELY PLACE. [JAKE JACKSON #2]). Hemlock, 25.99 tp.

Armstrong, K. L. KNOWN TO THE VICTIM. Doubleday Canada, 25.00 tp.

Atkins, Ace. DON'T LET THE DEVIL RIDE. Morrow, 37.00 hc.

Authors, Various. HALLOWEEN CUPCAKE MURDER. Cozies, 11.99 pb.

Carlene O'Connor, Liz Ireland and Carol J. Perry each contribute a Halloween mystery.

Beaton, M. C. & R. W. Green. DEAD ON TARGET. [AGATHA RAISIN]. St. Martins, 12.99 pb.

Bentley, Don. TOM CLANCY WEAPONS GRADE. [JACK RYAN JR. #11]. Berkley, 14.99 pb.

Bottini, Oliver. THE INVISIBLE WEB. [THE BLACK FOREST INVESTIGATIONS #5]. Quercus, 19.99 tp.

Brennan, Allison. NORTH OF NOWHERE. Minotaur, 12.99 pb.

Brennan, Allison. YOU'LL NEVER FIND ME. [ANGELHART INVESTIGATIONS #1]. MIRA, 12.99 pb.

Cartmel, Andrew. ASHRAM ASSASSIN. [PAPERBACK SLEUTH #2]. Titan, 23.99 tp.

Casey, Jane. A STRANGER IN THE FAMILY. [MAEVE KERRIGAN #11]. Hemlock, 25.99 tp.

Chien, Vivien. PEKING DUCK AND COVER. [NOODLE SHOP #10]. Minotaur, 12.99 pb.

Child, Lee & Andrew. THE SECRET. [JACK REACHER #28]. Dell, 14.99 pb.

Childs, Laura. HONEY DROP DEAD. [TEA SHOP MYSTERY #26]. Berkley, 13.50 pb.

Coben, Harlan. THE MATCH. [WILDE #2]. Grand Central, 13.99 pb.

Cornwell, Bernard. SHARPE'S COMMAND. [SHARPE #14]. Harpercollins, 12.99 pb.

Cox, Helen. A BODY IN THE BORDERLANDS. [KITTY HARTLEY #8]. Quercus, 19.99 tp.

Craven, M. W. FEARLESS. Flatiron, 24.99 tp.

Craven, M. W. NOBODY'S HERO. Flatiron, 39.99 hc.

Day, Maddie. MURDER AT THE RUSTY ANCHOR. [COZY CAPERS BOOK GROUP #6]. Cozies, 11.99 pb.

Dean, Will. BLACK RIVER. [TUVA MOODYSON #3]. Hodder, 19.99 tp.

Dean, Will. WOLF PACK. [TUVA MOODYSON #5]. Hodder, 19.99 tp.

DeMille, Nelson. THE MAZE. [JOHN COREY]. Pocket, 14.99 pb.

Feeney, Alice. DAISY DARKER. Flatiron, 12.99 pb.

Ferguson, Ian. MYSTERY IN THE TITLE. [MIRANDA ABBOTT #2]. HarperCollinsCanada, 25.99 tp.

Fields, Helen. PROFILE K. Avon, 25.99 tp.

Fluke, Joanne. PINK LEMONADE CAKE MURDER. [HANNAH SWENSEN #29]. Cozies, 12.99 pb.

Goldin, Megan. STAY AWAKE. St. Martin's, 12.99 pb No US.

Gray, Alex. OUT OF DARKNESS. Sphere, 34.99 hc.

Greaney, Mark. SENTINEL. [ARMORED #2]. Berkley, 39.99 hc.

Grisham, John. THE EXCHANGE: AFTER THE FIRM. Vintage, 24.95 tp.

Hannah, Mari. THE LONGEST GOODBYE. Orion, 19.99 tp.

Harding, Robyn. THE HATERS. Grand Central, 24.00 tp.

Heider, Elizabeth. MAY THE WOLF DIE. Penguin, 27.99 tp.

Heller, Peter. THE LAST RANGER. Vintage, 24.95 tp.

Hewson, David. THE BORGIA PORTRAIT. Canongate, 22.50 tp.

Hirahara, Naomi. EVERGREEN. [JAPANTOWN #2]. Soho Crime, 24.95 tp.

Holland, Sam. THE PUPPET MASTER. [MAJOR CRIMES #3]. Hemlock, 23.99 tp.

Huber, Anna Lee. A DECEPTIVE COMPOSITION. [LADY DARBY #12]. Berkley, 24.95 tp.

James, Peter. STOP THEM DEAD. [ROY GRACE #19]. Pan, 21.99 tp.

Jensen, Louise. INTRUDERS. Harpercollins, 25.99 tp.

Johnson, Craig. FIRST FROST. [LONGMIRE #20]. Viking, 39.99 hc.

Kanon, Joseph. SHANGHAI. Scribner, 38.99 hc.

Khan, Vaseem. DEATH OF A LESSER GOD. [MALABAR HOUSE #4]. Hodder, 19.99 tp.

Koryta, Michael. AN HONEST MAN. Mulholland, 25.99 tp.

Lange, Richard. JOE HUSTLE. Mulholland, 38.00 hc.

Lansdale, Joe R. SUGAR ON THE BONES. [HAP AND LEONARD #13]. Mulholland, 38.00 hc.

Leon, Donna. REFINER'S FIRE. [COMMISSARIO GUIDO BRUNETTI #33]. Grove, 42.95 hc.

Lillard, Amy. MURDER FOR THE SAGES. [SUNFLOWER CAFE]. Kensington, 11.99 pb.

Lippman, Laura. PROM MOM. Morrow, 23.99 tp.

MacBride, Stuart. IN A PLACE OF DARKNESS. Bantam UK, 26.99 tp.

Maitland, K. J. RIVERS OF TREASON. [DANIEL PURSGLOVE #3]. Headline, 19.99 TP.

Mason, Simon. LOST AND NEVER FOUND. [DI WILKINS]. Quercus, 36.99 hc.

McGarrity, Michael. THE LONG AGO. Norton, 21.99 tp.

Mead, Tom. THE MURDER WHEEL: A LOCKED-ROOM MYSTERY. Penzler, 22.95 tp.

Minix, Sue. COVER FOR MURDER. [BOOKSTORE MYSTERY]. Avon, 22.99 tp.

Mosse, Greg. MURDER AT BUNTING MANOR. [MAISIE COOPER #2]. Hodder, 19.99 tp.

Parker, T. Jefferson. DESPERATION REEF. Forge, 38.99 hc.

Pastor, Ben. THE VENUS OF SALO. [MARTIN BORA #8]. Bitter Lemon, 27.50 tp.

Patterson, James & Dolly Parton. RUN, ROSE, RUN. Grand Central, 13.99 pb.

Patterson, James & Brendan DuBois. BLOWBACK. Grand Central, 13.99 pb.

Penzler, Otto (ed). GOLDEN AGE WHODUNITS. Mysterious, 23.95 tp.

Quinn, Spencer. MRS. PLANSKY'S REVENGE. Forge, 23.99 tp.

Rampo, Edogawa. THE GOLD MASK. Penguin Classic, 21.99 tp.

Reichs, Kathy. THE BONE HACKER. [TEMPERANCE BRENNAN #22]. Scribner, 14.99 tp.

Robards, Karen. SOME MURDERS IN BERLIN. MIRA, 35.99 hc.

Robb, J. D. RANDOM IN DEATH. [EVE DALLAS #58]. Griffin, 24.00 tp.

Robotham, Michael. STORM CHILD. Simon & Schuster, 24.99 tp.

Silva, Daniel. THE COLLECTOR. [GABRIEL ALLON #23]. Harper, 13.99 pb.

Silva, Daniel. A DEATH IN CORNWALL. [GABRIEL ALLON #24]. Harper, 24.99 tp.

Smirnoff, Karin. THE GIRL IN THE EAGLE'S TALONS. [GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO #7]. Penguin Canada, 23.00 tp.

Stefanovich-Thomson, Alexis. THE ROAD TO HEAVEN. [PATRICK BIRD MYSTERY #1]. Dundurn, 24.99 tp.



Stout, Rex. HOW LIKE A GOD. Hard Case Crime, 22.99 tp.

Swanson, Louise. END OF STORY. Hodder, 19.99 tp.

Tapper, Jake. ALL THE DEMONS ARE HERE. Little Brown, 25.99 tp.

Taylor, Brad. THE DEVIL'S RANSOM. [PIKE LOGAN #17]. Morrow, 12.99 pb.

Thomas, Sherry. A RUSE OF SHADOWS. [LADY SHERLOCK #8]. Berkley, 24.95 tp.

Thomson, Lesley. THE MYSTERY OF YEW TREE HOUSE. [DETECTIVE'S DAUGHTER].  
Aries, 22.99 tp.

Toyne, Simon. THE CLEARING. [LAUGHTON REES #2]. Morrow, 23.99 tp.

Walker, Martin. A CHATEAU UNDER SIEGE. [BRUNO, CHIEF OF POLICE #16].  
Vintage, 24.95 tp.

Winspear, Jacqueline. THE COMFORT OF GHOSTS. [MAISIE DOBBS #18]. Soho  
Crime, 39.95 hc.

Youers, Rio. THE BANG-BANG SISTERS. Morrow, 39.50 hc.