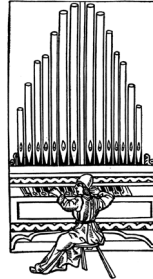


THE OBDURATE EYE #57, November 2025, a personal zine from Garth Spencer, 6960 Damon Street, Vancouver, BC CANADA V5S 3H7, Email garth.van.spencer@gmail.com or hrothgarweems@gmail.com. Garth acknowledges that he does this on the denounced territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, səliwətaɫ, and skwxwú7mesh peoples. This zine endorses the Port Alberti in 2030 bid. (Was that for Worldcon or Westercon?)



The organ of no clique or party

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First World Problems

The first thing on my mind these days is “where do computer files disappear to?” This problem emerged when I thought I had downloaded some email attachments to my thumb drive at Starbucks, came home, and discovered that the files were empty. (I had to do this because the Internet connection at my house is disconnected.) The files were there, the filenames were there, but the files were blank. So I had to go to Starbucks all over again, thus delaying my latest work-from-home assignments.

This is little better than finding my digital files disappearing into the electricity entirely. (I had to reconstruct half of this fanzine when I discovered my records had defaulted to an earlier, incomplete draft. WTF???)

Are there even words for problems like these? Can I look for remedies online? Under what keywords?

In the interim I made the mistake of trying to describe this problem to one of my housemates. He didn't get it and kept interrupting about the difference between Outlook and Thunderbird email programs, and the difference between the Windows 365 platform on my desktop and the Linux Mint platform on my laptop, and generally reminded me of my other problem, chronic communication breakdowns with other people. Little wonder if I don't ask people enough questions.

Is there even a word for this problem? Can I look for remedies online? Under what keywords?

There's probably a lot of things I could do by myself, to fix the Internet connection at home ... or to make sure to keep healthy, or to maintain this house, or to look after my finances. Very simple things, probably, but for no particular reason I just didn't run across them.

You probably experience random holes in your education and know-how, too. Don't you?

The last thing on my mind these days is “what the hell should I be doing with my life?” Since I am now semi-retired this shouldn't be a problem. But I am still, for no reason, working out issues that date back a few years or decades ... or, specifically, to Other People's Bullshit. It took surprisingly long to identify the OPB content in work issues, and family, and intimate relationships, and fandom. It's taking surprisingly long to get OPB content out of my head, too.

The only things to do with life, really, are to learn things and grow in character, if you're even capable of learning and growing. Did I have to spend over half a century to work this out? No, I don't think I should have had to.

What are you thankful for learning? And what are you resentful for missing out on?



Some joker flew the black flag over Heritage Hall in Vancouver, at the beginning of October. I enjoy this, but I have no explanation.

LoCs

Perry Middlemiss, October 2, 2025

I am very much in agreement with you that trying to take less notice of the day-to-day news is advantageous for your mental health. As I get older (I just moved into my 8th decade - good god!) I want my stress levels to decrease, not increase or be exacerbated by nonsense. That is not to say that I take no notice of the news at all. On the contrary I do try to keep on top of what is going on, I just don't take many deep dives into the abyss - that way madness lies.

These days I tend to get my news from a couple of TV news broadcasts here in Australia (ABC and SBS both funded by the Government but run independently) and a couple of newspapers (*The Age* and *The Guardian*). That's quite enough. It is quite interesting how easy it is to get a fair idea of what is going on by just skimming the headlines or getting a short summary on the TV news. If something catches my interest I can dig into it a little bit more but I try to step back from that if it seems to be getting too much of an obsession. Current affairs programs, which dig deeply into a topic, tend to be off the menu.

Is it working? Well, I think so. I'm not trying to shy away from the world, just trying to make sure my interactions with it don't overwhelm me. I can see signs of this in some of my friends and I gently attempt to advise dropping their news consumption. I'm not sure that any of them are following my advice as yet. But I'll keep working on them.

((It takes a strong sense of the ridiculous to take the news in stride these days. Maybe we should start a write-in campaign, asking the Powers That Be to come up with more credible performances. Only where do we send the petition?))

Catherine Groves, October 3

That is terrible news, that Guy Lillian has passed on. I will miss him so much. I can't write anymore; this is devastating to me.

((A good man. He will be missed.))

Mark Nelson, October 4

As I missed the deadline for issue 56 I'd better start the loc on issue 56 sooner rather than later.

I think it's normal to have periods in your life when you lack motivation. Or at least there have been periods in *my* life when I have lacked motivation. It's beneficial for *me* to think that this is a normal state of affairs. Of course, I know people who always seem to be pushing forward on multiple fronts. No steps backward for them, only steps forward. I like to think that they are the exception, not the rule. I can look back, with the benefit of hindsight, and ask should I have done X, Y, or Z. But overall I'm happy with my life today. Perhaps it's a trite observation. We can't change the past, but we can change our future. Identifying errors in the past is only helpful if this will allow you to avoid making errors in the future.

((Eventually you just have to shrug off Other People's Bullshit. That is about all I have learned in life.))

Like you, I have also noticed having a number of senior moments. The two frequent expressions of this are in my writing and speaking. Sometimes when I read through a passage I discover that one of the words I've written is wrong. I don't mean that I misspelt the word I was aiming for. That's not a senior moment, I've been doing that for most of my life. For some reason spelling has never been my strong point. No, it's worse than that Jim. I write a completely different word to the one I intended. A very similar thing sometimes happens when I'm speaking. I'll say a random word that's unrelated to the point that I'm making. Or sometimes I'll say the words but change the order. I find the spoken errors to be more disconcerting than the written ones.

((You're not the only one. I sometimes find myself correcting simple errors when I transcribe dictation for people with degrees ... errors like leaving out the critical verb that makes a sentence, or the critical noun that names the subject, even in a whole article.

((What really gets me are the times when I am using perfectly plain English and still can't make myself understood ... or when people think they are speaking or writing quite clearly, and I can't make head or tail of their words. Because if yes then else without doubt and or but this point in time raisins.))

Returning to the question of hanging artwork. We have a very small room at the front of our house. I've put two bookcases in there, so we call it the library. I have a large photograph that I'm thinking of hanging in there. Unfortunately, being a new house, the walls are not made from brick. We asked the husband of a friend, who is very handy, and he declined to hang the photograph. If it had been brick, no problem. The wall's made from Hebel and he's worried what the structural consequences will be of

hanging a heavy photograph on the wall. Conceivably this photograph might be spending a considerable amount of time leaning against the wall.

((I am guessing that Hebel is a kind of drywall, and the photograph frame is a bit much for that substance to support. Right now I have a project of printing out wise quotes and poems, and putting them in very cheap frames, to put on my walls. I figure that the cheap cardboard frames I get at a dollar store will do no harm to my walls.))

Mark Nelson, October 20, 2025

I'm reading with increasing frequency that people I know have decided not to read the news. Based upon the "Australian experiment" I think that, if you want to promote civilised behaviour, a good first step forwards is to make voting compulsory. It's certainly not a panacea, but it's a small step. Of course, making voting compulsory in countries where it is currently not compulsory is a non-starter.

((Eventually it dawned upon me that humans generally have no conception of finding out anything, before they pass judgment on politics and sports and other people's religion and sexual behaviour. It would be a useful custom to adopt, but how do you popularize new customs?))

I agree with you that APA fanzines are a breed apart from generally available fanzines. And I say that without wanting to start a fight!

Social calculus in the sense of Asimov's Psychohistory is, and always will be, psychobabble which will remain confined to the pages of his Foundation novels. Even Asimov realised that it was all nonsense, as exemplified by the plot line involving The Mule. Social calculus, in the sense that you use the term – particularly with reference to "advertisers, political parties and governments" which are trying to shape "how large groups of people will behave" – is known as manipulation, which has been a well-practised human skill for a very long time! Social calculus, in the sense of demographers making short-term predictions about the demand for services, schools, utilities etc., is applied statistics.

"Clearly I was never exposed to psychology, sociology or anthropology courses with any mathematical rigour;"

Do such courses exist? Well, it depends upon what you mean by "mathematical rigour" and what you want to achieve. For example, there are only seven one-dimensional black and white patterns. (Technically you can say that there are seven one-dimensional space groups, which classify the ways patterns can repeat in 1d considering translations and reflections.) Anthropologists have used these mathematical patterns to classify the types of patterns that they find in, for example, basketwork in different cultures. Not all cultures use all seven patterns. Different cultures might use the seven patterns with different frequencies. I have a book on this topic in my office because I taught this material in a "mathematics for liberal students" subject once, and only once, just over twenty years ago.

((Somehow this reminds me of a book titled A Pattern Language, based on the idea that our commercial architecture is made of standard components such as bathrooms, living rooms, kitchen layouts, and so on. When you try replacing windows and doors, however, the components can seem a lot less standardized.))

Duncan Shields covers a couple of movies that involved Preston Sturges. That gives me the opportunity to reprint a small item about Samuel Goldwyn from the most recent issue of my ANZAPA fanzine.

Goldwyn, ever the seductive wooer, was working on Preston Sturges. "Will you give me your word of honor," he asked, "that you will come over here to me when you finish your Paramount picture?"

"No," said Sturges. "I won't."

"All right," said Goldwyn. "If you won't give me your word of honor, will you give me your promise?"

Returning to your list of Life Skills from issue 51:

How to hunt and cook a rabbit: Learning how to hunt has never been on the list of Life Skills that I've aspired to. I have cooked rabbit a small number of times, but only rabbit that has already been prepared. One of my colleagues in the School of Mathematics was the late Keith Tognetti (1930-2023). He had many interesting stories to tell. He was old enough to remember going rabbit hunting with his dad in the 1930s, when Australia was in the Great Depression. His comment was that he'd eaten enough rabbit in those years; he never wanted to eat one again.

((At this point in the exercise I realized I was no longer listing points of common knowledge, but items in our cultural base that may have gone out of common practice. This is the definition of 'mission creep'.))

How to identify cloud formations (and what they mean): I'd like to be able to do this. I don't think it's a life skill, but it's a cool skill.

((An elementary school taught my class all about cumulus and cirrostratus clouds and other signs and portents.))

How to identify dinosaurs: Wait a minute. I was under the impression that your life skills were preparing us for the forthcoming Zombie Apocalypse. If you're replacing this scenario with some kind of *Jurassic Park* situation in which dinosaurs roam the Earth then shouldn't you replace "How to hunt and cook a rabbit" with "How to hunt and cook a dinosaur"?

((Actually I was hoping to prepare people for the global breakdown of manufacturing and transportation technology, or the loss of enough skilled tradespeople to maintain availability of goods and services we all depend upon. You may think of that as a sort of Zombie Apocalypse, if it follows from the general endumbification of the human race.))

Kidding aside, dinosaurs are cool. Which is perhaps why your next skill is...

How to identify fossils: When I was a first-year undergraduate I took a year-long course in Earth Sciences. This included a subject in invertebrate palaeontology. I've forgot anything that I learnt from this subject. I remember one thing. A typical lecture consisted of giving us a fossil and we had to prepare a scientific report on it in the approved manner. Part of this process involved sketching the fossil. I was rubbish at sketching the fossil. I remember a second thing. This is that trilobites are, in a very overused word in this loc, cool.

Something else that I vaguely remember. I don't think I learnt this in palaeontology, so I don't count it as a third thing. Canada is home to a famous fossil site with

exceptional preservation from the Cambrian period, the Burgess Shale in British Columbia.

((The famous Burgess Shales, yes, the result of the ancient Cambrian explosion of new marine species with unprecedented body plans.))

How to identify insects and spiders: I've never needed to do this and I'm not interested in learning how to do this. Australia has a number of venomous spiders; these are invariably described as being poisonous, which they are not, because they inject their venom. These are mostly not dangerous to humans. However, there are two Australian spiders that can kill humans: the Redback and the Sydney Funnel-web. These are not *rare* and sometimes hear of them being discovered on properties or even in houses. There are a couple of other species that are potentially harmful. These include the mouse spider and the white-tailed spider.

((Australia is sometimes called the land where everything is trying to kill you.))

How to improve your vocabulary: The best way is to read good quality writing – or perhaps, now that subtitling is common, to watch good quality TV shows. At one stage my wife was interested in training to be a medical doctor. (This was long before we started dating.) She watched a few medical shows, *House* being one of them, and kept a notebook in which she wrote down all the medical words that were used on these shows. Even today, twenty years later, when some obscure (at least to me) medical term is mentioned, she can tell me what it means.

((If the show got it right. I have a tendency to work out medical and legal terms myself, due to taking Latin in my secular high school.))

She's also very good at doing non-cryptic crosswords, much better than me. There are two unusual things about this. Firstly, English is her second language. Secondly, she does not read for pleasure; only for work. It's a mystery to us how she has picked up such a large vocabulary. (Still, being good at crossword puzzles doesn't just require a large vocabulary. There's a strong element of pattern recognition required and an understanding of how words are formed in English.)

((Having more than one language may have a lot to do with it.))

How to improvise a battery: No idea.

((I believe that involves alternating layers of nickel coins and tissues soaked with vinegar.))

How to iron a shirt: Before my wife-to-be moved in with me, I ironed all my own clothing. (At one stage I even ironed socks and underwear. I know ... I know ... but eventually I stopped doing that). However, Sianne told me that it was infuriating watching me iron, because I iron too slow. Consequently, in the last thirteen years, I've done very little ironing. Now that I'm retired she has hinted that perhaps it's time for me to pick up the iron. Just as long as I do it when she's at work.

How to jog: I did have plans of starting an exercise routine after moving into our new house (mentioned in answer to some of your earlier skills). Even though this happened back at the end of May, for various reasons it's not happened yet. There always seems to be some reason for not doing some exercise. Writing locs springs to mind ... I

promised my GP that I would start to exercise after we moved, so sooner or later I will start.

((Simply walking a lot is a good start.))

How to juggle: Something that on occasion I've thought about trying to learn. Nothing fancy; just keeping three things up in the air would be, guess what, "cool." But I've never made an attempt to do it. I doubt I will. Not sure it will be much use in fending off Zombies and even less use in surviving the attack of the dinosaurs.

((Juggling can help create a distraction when someone is about to mug you, or attempt to survey you, or try to sell you life insurance.))

**Lloyd & Yvonne Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2
<penneys@bell.net> October 24, 2025**

AAAAAAUUUGGGHHHH! Busybusybusybusy! So much to do, and only so much time. *Obdurate Eye* 56 is up, and here I go!

I am an old journalism student...today's news makes me angry and glad I did not pursue reporting as a career. It would have been very difficult for me to stay objective, for I can't do that now. At the heart of our society today is dis- and misinformation, lying outright and puerile insults. The disintegration of civilized behavior will not last forever? I fear that our civility will disappear altogether.

((Life is a lot simpler if you just assume that reality disappeared some time in the 1970s, probably during the Reagan administration in the States, and things have been getting progressively more surreal ever since. My personal theory is that one of the Powers That Be suddenly realized the end of the world was scheduled to occur in less than a week, and in a panic they stuffed everyone overnight into a hastily-constructed virtuality, just to buy time to Finish Up the Paperwork. Only the software engineers quite forgot to build in a continuity module! This is why the allegedly most powerful country in the world appears to select mentally deficient chief executives, North Americans seem to have forgotten the kind of mutual respect between competitors that held legislatures and markets and civil society together, and I can't find Stoned Wheat Thins at the supermarket anymore. The moral of this theory is that you shouldn't take anything seriously anymore, especially not if it's labeled as news.))

The idea of civilian self-discipline is a good one, compared to others. It's not a popular idea, though, and too many people, in my humble opinion, will do as they damned well please, and you can't tell ME what to do ... In so many ways, common sense has become an oxymoron.

((Well, that simplifies my life right there.))

My loc ... oh, I do make lists, and I have a personal sheet, double-sided which I update from time to time, called Dumb Things I Gotta Do. I keep it heavily updated with all commitments and important dates listed. I have come to rely on it.

((If you got a system that works, keep using it!))

We Also Heard From: Hugh Spencer, Heath Row, Leybl Botwinik



A view of my street on October 8, 2025

And Now the News

***On Spec* Will Continue!**

After the recent announcement that *On Spec* magazine had to cease publication, we received the following:

“Shadowpaw Press of Regina, Saskatchewan, is thrilled to announce that it has agreed to carry on the legacy of *On Spec*, Canada’s premiere magazine of science fiction and fantasy. The current plan is to Kickstart an *On Spec* 2026 anthology in the spring of next year, with the goal being to publish the book through Shadowpaw Press in the fall. If the Kickstarter succeeds, the goal would be an annual anthology thereafter.

“The anthology will be open to all Canadian writers of science fiction and fantasy and edited by Shadowpaw’s publisher and editor Edward Willett, an Aurora Award-winning author who, like so many other Canadian authors, has himself been published in *On Spec*. Willett looks forward to drawing on the expertise and assistance of the current *On Spec* editorial staff as he works toward publication of the new anthology.

“Willett has previously run six successful Kickstarters, most notably the campaigns that produced the five *Shapers of Worlds* anthologies, featuring authors featured on his Aurora Award-winning podcast, ‘The Worldshapers,’ international award-winners and bestsellers among them, and numerous Canadians.

“Shadowpaw Press (shadowpawpress.com), founded in 2018, is a member of the Association of Canadian Publishers (which has awarded the press the status of Certified Canadian Publisher), and a member of Literary Press Group of Canada. Its titles are distributed by LitDistCo to bookstores across Canada. Recent science fiction and fantasy titles have included two posthumous novels by Dave Duncan, *The Traitor’s Son* and *Corridor to Nightmare*, Robert J. Sawyer’s twenty-fifth novel, *The*

Downloaded; I, Brax: A Battle Divine by Governor General's Award-winner Arthur Slade; *Fireboy* by Edward Willett; and the cyberpunk thriller *Gods of a New World* by Ryan Melsom. The press also publishes literary fiction and nonfiction and poetry.

"Watch for more details in the near future!"

(Edward Willett, Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy, October 19, 2025)

Grant Canfield (1945 - 2025)

Grant Canfield – architect, fanzine fan, and well-known fanartist – passed away on October 21, 2025, after serious illness. He was 79.

The Nov. 2025 *Ansible* tells us that Grant Canfield was a "FAAn Award-winning US fan artist whose work appeared in many zines including *Locus* and *Science Fiction Review* ... He was nominated seven times for the fan artist Hugo in the 1970s and received the Rotsler Award for life achievement in 1999."

(Ellen Klages, Facebook, October 21, 2025; Lenny Bailes, *Ansible*, Nov. 2025)

2027 Worldcon Goes to Montreal

The World Science Fiction Convention (so-called) for 2027 will be held in Montreal, Quebec instead of Spuzzum, BC.

The Continuing Saga of *Amazing Stories*

"Some people have asked...in 2026, *Amazing Stories* will celebrate its 100th birthday with special events in the US, and I suspect, in Canada, too. Publisher Steve Davidson, Managing Editor Kermit Woodall, and I will mark the return of the *Amazing Stories* magazine. With luck and timing, the first issue will be out March 10, 2026, the exact day of AS's centenary."

(Lloyd Penney, email, October 24, 2025)

Kingdom/Republic of Talossa in Alleged Crisis

Baron Alexandreu Davinescu writes on Wittenberg, the Talossan discussion board:

Azul! I wanted to reach out and see if you might be interested in supporting the Progressive Alliance, and maybe even joining us? We believe in moving Talossa forward into the future without betraying her past, and I thought that might vibe with you.

A big focus for this upcoming term is passing the *Public Process Act*, to get rid of the government's secret power to control immigration. The immigration process should play out in the public eye ... no one should get to secretly decide who's allowed to apply!

We also want to update our website (some of the links don't even work) and reach out to interesting communities, so that even more people can hear about Talossa and

learn what makes us amazing! And of course, we want to support new clubs and initiatives. Wouldn't it be fun to have more cool stuff to do?

Anyway, if this interests you, please write me back. Or you can check out our forum on Wittenberg here.

Thanks for your time!

Alexandreu

Reply to this Personal Message here:

<https://wittenberg.talossa.com/index.php?action=pm;sa=send;f=inbox;pmsg=8288;quote;u=20>

The Progressive Alliance also writes:

We're only a few days away from the end of the voting for the Clark, and we're very close to the current URL government killing *The Public Process Act*. Your Talossan government is trying to keep the power to secretly control who even gets to apply to immigrate!

It's 2025, and people around the world have learned to be careful how much power they give their governments. Even if you approve of the people in power now, Talossa is a democracy -- someone else will have that power soon. Do you trust *every* politician who will *ever* serve in the Government with the power to secretly control who's even allowed to apply?

The Public Process Act, 61RZ27, is a simple bill, and it only requires that your government is required to disclose to the public whenever they block an immigration petition. It prevents a minister or bureaucrat from just casually deleting an application.

But this URL Government is on the brink of killing *The Public Process Act* so that they can keep the power to secretly bar immigration. But no government should have that power! We need this reform! We need this progress!

Is a future minister secretly kind of a bigot? Too bad, *The Public Process Act* says that they can't secretly block queer people from applying to immigrate.

Is a future minister maybe a little too enthusiastic about their political cause? Too bad, *The Public Process Act* says that they can't secretly block someone with the "wrong" beliefs from applying to immigrate.

Does a future minister just really not like someone's "vibes?" Too bad, *The Public Process Act* says that they can't secretly block people who they don't like.

Remember, *The Public Process Act* doesn't prevent the Government from blocking the immigration of people who are abusive or delusional or dangerous -- they would just have to *tell the people*.

Contact your MZ today and tell them that you don't want the Government to have the power to secretly control who's allowed to apply to immigrate. Tell them you want transparency, and that they should vote for *The Public Process Act*, 61RZ27! Tell them that your vote in the next election depends on *their* vote *now*!

Alexandreu Davinescu for the Progressive Alliance

The [Progressive Alliance](#) wants to move Talossa forward, and we need your vote! We have a [lot of plans](#) for the future, including [getting rid of secret government control over immigration](#) and plans to [steal His Majesty's money](#). Feel free to drop in and ask about any of our policies on our party forum [here](#)!

This week, we also have a **video address** from our candidate, Baron Alexandreu Davinescu. **Watch it on [YouTube](#) or [Tiktok](#)!**

The Green Party writes:

The Green Party believes that a truly vibrant nation depends not only on the health of its political institutions, but also on the flourishing of its culture, community, and shared identity. Politics is an essential part of national life, yet when it dominates every conversation with a near-unending season, it can overshadow the deeper bonds that make Talossa unique—a rich heritage of creativity, humor, civic imagination, and friendship across borders. When I was Seneschal I did work on a project called the National Skills and Social Connections Survey parallel to the Census. Along with the Talossa Talks project it represented a continuing effort to build "connection as culture" into our national being.

By extending the time between elections, we create room for "connection as culture" as a broader, more balanced national rhythm. Our Seneschal once described Talossa's political cycle as one that moves in "dog years." Talossa is a nation of humans not dogs (for better or worse as dogs are lovely creatures lol). Our promises in politics are unrealistic because the time scales themselves are not realistic. This reform would encourage citizens to invest their energy in projects that unite rather than divide us: cultural creation, artistic expression, linguistic revival, historical preservation, and community engagement. These activities can and likely would remind us that Talossa is not simply a place for politicians to flex their latest campaign skills or theories, it is not a parliament or a ballot box—it is a living culture based on more than the same panorama of political personalities. Yours truly included.

A longer period between elections also reduces political burnout and the constant cycle of campaign competition, allowing for a more thoughtful and sustainable approach to governance. It fosters continuity, reflection, and collaboration rather than reaction and partisanship.

We envision a Talossa where political life serves cultural life—not the other way around. By nurturing an expanded apolitical culture, we reaffirm that our nation's strength lies in what we build together: shared experiences, enduring friendships, and the creative spirit that has always defined the Talossan people. Politics is a conduit, a tool, but it is not a sufficient basis for a nation's entire culture.

We support fixed, annual (read predictable) election cycles. Like the World Series starting in October we want to see a Talossan Election every January.

If you agree, we welcome your support!

Breneir Tzaracomprada for the Green Party

The following message was submitted by Mic'haglh Autófil on behalf of the Union of Free Reformists (URL) .

Mic'haglh Autófil vs. Alexandreu Davinescu: *What Sets Them Apart? The Issues:*

Autófil supports a government of trust and transparency, not micromanagement from the top.

Autófil supports keeping roles spread around instead of concentrating them in the hands of a few.

Autófil is a newer citizen with fresh ideas and enthusiasm; by his own admission, Davinescu wants to retread the same old tired past.

The Personalities:

Autófil treats his opponents with courtesy. He has never tried to weaponize the justice system to punish political opponents, or treated someone so badly that they quit Talossa.

Autófil thinks Talossa works best when we welcome new ideas, not shut them out.

Can Davinescu say the same to any of the above? No.

Davinescu and Tzaracomparada have been campaigning for this election for so long now that a good chunk of their material is laughably out-of-date, but that doesn't change the fact that the only way to guarantee sane, honest government for Talossa is with a URL majority. And the only way to guarantee a majority is if the URL gets every vote possible -- including yours!

Vote URL for Honest, Progressive Leadership

Mic'haglh Autófil on behalf of the Union of Free Reformists (URL)

Cahiers du DVD

MOVIE REVIEWS FOR OCTOBER 24th, 2025

by Duncan Shields

All We Imagine As Light (2024)(India) - A fascinating look into a couple of normal lives in modern-day Mumbai. A woman had an arranged marriage to a German a long time ago but hasn't seen him since. They talk once a year or so on the phone ever since he moved back to Germany immediately after the wedding years and years ago. She's in limbo. Her roommate is a risk-taking, flighty romantic seeing a Muslim boy which is frowned on. These two propel the plot. It's a visually rich movie that feels like a documentary passively witnessing lives instead of actors in a story. Like I gave my eyes a trip to India. Very 'slice of life.' Long and slow so it's not for everyone and I'm positive some of the deeper cultural stuff went over my head but love is always relatable. It won about a bazillion awards around the world so it's high quality. Good 'world cinema.' - VPL DVD. Streaming on Criterion and Crave. Available for rent from AppleTV. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Speak No Evil (2022)(Denmark) - A reserved couple spends a weekend in a remote cabin with a looser, more relaxed couple they just met and things don't go well. Not

the 2024 American remake. Great horror movie score. There's probably a lot of Danish/Dutch social unease and differences I'm not getting in full but the growing social awkwardness bleeding over into real horror is clear. The couples have English in common but don't speak each other's native tongue so I'm sure that level is lost in the American remake. Deeply uncomfortable and tense. That feeling when politeness and the benefit of the doubt and social contracts get you in over your head. Nuanced and well done. Maybe not quiiiiiiite 100% plausible but hey, it's a horror movie. - Streaming on Shudder, AppleTV and Tubi. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Practical Magic (1998) - I somehow never saw this. What a cast. Sandra Bullock, Nicole Kidman, Diane Weist, Stockard Channing, Aidan Quinn, Goran Visnjic, a baby Evan Rachel Wood, and a host of lady character actors you've seen before. Destroys the Bechdel test. Directed by Griffin Dunne! I guess I wasn't the target audience in 1998. What a delightful movie! The Owens women, descended from legit Salem witches, are cursed in the matters of love. After their mother's untimely death, Sandra and Nicole are raised by their aunts Stockard and Diane and romantic tragedies and curses abound. I had a wonderful time watching this. Critics seem to have savaged it at the time but, like, it's not trying to be *Citizen Kane*. Packs a lot into its 104-minute runtime. Great Halloween viewing. - streaming on Crave and Prime. Available for rent from GooglePlay and AppleTV. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Working Girls (1931) - Another film directed by the astounding Dorothy Arzner. A great pre-Hayes-code romantic comedy movie about two small-town sisters who move in to a girls' boarding house in New York, get jobs, and become romantically entangled with a few dudes. Not super racy but definitely adult. Tons of roles for women and lots of real talk. The dudes are not the focus. I really enjoyed it. - streaming on YouTube.

Insidious (2010) - A James Wan (*Malignant*, *Saw*, *The Conjuring*) film about Rose Byrne and Patrick Wilson and their kids having child possession and haunting troubles in their new house. It's all familiar scary-movie territory until it goes all James Wan, which is an acquired taste. It's like a car crash of five other '80s horror films with hyperkinetic camera moves and no budget. A sometimes frustrating blend of REALLY effective tension followed by what could be seen as outright silliness. But it's worth a watch and it is enjoyable if you can roll with it. - streaming on Prime and Crave. Available for rent from AppleTV. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Daddy's Head (2024) - What a wild movie. A recently-widowed mother and her stepson deal with grief in a fancy modern house on a large acreage. While they deal with grief, a strange being invades their space, wearing the face of the deceased. A metaphor for grief? A hallucination? A stranded alien? The movie never fully lays out what's going on, but it's got atmosphere and vibes to spare. I don't know who chose that awful title, but it's a good movie, I thought. The lack of concrete definition, the minimalist script, and the measured pace could turn some off, but I went with it. Dreamlike. A solid, creepy film. - streaming on Shudder. Available for rent from AppleTV and GooglePlay. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Mute Witness (1995) - A mute American makeup artist is working on a huge movie-set sound stage in Russia. She gets trapped overnight and sees a murder. What follows is some shockingly high-quality filmmaking, tons of atmosphere, a deeply surprising cameo, cat-and-mouse tension, fatal hijinx, and cold-war-adjacent Russian crime intrigue. Much more complex and entertaining than just a simple horror movie needs

to be. More of a thriller, really. Hard to market something like this but I liked it a lot. - streaming on Shudder. Available for rent from AppleTV and GooglePlay. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

The Brood (1979) - David Cronenberg horror with Oliver Reed as a dodgy psychotherapist holding a patient hostage under the pretense of intensive therapy. The experimental "psychoplasmatism" process has a habit of physically manifesting the patient's violent emotions. Slow and strange. It's literally set in Canada, which is nice. I can't say that it's a good movie, but it has unique monsters and is good and weird, like a Cronenberg should be. Plus the late Samantha Eggars has the best 'crazy eyes' in the business, I think. She's amazing. An odd film that plods, but it's unique. - Streaming on Shudder and Criterion. Available for rent from AppleTV and GooglePlay. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Bodkin (series)(limited series) - I quite liked this dark little Irish tale starring Wil Forte as a hapless podcaster investigating a cold case with his team in the remote Irish burg of Bodkin, only to get caught up in a very current and dangerous mystery. Its got Samhain, nuns, eels, cool graphics, Irish humor, smugglers, bog people, and a twisty plot. Perhaps a bit TOO twisty here and there but I liked it a lot. - streaming on Netflix

Breaking Glass (1980) - The story of a scrappy band and manager rising to fame while wrestling with the prospect of selling out and the pressures of fame in violent, poverty-stricken, early-80s Britain. Lots of sweet '80s fashion. Starring actual '80s pop star Hazel O'Connor, Phil Daniels (*Quadrophenia*, *Scum*), and Jonathan Pryce. Lots of cameos from your favorite British character actors and some irl music royalty. I wasn't really feeling the music and the story isn't anything you haven't seen before, but the performances and visuals were great. A quality snapshot of the time. - for rent on YouTube, AppleTV and GooglePlay.

Check out all my reviews on <https://letterboxd.com/duncanshields/films/reviews/>

The Things I Find on Facebook Dept.

Zoe Ellen Explains Genetic Gender

Via **Summer McCracken**

eorSdpotsn91p8ethc1190bg 07937fa4 12hr6t1847mt4c55:6teSti ue ·

In 1890, the X and Y chromosomes were discovered. It was found that the men who were tested had 46 chromosomes, including an X and a Y, while women who were tested also had 46 chromosomes, including 2 X chromosomes.

So obviously the conclusion was that the Y chromosome defined masculinity. A reasonable conclusion.

Fast forward 50 years... and it was found that some men had 47 chromosomes, including 2 X's and a Y, while some women had 45, including only one X. Still no problem with the "Y chromosome defines masculinity" idea.

Then ... it was found that fully 1 in 300 men weren't 46,XY. Some women were.

Oops.

After DNA was discovered in the 50s, it was found that the SrY gene, usually found on the Y chromosome, sometimes was missing. And sometimes had been translocated to another chromosome, hence 46,XX men and 46,XY women. So SrY defined masculinity.

Then ... it was found out that some men didn't have an SrY chromosome, not anywhere. Some women did. Other genes were involved. Worse, other factors, such as Androgen Insensitivity made 46,XY people female, and Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia masculinized 46,XX people.

Then in the 70s, other syndromes, such as 5alpha-reductase-2 deficiency were identified, which caused babies to look like one sex at birth, then the other at puberty. Worse, in some places 1 in 50 infants had this natural sex change, it was not rare there.

(*Science* 1974 Dec 27; 186 (4170): 1213-5)

In an isolated village of the southwestern Dominican Republic, 2% of the live births were in the 1970's, *guevedoces*....These children appeared to be girls at birth, but at puberty these 'girls' sprout muscles, testes, and a penis. For the rest of their lives they are men in nearly all respects.

In the 90s, it was found that hormonal hiccups in the womb caused some parts of the body to develop as one sex, others as the other, regardless of genetics.

Male-to-female transsexuals have female neuron numbers in a limbic nucleus.

(Kruiver et al *J Clin Endocrinol Metab* (2000) 85:2034–2041)

The present findings of somatostatin neuronal sex differences in the BSTc and its sex reversal in the transsexual brain clearly support the paradigm that in transsexuals sexual differentiation of the brain and genitals may go into opposite directions

It's a matter of timing during foetal development. Sometimes a boy is born looking like a girl, sometimes a girl is born looking like a boy, regardless of chromosomes.

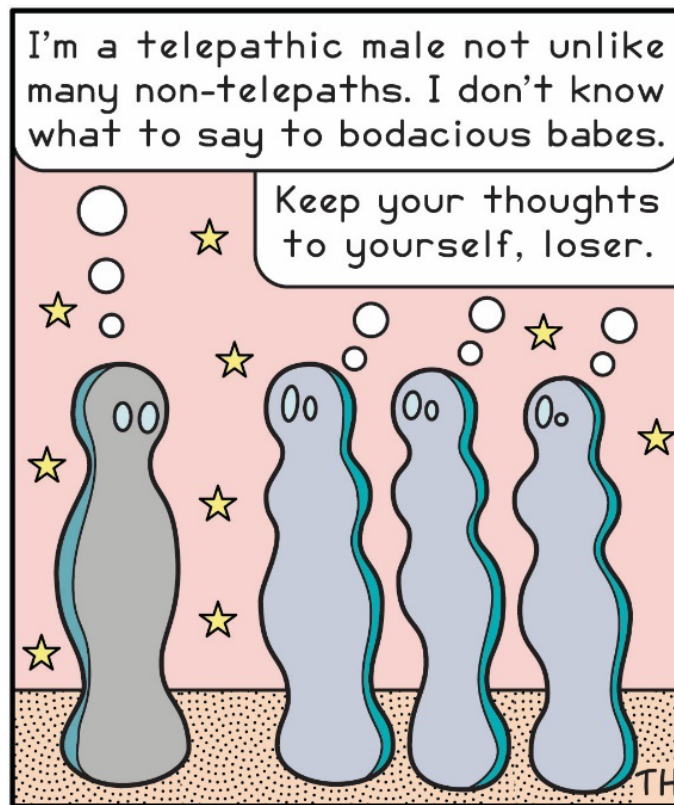
This is complex stuff. We don't teach the Theory of General Relativity in grade school; Newtonian physics or at most Special Relativity (far simpler) is enough. Similarly, "XX is female, XY is male" is good enough, unless you do medicine or biology in college.

It's only really relevant when talking about Trans or Intersex people, just as Relativistic effects only become relevant in the domain of the very big, very small, or very very fast, close to 186,000 miles a second.

People do **not** need psychiatric help when they think that things get heavier, more massive, as they go faster ... while lengths contract. People do **not** need help when they think their sex is something different from their genetics.

Intersex people exist. Trans people exist. They are unusual, so trying to apply the usual approximations is as silly as trying to apply Newtonian physics to things moving close to or at light speed. Legislating such things is as insane as legally ruling that $\pi = 3$... as has been done in the past.

I hope this helps explain.



Missing Coverage

from R. Graeme Cameron on Facebook, October 19, 2025:

“... Normally I don't comment on current political news. But out of curiosity I checked CNN news online to see what they had to say about the 7-million-strong "No Kings" protests today [October 19, 2025]. I looked under their breaking World news, their breaking Americas news, and their breaking political news. Not a peep. Not a mention. Apparently the protests never happened. No wonder I rarely check CNN news anymore.

“I have seen footage of the protests elsewhere. A lot of enthusiastic people. But to what end? Recent info I've picked up from various sources tell me ICE has incarcerated 60,000 people without charge or due process, has a budget of 45 billion dollars, pays a \$50,000 signing bonus, numbers 100,000 strong and is not accountable to either the justice or political system, being purely a creature of the White House accountable to no one else. And the Supreme Court thinks that's fine.

“If the above paragraph is correct, then all the protest in the world isn't going to accomplish a thing. So, assuming Stephen Miller has already established the Fourth Reich American-style, where does that leave Canada? In the position of Romania or Hungary before WWII. Better give in or else. No wonder I think of the 20th century, the

world I grew up in, as the good old days. They weren't, but in retrospect, they might be, compared to what is currently shaping up.

“Good thing I have a complete collection of the early Three Stooges two-reel films. I can always rely on them to restore sanity. ...”

Small Town Meeting

(passed on by Catherine Crockett on Facebook, October 11, 2025)

Copied from a friend. Pass it on.

I'm Maude Wilson. I'm 76 years old. They gave me this job as a custodian at the town hall after I lost the lower part of my leg to diabetes. I'll do it for a dollar less than minimum wage, so I guess it was a good deal for both of us.

Wednesday night had me sweeping gum and evangelical tracts off the auditorium while half the town shuffled in for the meeting. The topic: “free speech in America.”

The air smelled like floor polish and takeout. The fluorescent lights buzzed overhead, nervous as the rest of us. On one table, a stack of Narcan pamphlets sat next to a donation jar for the food bank – the truest summary of America in 2025 I've ever seen.

I watched the people as they entered. A middle-aged man in a Harley jacket with a faded Confederate flag on his forearm. An elderly woman with a walker gripping a flyer from Moms For Liberty, despite not having any children of her own. Ms. Camacho from the local elementary school, whose rusty old beater still had an Obama 2008 sticker. Sheriff Glover leaned by the door, hat low. Last year he'd shot a kid for stealing catalytic converters and he still had the stress of the inquiry on his weathered face.

At the microphone, Sandra – a homemaker and mom of four – announced that “the gays” in schools were teaching her youngest daughter that it was okay to be a boy. You could hear the tremble in her voice. She was heartbroken that her daughter could question the Christian beliefs she held so dearly. Then Ms. Camacho took her turn. “It's okay if your child is trans,” she said, almost in tears. Meanwhile, the child wept in the back, clutching her school-supplied bag of emotional support fentanyl.

A wave of murmurs passed through the crowd. Phones lifted, little red dots blinking, everyone half-listening and half-recording.

Then lightning cracked outside. The fluorescent lights gave up – as the power went out. Someone screamed. Sheriff Glover told everyone to stay put.

Then something amazing happened.

In the middle of the room, a sea of glowing red embers erupted and a great, glistening tentacle cracked the storied old town hall floor. Slowly, from the great crack, a multidimensional being emerged, all eyeballs and tendrils, whipping the ankles of the townspeople closest to the aisle.

"I am Narlrthop, Destroyer of Light, Devourer of Souls," the demon announced. It swallowed poor Ms. Camacho whole, then turned on Sandra, a great mouth forming amidst its lumps and tumours to tear her into spaghetti-thin shreds.

The town reverend stood and crossed himself, but his faith was no match for the whip-thin appendages of Narlrthop, who squeezed his throat until his eyeballs burst like a pair of balloons.

"Why are you doing this?" the elderly woman cried.

"I have emerged from the primordial ooze of ChatGPT-generated glurge you repost on Facebook," the demon declared. "It is clear to me that you people won't have read this middle part, and so I exist in the perfect state of freedom that you imagine for yourselves, untethered from truth or inquiry or consequences. Don't worry, people will already have made up their mind about what this story represents and how it reaffirms their existing beliefs, skip this part, skim to the end where it says something nice about American values, and repost without wondering about the story's providence. Now let me feast upon your entrails!" And the elderly woman was gulped down in a single go.

The room clapped – polite, tired, but hopeful.

"That's what we all have in common," Sheriff Glover declared. "Democracy, freedom, the way this country used to be. Also a widespread case of media illiteracy."

Share this if you want a return to how you vaguely remember your town being before you grew up and had to deal with responsibility and complexity.

People Have this Criticism of Capitalism

Den Valdron, Facebook, October 11, 2025:

It's as if the entire problem is Capitalism, and if only we could get rid of Capitalism, then all the world's problems would be solved, and everyone would get ponies.

Now don't get me wrong. I hate Capitalism as much as the next person. Or the grisly, necrophile corpse shambling around that passes for 'capitalism.' Pretty much every significant sector of the American economy is dominated by either actual or de facto monopolies or by an effective oligarchy of four or five corporations, owning shares in each other, with interchangeable and interchanging staff and management, policies and agendas which either actively cooperate or have such uniformity of actions that they might as well be.

We live increasingly in a 'rentier' economy, where less and less is owned, everyone falls into debt slavery, and everything is leased or rented, in order to provide continuous income streams for oligarchs and monopolies as they deliver shittier and shittier products and drive this world to collapse.

The people in charge, driving this, are stunningly ignorant, self-serving, childish, greedy, rapacious, profoundly incompetent, oblivious to consequence, and lacking empathy. The 1% and 0.01% might as well be reptoids in human skin. Occasionally they recognize the consequences of their personal and collective actions, but then they shrug and step on the gas pedal driving us all to hell.

I think they use the term 'Capitalism' in the way that Ed Gein wore his mother's skin to dance around. Partly affection, partly delusion, and in large part distraction from who they really are and what they really want to do. They dress up in a mythological skin called capitalism to sell us all bullshit.

I don't think we're actually in capitalism. I think we're in some still-to-be-categorized-or-named post-capitalist, techno-feudal, cyber-assisted monopoly/oligopoly. One perhaps unique in history in terms of being utterly divorced, conceptually, from the population that sustains it.

I feel that railing against Capitalism under these circumstances is childish, and really misses the point, and fails to appreciate how much trouble we are actually in. And if you choose to be offended by this remark, fuck off.

But let's get back to the point: "Capitalism sucks and if only we got rid of it, everything would be fine."

I think that it's pretty obvious that the current concentration of wealth is incredibly destructive, and that the best thing for the human race would be a massive redistribution of wealth, and strict measures to prevent such concentrations.

But here's the larger problem we all face.

The call is coming from inside the house.

Capitalism is not some absolutely unique evil which has led astray the world for the last three or four centuries. Come on.

Were fucking Mongols capitalists? They went out, murdered so many people the planet's climate changed, they murdered a significant fraction of the human race. They eradicated entire civilizations. Let's not praise their 'achievements.' They were vicious murdering bastards who built an empire based on cruelty and murder, and then pissed it away by being ignorant selfish knobs. That wasn't capitalism.

The Chinese, authors of a few genocides themselves, weren't capitalists. The various bloodthirsty dynasties of the Indian subcontinent weren't capitalists. Nor was the Caliphate, or the Ottoman Empire, nor for that matter the Roman Empire, or the Confederacy of Delos. Chaka Zulu was not a capitalist, he was a mass murderer. When King Kamehameha was conquering the Hawaiian Islands with European firearms, he didn't practice diplomacy, he trapped a defending army up against a cliff and marched them all over. The Aztecs and Inca were not capitalists, just vicious Empire builders. The Hittites and Assyrians were notable only for being the biggest bastards of their day. None of them capitalists.

I'm sorry if this all comes as a shock. Pre-Capitalism was not a wonderful communal era of cooperation, good feeling and sharing.

Pretty much every economic system, working back from Mercantilism to simple piracy and looting, feudalism, palace economies, etc., has been based on two things: (1) Brutal exploitation and subjugation of some portion of a population (typically the majority); (2) Monopolisation of resources in an eventually corrupt and unaccountable ruling/elite class.

With one genuine exception, one exception that gives me hope – Catal Huyuk – pretty much every society on Earth has produced a social surplus, and [every] critically

complex society on Earth beyond a village level has been built around confiscating that social surplus on behalf of or by an elite, which then promises to redistribute, but mainly keeps that surplus.

There you go. I've just described every fucking civilization that has existed in human history. And here's the thing, these salient features are fundamental to, and constitute the major, perhaps the sole criticism of ... Capitalism!

The big evil of Capitalism is that it is *just like every other* socio / political / economic system that we are prepared to be genuinely honest about.

I emphasize genuinely honest, because I've read a great many utopians, Marxists, libertarians and other shmucks who enthusiastically misrepresent history, and eagerly pontificate that their system will solve all problems and deliver ponies for everyone.

Yeah, well. Sorry. We've had several planetary case studies of Marxist societies that fucked things up on colossal scales. Don't give me the 'No True Scotsman' argument. Ideologies in various permutations were proposed, elaborated, implemented and produced staggering numbers of mass graves.

Yeah, well, the Mercantilists weren't much better – take a look at Columbus' shenanigans. The Theocrats have their own piles of mass graves. The historical record is full of genocides, and beneath the genocides, there's an endless orgy of murder, enslavement, rape, abuse of resources and every other bad thing.

Now, I'm not saying it's all bad. Someone invented the cheeseburger. And insulin. As appalling as humans are, we have lots of redemptive potential, and even redemptive actions and quests. This gives me hope. Through history, there have always been people fighting for compassion, for empathy, for decency, for some sort of better life and better world for all of us.

But the reality is that when we're decrying the evils of the world, the evils of 'Capitalism', we need to face the fact: The call is coming from inside the house. The real problem is ... us.

Railing against capitalism is worse than fucking useless. It's useless and misleading and a waste of time. It's like railing against Satan. Or railing against Emmanuel Goldberg. It's a charming target that makes us feel good, like we're doing something, and solves nothing, and contributes to solving nothing.

Suppose we eradicated capitalism overnight? Well, let's set aside the fact that several billion people are going to die ... Are we really any further ahead by replacing it with the latest edition of Elites confiscating/controlling social surpluses, promising to redistribute and fucking us, or targeted segments of us, over?

We're still back with the boot stamping on the human face, like it has been through the entirety of history, we've just gone and changed the labels on the boot and face. So nothing has actually changed, and we're not getting off this doom train we've been building for ourselves.

Oh and by the way – several billion people dying? That's accelerationism for you. Oh right – the 'special' people who believe the world is irretrievably corrupt, we have to burn it all down and replace it with something better. What assholes.

Listen accelerationist chumps, the world is complicated, it's made of billions of complicated interlocking, interacting pieces. Burn it all down, take a giant hammer, and people die by the millions and billions. I come from poor nobody stock, my people are the ones that die by millions and billions. So yeah, not interested in your half baked utopian ideals built on the corpses of my folk.

I'm massively unimpressed by guys like Peter Thiel (accelerationist) and Curtis Yarvin¹ (dark enlightenment) and their endless, infantilized circle jerks. I'm sorry, but narcissism and too much cocaine and Adderall are not going to get us a future.

But at least I know what these assholes stand for – a nightmarish techno-dystopia dooming us all to mass death and planetary collapse. Not that they're paying attention. They have this vision of utopia that would make Mao and Hitler shit their pants.

I mean, Christ: all these people, our current ruling elites, are so manifestly infantile, selfish, incompetent and evil, I have no idea *why or how* the rest of us are even putting up with them. *Why* isn't Elon Musk strapped to the nose cone of his next Space X? *Why* isn't Peter Thiel hiding out in a hollowed-out volcano in Antarctica, stroking his Angora cat? *Why* is anyone taking Curtis Yarvin seriously? *Why* are we putting up with rapacious lunatic hypocrites like the Kochs, the Mellons, the DeVos, etc.? Is there some weird biological quirk that means once a person becomes a billionaire, they turn into a toxic asshole? *Why* are we putting up with this?

The one thing I haven't seen is a better idea. Why aren't we doing this? Why aren't we coming up with something better? Where's the thinking? Where's the vision? The ideals?

Don't get me started on the fucking Marxists. Marx was over 150 years ago, he had limited access to data, he was hampered by the views of his own society. Yeah, sure, he was fine for the 19th century, a good thinker who had some decent insights, worked with what he had, and made shit up when he didn't. But come on. Sigmund Freud is now recognized as a crank. Newtonian physics was superseded. The Aristotelian model was junked. We've had revolutions in every single field of human knowledge. But when we get to Marx, we've got nothing but 150 years of half-baked embroidering which has gotten us nothing but whiny bitch-ass academics and mass graves in stunning profusion.

So what's the genuine path forward? How do we find our way to Justice? To an egalitarian world that doesn't trounce 99% of the human race in some form of slavery? To something that avoids planetary catastrophe?

I dunno. I'm not trying to insult anyone or be controversial. But I'm kind of sick of this.

We all know what the bad guys want.

But the good guys? Wall to wall dumbasses.

I swear, every time I hear "The problem is capitalism" I want to scream, because it's shallow, trite, is an ignorant evasion, and offers nothing.

¹ To be explained in the next article.

We need to face the fact that the call is coming from inside the house. If we can't do that, then whatever replaces what we've got now, is just going to be more of same.

And none of us can afford that any more.

Look, I don't have the answer. But we're not even looking for answers. We're all just drowning. We need to have a real dialogue, and give up these cherished illusions/hallucinations ignorant shibboleths. Fuck off with the two minute hate, and start having a real conversation.

Now, I know that I've used some harsh language here, and presented my views in a rather meandering and provocative manner. But it's late at night, I'm tired, medicated and in chronic pain. So if anyone does take exception: Fuck off.

Who Is Curtis Yarvin?

(anonymous Facebook post, March 4 2025)

[UPDATE: On Thursday 3-6-25 I will be taking this post off of its PUBLIC setting. If you have shared it from someone else, it will then disappear from your fb page. So if you'd like to keep it and share with others, please copy and paste it onto your own page. Or you can also find the full original piece by its author Shane Almgren on his 'Trumpland Diary' fb page: <https://www.facebook.com/.../pfbid02LgYiTeQmG4jCiQ96dSR8G...> and share from there.]

So, this here is the easiest-to-understand breakdown of the Elon Musk / JD Vance / Peter Thiel / Curtis Yarvin / tekdestruktors agenda currently ambushing the USA. If you're still in the dark as to what Musk and DOGE are actually up to, I urge you to read this. It's by Shane Almgren, who has authored a couple of books on adjacent topics ('The Trumpland Diaries' and 'Conspiracy Christianity') and has been investigating the above-mentioned people for a while. Yes, it's a bit long, but not really. He's made it chatty. (This is an excerpt from a longer piece.) Please read and share –

"Finally, we've got a third group – the one that's responsible for all the chaos Elon and DOGE are causing. Their agenda is actually far more extreme than either Project 2025 or the [Christian Reconstructionists/Dominionists]. And the scary thing is, they're already implementing their freakish plan at warp speed while most of the country is busy bickering about all the quaint Project 2025 garbage (and Trump's usual unending fire hose of idiotic nonsense).

There's a few key players we're gonna have to cover some backstory for, namely Elon Musk, JD Vance, a guy you might've heard of by the name of Peter Thiel, and a guy you almost certainly haven't, Curtis Yarvin. These guys are all connected in a mildly horrifying way and we're about to unpack it all...

Once upon a time in the 90's, Elon Musk founded a small company called [X.com](#) (No, not Twitter – a different [X.com](#). Dude just has an inexplicable fixation with the letter X). X was a fledgling digital banking service that allowed people to transact with vendors and each other without cash, checks, or plastic.

At the same time Musk was building out X, another young entrepreneur, a German immigrant named Peter Thiel, was building a very similar money-transfer service right across town called Confinity. Rather than compete with each other, Musk and Thiel decided to merge their two companies in 1999, with Musk named CEO of the new company. Shortly after the merger, Musk was fired as CEO by the board, who replaced him with Thiel. After Thiel took over, the company's name was changed to "PayPal." You may have heard of it.

PayPal attracted some of the most promising young talent in Silicon Valley, and its early members wielded so much power and influence in the tech space that they became collectively known as the "PayPal Mafia."

Besides Musk and Thiel, the PayPal Mafia included:

- Steven Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim (co-founders of YouTube)
- Russel Simmons and Jeremy Stoppelman (co-founders of Yelp)
- Max Levchin (current CEO of Affirm)
- Roelof Botha (partner at Sequoia Capital)
- David Sacks (Founder of [Geni.com](https://www.geni.com) and Yammer, Trump's new "AI/Crypto Czar")
- Reed Hoffman (founder of LinkedIn, early investor in Facebook, currently on the board at Microsoft)
- Jack Selby (co-founder of Clarium Capital with Peter Thiel)
- Yishan Wong (CEO of Reddit, founder of Terraformation Inc)
- Premal Shah (founder of Kiva, on the board at [Change.org](https://www.change.org))

Plus a dozen others. The PayPal Mafia churned out a Who's Who in the Big Tech space, with nearly everyone involved becoming billionaires many times over. Today, it's one of the wealthiest and most influential collection of individuals, not just in America, but in the entire world.

In 2002, eBay acquired Paypal for \$1.5 billion. Although no longer officially with PayPal after being ousted, Elon still held around 10% of the company shares and netted roughly \$160 million in the sale.

So that's the Peter Thiel-Elon Musk connection – they co-founded PayPal together.

Now let's see how JD Vance is tied into this crew.

In 2011, Peter Thiel gave a talk at Yale where JD Vance was attending law school, changing the course of Vance's life, as JD recounts it. Vance called Thiel "possibly the smartest person" he ever met, and decided to pivot from a career in law to one in venture capital. In 2015, JD joined the Thiel-founded Mithril Capital, with Thiel as his personal mentor.

In 2016, Vance published "Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis," thrusting his name into the national spotlight for the first time. It was at this same time that Vance, unencumbered by any political aspirations or pretense and therefore free to speak his actual mind, sent his Yale roommate an email regarding America's leading presidential candidate, Donald Trump, that read: "I go back and forth between

thinking Trump is a cynical asshole like Nixon who wouldn't be that bad (and might even prove useful) or that he's America's Hitler. How's that for discouraging?")

Vance left Thiel's firm in 2017 and joined a D.C.-based investment firm. Then he launched his own VC firm, Narya Capital, in 2019 with financial backing from Thiel, billionaire VC capitalist Mark Andreessen, and former Google CEO Eric Schmidt.

For reasons we'll get to in just a minute, around the time the pandemic was starting to wind down, Peter Thiel decided it was finally time for him to own a U.S. Senator and start pulling some long-awaited political strings. He figured that since he'd funded Vance's VC firm and essentially owned Vance already, he'd just migrate that ownership from the private sector to the public.

Because JD Vance had been an open critic of Donald Trump during Trump's entire first term, Thiel invited Vance down to Mar A Lago to smooth things over in hopes of getting an endorsement from Orange Jesus. Thiel informed Vance of his plans to make him a Senator, so Vance scrapped all his previous principles, decided power was "more gooder" than having any convictions, kissed Trump's ring, and earned the endorsement.

Thiel, for his part, poured an ungodly amount of his own money into Vance's Senate campaign – about \$15 million – marking the largest donation to a single Senate candidate in American history. In addition to his personal \$15 mil, Thiel also recruited 10 major donors for Vance, including a couple old tech buddies from the PayPal Mafia who chipped in a million each.

So, if you ever found yourself wondering how the author of "Hillbilly Elegy," a lawyer-turned-venture capitalist with no political experience or aspirations and a vocal critic of Donald Trump, came out of nowhere and managed to snag Trump's endorsement and win a Senate seat in his first foray into politics, there's your explanation: Peter Thiel orchestrated, arranged, and funded the entire thing. A tech billionaire bought himself a Senator.

Now, the next question is Why? This is where it starts to get scary. It's time to meet the final character in our story, Curtis Yarvin.

Yarvin is a software developer and tech entrepreneur who started the Unqualified Reservations blog in 2003 under the pen name Mencius Moldbug. He's perhaps best known for founding the anti-egalitarian, anti-democratic philosophical movement known as the Dark Enlightenment or neo-reactionary movement (NRx).

Like most people, Yarvin sees a ton of problems in society. But unlike most people, the problems he sees – and his solutions to those problems – are dystopian fringe at best, and democracy-ending suicide at worst.

In a nutshell, Yarvin's Dark Enlightenment political worldview is that the REAL power in the U.S. resides in an informal collaboration of universities and the mainstream media (that he calls "the Cathedral") which collude to sway public opinion. He admires the former Chinese Communist leader Deng Xiaoping for his "pragmatic and market-oriented authoritarianism," believes America's commitment to equality and justice "erodes social order," and advocates for an American "monarch" to dissolve elite academic institutions and media outlets asap.

A regular speaker at various Libertarian and techno-fascist conferences, Yarvin's position is that democratic governments are inefficient and wasteful and should be replaced with sovereign corporations whose "shareholders" elect an executive with total power over the country/corporation. As Yarvin explains it, "Unencumbered by liberal-democratic procedures, the executive could rule like a CEO-Monarch."

And just in case it still isn't abundantly clear what Curtis Yarvin thinks is the solution to what ails America, here it is in his most straightforward phrasing: "If Americans want to change their government, they're going to have to get over their dictator-phobia."

Yes, Curtis Yarvin is an unapologetic proponent of dictatorships since "there's no real difference between a dictator and a CEO, and corporations under the rule of a CEO appear to work just fine." As he puts it, "Nations like the United States are outdated software systems" that need to be "broken up into smaller entities called 'patchworks' which would be controlled by tech corporations."

As he put it in an interview with the NY Times on Jan 18, "Democracy is done."

Now, I know what you're thinking.

"Shane, this Yarvin dude is clearly off his rocker. Nobody in their right mind would take this "Corporate Monarchy" nonsense seriously. Why are you wasting everyone's time explaining in detail the techno-fascist-manifesto ramblings of some internet pop philosopher who calls himself 'Mencius Moldbug?' Dude sounds like he's living in some Matrix-meets-Hunger-Games dystopian fantasy world. Surely NOBODY takes this dude's crazy ideas seriously!"

That's where you would be wrong.

Perilously wrong.

Two of Curtis Yarvin's biggest disciples and advocates for his technocratic ideas are...

Peter Thiel and Vice President JD Vance, the MAGA heir apparent.

The three of them have been friends since at least 2009 after Yarvin's writings and ideologies became super popular within the PayPal Mafia circle. (If you've got an hour and a half to waste, here's Vance on the Jack Murphy Live Podcast name-dropping Yarvin and spewing a few of his more sinister ideas.)

See, people forget that billionaires have political ideologies just like everyone else. And remember, most peoples' political ideologies are generally tailored to improve the life of the person holding them. Democracy sounds great if you're a peasant living under a king with no say in how things are run. But in what way would democracy improve your life if you're a multi-billionaire who can buy politicians? Once you're up that high on the food chain, democracy is no longer a step UP, it's a step DOWN.

So, all these filthy rich, filthy powerful tech bros have jumped on board with turning America into a corporation run by a CEO with authoritarian power. According to them, the masses don't need to be voting – the masses are idiots. (Or as Yarvin puts it, "The masses are asses.") The PayPal Mafia has no interest in becoming beholden to the whims of a bunch of blue collar workers from Appalachia. If they're gonna be free to live their best lives, they're gonna need to unshackle themselves from the "masses who can't even figure life out enough to afford groceries."

Put bluntly, those who can write a check for a few \$billion and not even notice it's gone are not interested in the opinions of those whining about the cost of 12 eggs.

As Peter Thiel once wrote in a Cato essay, "I no longer believe that freedom and democracy are compatible."

Now, supposing they were actually going to attempt to pull this techno-coup off, what would that look like in practice?

Thankfully, Yarvin has had the plan mapped out for years with a little strategy he's given the acronym RAGE: Retire All Government Employees.

It would look exactly like what we're all looking at.

Elon's "haphazard, chaotic coup" of federal agencies is anything but. This has been the plan all along by these Yarvin acolytes: gut the federal workforce – either by mass firings or incentivizing them to resign – crippling the entire government in the process, at which point Big Tech corporate solutions that just so happen to already be on hand can step in and take over the reigns of running our government.

Since you could never get away with doing this as a blatant hostile takeover, you just frame the entire exercise as an "audit to weed out fraud and corruption," then watch the gatekeepers roll out the red carpets and cheer the whole takeover on!

I know it sounds like tin-foil-hat conspiracy, but LOOK at what's happening in front of your eyes.

Isn't it a little weird that JD Vance came out of nowhere to win a Senate seat? And weirder still that Peter Thiel managed to convince Trump to make this virtual nobody his running mate even though Vance was the most unpopular VP pick in polling history?

Wasn't it a bit strange that Donald Trump told a bunch of Evangelicals at a rally, "Vote for me this one time and I'll make sure you never have to vote again?" What the hell did that mean?

Isn't it slightly too coincidental that Peter Thiel's original business partner Elon Musk is currently running roughshod through the American government doing EXACTLY what Curtis Yarvin said needs to happen?

This isn't conspiracy land at this point. These dudes told everyone what they wanted to do, and then they started doing it while we all watch dumbfounded. The Left is going, "Surely they can't be doing what it sure as hell looks like they're doing – taking over the government!" and the Right is just...cheering them on because it "makes the libtard snowflakes cry."

So there's your explanation.

Elon Musk, JD Vance, and Peter Thiel are executing a long-planned agenda to take over the [U.S.] government. Donald Trump is just a dementia-addled old man along for the ride, ranting about windmills and magnets and taking over canals, and content to just sign large pieces of papers for the TV cameras all day.

Hopefully, the chaos makes a little more sense now."



Is this the best we can do?

Fanzines Received

SMOF News #5:5, #5:6, Oct. 8, 2025. Petr  a Mitchell ed. Court cases about conventions; Chris Barkley’s Hugo from the Chengdu Worldcon is also the subject of a court case against one Dave McCarty, who keeps holding on to it; conventions suspended, or adding guests;

The Visionary (newsletter of the Universal Life Church), Oct. 1, 8, 15, 17, 24, 2025. Write to: Universal Life Church Ministries, 2720 1st Ave S Seattle, WA 98134, or email newsletter@themonastery.org. Allusions to the non-controversies that some American churchgoers flame on about, such as the upset recently in Florida about Hallowe’en decorations featuring witches; free speech and the backlash that follows; it seems the U.S. Supreme Court is examining Colorado’s anti-conversion law, against religion-based gay conversion “therapy”; how some priests oppose and others support ICE raids;

MT Void #44:14, Oct. 3, 2025; #15, Oct. 10; #16, Oct. 17; #17, Oct. 25, 2025. From Evelyn Leeper, evelynchinelisleeper@gmail.com. Film and book reviews, including the books selected for the book reading club; etc.

Tightbeam #373, Oct. 2025, Editors: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609. Jon Swartz judgetswartz@gmail.com. Billed as “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.”

X-Rayer #186, Oct, 13, 2025, from Ray Palm, raypalmx@gmail.com. This issue features an obituary for the much-missed Guy H. Lillian III, editor of *Spartacus* and *The Zine Dump*; a dismissive review of the latest *Superman* movie; a roundup of some bizarre news about demented representatives in Washington (always good for a laugh); and letters.

Oates #3, Sept/Oct. 2025, a fanzine composed for SAPS, and outside distribution, from Kelly Oates, kelly@oates.one. A meditation on Hexagram #83; the weather in Northern California; a report on how Kelly came to be perceived as a hoax; a daydream about Carl Brandon meeting Octavia Butler and wandering together through San Francisco in the early 1980s; a recipe for haggis, since Burns Night is coming on January 25th; and we finally learn the secret of Kelly Oates' home town.

Captain Flashback #83, from Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, 11032 30th Ave. NE Seattle, WA 98125. E-mail Andy at fanmailaph@aol.com, and Carrie at carrieroot49@yahoo.com. A fanzine composed for the 472nd distribution of the Turbo-Charged Party-Animal Amateur Press Association, distinguished by profiles of horror TV show hosts, letters, and a survey of the works and life of Barry B. Longyear (1942-2025). This issue features Ghoulia, Phantom Lady of Tucson.

Origins #72, Fall 2025, the relaunched National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F) publication of N3F's Historical and Research Bureau. Sam Lubell ed., SamJLubell@gmail.com. Sam says, "*Origins* covers the history of science fiction/fantasy, fandom, and related science focusing on pre-21st century content. I urge people to send in articles, letters, reviews of older SF, and anything relevant ... I'd be interested in stories on how people discovered fandom and what they did." Just as stated, the articles in *Origins* cover early science fiction stories, authors, and fandom.

Impulse #48:8, October 2025, the Montreal SF & Fantasy Association newsletter, Keith Braithwaite ed. mailing address: 125 Rue Léonard, Châteauguay, Québec, Canada, J6K 1N9, E-mail: Keith1958@live.ca. Much advertising of the club's upcoming book sale, a call for renewing memberships, a reminder that volunteer positions are open, an announcement of guest speaker Riley Rosener talking about exoplanets.

Ionisphere #48, October 2025. Edited by Jean-Paul L. Garnier, 61871 Twentynine Palms Hwy, Joshua Tree, CA 92252, USA, email for the editor and magazine, spacecowboybooks@gmail.com. "This issue of *Ionisphere* is all about SFF contests and features interviews with Dream Foundry's Julia Rios & Anaea Lay, the N3F's Jefferson Swycaffer, SFPA President Brian U. Garrison, Writers & Illustrators of the Future Contest Director Joni Labaqui, and Utopia Science Fiction's Tristan Evarts. ..."

We also received: *This Here* ... #92, Nic Farey, Las Vegas, NV, USA; *Random Jottings* #22 Omnibus; *Pablo Lennis*; *The Stf Amateur* #25, Oct. 2025; and *Vanamonde*.



Of Making Many Books Dept.

Book Releases in October and November 2025

- 1) Mystery and Crime Fiction, and
- 2) Science Fiction and Fantasy

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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.

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- Anderson, Lin. THE DEAD AND THE DYING. [RHONA MACLEOD #19]. Macmillan, 44.99 hc.
- Andrews, Donna. FIVE GOLDEN WINGS. [MEG LANGSLOW #38]. Minotaur, 39.00 hc.
- Baldacci, David. TO DIE FOR. [6:20 MAN]. Grand Central, 25.99 tp.
- Beaton, M. C. & R. W. Green. SUGAR AND SPITE. [AGATHA RAISIN #36]. Minotaur, 38.00 hc.
- Benjamin, Tom. LAST TESTAMENT IN BOLOGNA. [DANIEL LEICESTER]. Constable, 17.99 tp.
- Benoit, Deborah J. THE GARDENER'S PLOT. Minotaur, 13.99 pb.
- Berry, Steve & Grant Blackwood. RED STAR FALLING. [LUKE DANIELS #2]. Grand Central, 13.99 pb.
- Blacke, Olivia. A NEW LEASE ON DEATH. Minotaur, 25.00 tp.
- Blacke, Olivia. DEATH AT THE DOOR. Minotaur, 39.00 hc.
- Bowen, Gail. THE SOLITARY FRIEND. [JOANNE KILBOURN MYSTERY #23]. ECW, 36.95 hc.
- Bowen, Rhys. WE THREE QUEENS. [ROYAL SPYNESS #18]. Berkley, 25.99 tp.
- Brown, Rita Mae. TIME WILL TELL. [SISTER JANE ARNOLD #16]. Bantam, 24.95 tp.
- Cass, Laurie. BOOK 'EM, EDDIE. [BOOKMOBILE CAT #13]. Berkley, 13.50 pb.
- Child, Lee. SAFE ENOUGH: AND OTHER STORIES. Penzler, 23.95 tp.
- Clare, Alys. CHRYSANTHEMUM TIGER. [GABRIEL TAVERNER #6]. Severn House, 22.99 tp.
- Cleeves, Ann. THE KILLING STONES: THE RETURN OF JIMMY PEREZ. Macmillan, 25.99 tp.
- Connelly, Michael. THE PROVING GROUND. [LINCOLN LAWYER]. Little, Brown, 42.00 hc.
- Connelly, Michael. THE WAITING. [RENEE BALLARD AND HARRY BOSCH #6]. Little Brown, 13.99 pb.
- Cornwell, Patricia. SHARP FORCE. [KAY SCARPETTA]. Grand Central, 25.99 tp.
- Cunningham, Amy. THE SERIAL KILLER'S PARTY. Transworld, 19.99 tp.
- Dean, Will. ICE TOWN. [TUVA MOODYSON MYSTERY #6]. Hodder, 21.99 tp.
- Dicker, Joel. WILD ANIMAL. HarperVia, 25.99 tp.
- Doherty, Paul. MURDER'S SNARE. [BROTHER ATHELSTAN #23]. Severn House, 22.99 tp.
- Edwards, Martin. MISS WINTER IN THE LIBRARY WITH A KNIFE. Poisoned Pen, 28.99 tp.

Elliott, Lauren. EPILOGUE TO A CHRISTMAS MURDER. [BEYOND THE PAGE BOOKSTORE #11]. Cozies, 11.99 pb.

Emerson, Ramona. EXPOSURE. [RITA TODACHEENE #2]. Soho Crime, 24.95 tp.

Flower, Amanda. NATURAL BARN KILLER. [FARM TO TABLE]. Poisoned Pen, 13.50 pb.

Flynn, Vince & Don Bentley. CAPTURE OR KILL. [MITCH RAPP #23]. Pocket, 14.99 pb.

Fracassi, Philip. THE AUTUMN SPRINGS RETIREMENT HOME MASSACRE. Nightfire, 40.99 hc.

Goldberg, Tod (ed). EIGHT VERY BAD NIGHTS. Soho Crime, 24.95 tp.

Granger, Ann. DEATH ON THE PROWL. [CAMPBELL AND CARTER #8]. Headline, 21.99 tp.

Grisham, John. THE WIDOW. Doubleday, 42.00 hc.

Hadfield, Chris. FINAL ORBIT. [THE APOLLO MURDERS SERIES #3]. Random House Canada, 38.00 hc.

Harkaway, Nick. KARLA'S CHOICE: A JOHN LE CARRE NOVEL. [GEORGE SMILEY]. Penguin Canada, 23.00 tp.

Hawkins, Paula. THE BLUE HOUR. Anchor Canada, 24.00 tp.

Hill, Reginald. A CANDLE FOR CHRISTMAS & OTHER STORIES. Hemlock, 23.99 tp.

Hollis, Lee. DEATH OF A TOM TURKEY. [HAYLEY POWELL MYSTERY #18]. Cozies, 11.99 pb.

Hunter, Stephen. THE GUN MAN JACKSON SWAGGER: A WESTERN. Emily Bestler, 39.00 hc.

Indridason, Arnaldur. THE QUIET MOTHER. Harvill Secker, 31.99 tp.

James, Peter. THE HAWK IS DEAD: A KILLER IN THE PALACE. [ROY GRACE #21]. Macmillan, 26.99 tp.

Jance, J. A. THE GIRL FROM DEVIL'S LAKE. [JOANNA BRADY]. Morrow, 37.00 hc.

Jones, Philip Gwynne. THE MAGUS OF SICILY. Constable, 36.00 hc.

Korelitz, Jean Hanff. THE SEQUEL. Celadon, 25.99 tp.

Leonard, Elmore. PICKET LINE: THE LOST NOVELLA. Mariner, 31.00 hc.

Lewis, Henry. THE BOOKSHOP MURDER. [MYSTERY AGENCY PUZZLE]. Mobius, 36.00 hc.

Lindstein, Mariette. CHILDREN OF FOG ISLAND. [FOG ISLAND #3]. HQ, 23.99 tp.

Lynch, Christina. PONY CONFIDENTIAL. Berkley, 25.99 tp.

Major, Tim. WINTER RETREAT. [JEKYLL AND HYDE CONSULTING DETECTIVES #2]. Titan, 35.99 hc.

Mancarus, Kelly & Kristina. RUMOURED. Aries, 26.99 tp.

Mason, Emma. MURDER MOST HAUNTED. Morrow, 23.99 tp.

Mason, Simon. THE WOMAN WHO LAUGHED. [FINDER #2]. Quercus, 25.99 tp.

Masterton, Graham. PAY BACK THE DEVIL. [KATIE MAGUIRE #12]. Aries, 26.99 tp.

McCloskey, David. THE SEVENTH FLOOR. Norton, 24.99 tp.

McCloskey, David. THE PERSIAN. Norton, 39.99 hc.

McPherson, Catriona. SCOTZILLA. [LAST DITCH #7]. Severn House, 22.99 tp.

Meier, Leslie. TIS THE SEASON MURDER. [LUCY STONE DOUBLE]. Kensington Cozies, 11.99 pb.

Meyrick, Denzil. THE ESTATE. Transworld, 21.99 tp.

Miller, C. L. THE ANTIQUE HUNTER'S GUIDE TO MURDER. S&S, 13.99 pb.

O'Regan, Marie & Paul Kane (eds). DEATH COMES AT CHRISTMAS. Titan, 24.99 tp.

Osman, Richard. THE IMPOSSIBLE FORTUNE. [THURSDAY MURDER CLUB #5]. Pamela Dorman, 39.99 hc.

Papathanasiou, Peter. THE BOLTHOLE. Quercus, 29.99 tp.

Patterson, James & Ellis, David. LIES HE TOLD ME. Grand Central, 25.99 tp.

Patterson, James. HOLMES, MARPLE & POE. Little, Brown, 13.99 pb.

Patterson, James. HOLMES, MARPLE & POE. Little, Brown, 13.99 pb.

Pavesi, Alex. INK RIBBON RED. Penguin UK, 21.99 tp .

Pearson, Kingsley. FLAT 401. Orion, 23.99 tp.

Pennington, J.D.. THE OTHELLO CLUB. Datura, 24.99 tp.

Penzler, Otto (ed). GOLDEN AGE CHRISTMAS MYSTERIES. American Mystery Classics, 23.95 tp.

Pynchon, Thomas. SHADOW TICKET. Penguin, 39.99 hc.

Rosen, Lev AC. ROUGH PAGES. [EVANDER MILLS #3]. Minotaur, 25.00 tp.

Ryan, Tom. WE HAD A HUNCH. S&S, 25.99 tp.

Slaughter, Karin. THIS IS WHY WE LIED. [WILL TRENT #12]. Morrow, 13.99 pb.

Smith, Alexander McCall. IN THE TIME OF FIVE PUMPKINS. [PRECIOUS RAMOTSWE #26]. Pantheon, 37.99 hc.

Stevens, Chevy. THE HITCHHIKERS. St. Martin's, 24.99 tp. [BC author].

Todd, Charles. A CHRISTMAS WITNESS. Penzler Publishers, 31.99 hc.

Urszenyi, Steve. OUT IN THE COLD. [SPECIAL AGENT ALEXANDRA MARTEL #2]. Minotaur, 13.99 pb.

Waters, Martha. AND THEN THERE WAS THE ONE. Atria, 26.00 tp.

Wendroff, Michael. WHAT GOES AROUND. Aries, 24.99 tp.

Wilson, Claire. FIVE BY FIVE. Penguin UK, 19.99 tp.

Winslow, Don & Steph Cha (eds). THE BEST AMERICAN MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE 2025. Mariner, 23.99 tp.

Witherspoon, Reese & Harlan Coben. GONE BEFORE GOODBYE. Grand Central, 42.00 hc.

November 2025 New Mystery and Crime Fiction Releases

Allbright, Noelle. THE CHRISTMAS EVE MURDERS. Quercus, 23.99 tp.

Andrews, Brian. TOM CLANCY DEFENSE PROTOCOL. [JACK RYAN #25]. Berkley, 14.99 pb.

Archer, Jeffrey. AN EYE FOR AN EYE. [WILLIAM WARWICK #7]. HarperCollins, 12.99 pb.

Armstrong, Jess. THE SECRET OF THE THREE FATES. Minotaur, 26.00 tp.

Baldacci, David. NASH FALLS. Grand Central, 40.00 hc.

Bennett, S. J. THE QUEEN WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD. [QUEEN ELIZABETH II #5]. Crooked Lane, 39.99 hc.

Box, C. J. BATTLE MOUNTAIN. [JOE PICKETT #25]. Putnam, 14.99 pb.

Boyd, William. THE PREDICAMENT. [GABRIEL DAX #2]. Atlantic Crime, 43.50 hc.

Bruen, Ken & Jason Starr. SUPERMAX: THE MAX AND ANGELA TRILOGY. Hard Case Crime, 26.99 tp.

Child, Lee & Andrew. EXIT STRATEGY. [JACK REACHER]. Bantam, 39.99 hc.

Chizmar, Richard. BECOMING THE BOOGEYMAN. [THE BOOGEYMAN]. Pocket, 14.99 pb.

Clary, Julian. CURTAIN CALL TO MURDER. Orion, 23.99 tp.

Connally, Celeste. ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND TREACHERY. [LADY PETRA INQUIRES #2]. Minotaur, 26.00 tp.

Connally, Celeste. REVENGE, SERVED ROYAL. [LADY PETRA INQUIRES #3]. Minotaur, 39.00 hc.

De La Pava, Sergio. EVERY ARC BENDS ITS RADIANT. Simon & Schuster, 25.00 tp.

DeMille, Nelson & Alex DeMille. THE TIN MEN. [SCOTT BRODIE #3]. S&S, 26.99 tp.

DeMille, Nelson & Alex DeMille. BLOOD LINES. [SCOTT BRODIE #2]. Pocket, 14.99 pb.

Ellis, Kate. DEADLY REMAINS. DI WESLEY PETERSON #39]. Constable, 39.00 hc.

Erickson, Alex. DEATH BY JAVA. [BOOKSTORE CAFE #14]. Cozies, 11.99 pb.

Fields, Helen. WATCHING YOU. Avon, 25.99 tp.

Finch, Charles. THE HIDDEN CITY. [CHARLES LENOX #15]. Minotaur, 37.00 hc.

Fletcher, Jessica. A KILLER CHRISTMAS. [MURDER, SHE WROTE #59]. Berkley, 13.50 pb.

Forsyth, Frederick & Tony Kent. REVENGE OF ODESSA. [ODESSA #2]. Putnam, 42.00 hc.

Graham, R. L. THE SPIES OF HARTLAKE HALL. Macmillan, 42.99 hc.

Greaney, Mark. MIDNIGHT BLACK. [GRAY MAN #14]. Berkley, 14.99 tp.

Griffiths, Elly. THE MAN IN BLACK AND OTHER STORIES. Mariner, 23.99 tp.

Hannah, Sophie. THE LAST DEATH OF THE YEAR. [HERCULE POIROT]. Morrow, 25.99 tp.

Heisserer, Eric. SIMULTANEOUS. Flatiron, 38.99 hc.

Johnson, Craig. TOOTH AND CLAW. [LONGMIRE]. Penguin, 24.95 tp.

Jurczyk, Eva. 6:40 TO MONTREAL. Poisoned Pen, 26.99 tp.

Kellerman, Jonathan & Jesse Kellerman. COYOTE HILLS. [CLAY EDISON]. Ballantine, 39.99 hc.

Larsen, Ward. DARK VECTOR. [DAVID SLATON AND TRU MILLER #1]. Forge, 13.99 pb.

Laurie, Victoria. A TRINKET FOR THE TAKING. [MAGICAL TRINKET MYSTERY #1]. Kensington Cozies, 24.95 tp.

Lupica, Mike. ROBERT B. PARKER'S HOT PROPERTY. [SPENSER #52]. Putnam, 27.99 tp.

Macmillan, Gilly. THE BURNING LIBRARY. Morrow, 37.00 hc.

Margolin, Phillip. FALSE WITNESS. Minotaur, 41.00 hc.

Margolin, Phillip. AN INSIGNIFICANT CASE. Minotaur, 13.99 pb.

McLachlin, Beverley. PROOF. [JILLY TRUITT #3]. Simon & Schuster, 14.99 pb.

Moncrieff, Ada. MURDER AT MAYBRIDGE CASTLE. [CHRISTMAS MYSTERY #3]. Harvill Secker, 21.99 tp.

Parker, T. Jefferson. WILD INSTINCT. Minotaur, 41.00 hc.

Patterson, James & Paetro, Maxine. 24TH HOUR. [WOMEN'S MURDER CLUB #24]. Little Brown, 13.99 pb.

Penny, Louise. THE BLACK WOLF. [CHIEF INSPECTOR GAMACHE #20]. Minotaur, 40.00 hc.

Perry, Carol J. SUGAR AND SPITE. [WITCH CITY #15]. Kensington Cozies, 11.99 pb.

Pham, Jacquie. THOSE OPULENT DAYS. Atlantic Monthly, 26.50 tp.

Pine, Alex. COLD BLOODED KILLER. [DI JAMES WALKER #6]. HarperCollins, 23.99 tp.

Preston, Douglas & Lincoln Child. ANGEL OF VENGEANCE. [AGENT PENDERGAST #20]. Grand Central, 13.99 pb.

Quigley, Mindy. AT DEATH'S DOUGH. [DEEP DISH #5]. Minotaur, 13.99 pb.

Reichs, Kathy. EVIL BONES. [TEMPERANCE BRENNAN NOVEL]. S&S, 26.99 tp.

Sanders, Angela M. WITCH AND TELL. [WITCH WAY LIBRARIAN]. Kensington, 11.99 tp.

Segura, Alex. ALTER EGO. Flatiron, 25.99 tp.

Sigurdardottir, Yrsa. THE WAKE. Hodder, 28.99 tp.

Stonex, Emma. THE SUNSHINE MAN. HarperCollinsCanada, 24.99 tp.

Tierney, Marie. DEADLY ANIMALS. Holt, 25.99 tp.

October 2025 New Fantasy and Science Fiction Releases

Ajram, Sofia. COUP DE GRACE. Titan, 23.99 tp. [Canadian author].

Archer, Kaylee. WITCH OF THE WOLVES. Griffin, 28.00 tp.

Armstrong, Kelley. THE HAUNTING OF PAYNES HOLLOW. St. Martin's, 25.99 tp.

Asaro, Catherine. GOLD DUST. [SKOLIAN DUST KNIGHT #2]. Baen, 37.00 hc.

Ballingrud, Nathan. CATHEDRAL OF THE DROWNED. [LUNAR GOTHIC #2]. Nightfire, 24.99 tp.

Berry, Jedediah. THE NAMING SONG. Tor, 27.99 tp.

Blake, Olivie. GIRL DINNER. Tor, 41.99 hc.

Blake, Olivie (ed). THE BLACK CROW BOOK OF BEST NEW HORROR VOLUME 1. Black Crow, 36.95 hc

Blake, Olivie. JANUARIES: STORIES OF LOVE, MAGIC, & BETRAYAL. Tor.com, 27.99 tp.

Boleyn, Briar. ON WINGS OF BLOOD. [BLOODWING ACADEMY #1]. MIRA, 37.00 hc.

Briggs, Patricia. BLIND DATE WITH A WEREWOLF. Ace, 39.99 hc.

Briggs, Patricia. WINTER LOST. [MERCY THOMPSON #14]. Ace, 13.50 pb.

Britain, Kristen. FALLING IN A SEA OF STARS. [GREEN RIDER #8]. Daw, 42.00 hc.

Broadbent, Carissa. DAUGHTER OF NO WORLDS. [WAR OF LOST HEARTS #1]. Bramble, 41.99 hc.

Bunn, David. QUANTUM CAGE. Severn House, 39.99 hc.

Burke, Sue. USURPATION. [SEMIOSIS #3]. Tor, 25.99 tp.

Burnham, Sophie. SARGASSA. [EX ROMANA]. DAW, 27.99 tp.

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