

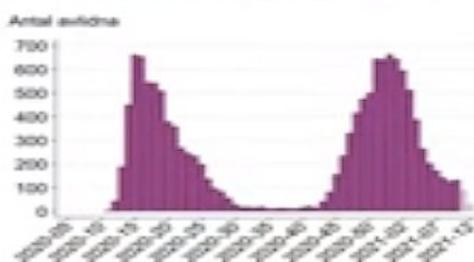
INTERMISSION #107

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com for EAPA, N'APA and some others. No more "history issues", but a smaller History Corner. Follow @SFJournalen's newstweets on Nordic sff/h&fandom! Look out for archetypus from the hypewriter! Late Mars...March 2021!

Editorially

For several issues, I've been talking about the corona epidemic, what Sweden has done (softer than elsewhere, giving much less secondary harm, more in line with prepared scientific response), but now it's time to talk about vaccines. That, plus warmer spring weather and a growing level of herd immunity, should put the virus to rest. If a huge majority of everyone is either herd immune or vaccinated the bugger gets no targets. A recent study of excess deaths - a reliable figure from year to year - in 30 European countries showed Sweden being on a modest 21th place...

Antal avlidna per vecka



The winter wave in Sweden is now down to virtually nil. (From Public Health Agency, March 30.)

But vaccinations have been sluggish among the EU countries. The reason is to a significant part that companies residing in the US, UK and even India (!) stop vaccine deliveries that the EU has contracted obligations to receive! Unacceptable.

I'm not worried for myself. I might already have had the virus, from a slight cold I had last spring (symptoms are mild with most people, even unnoticeable with many). But getting as many as possible vaccinated will remove the pretext opportunistic politruks have for "hard measures" like inefficient lockdowns. They hugely damage economy, mental health, mutual trust, education, increase crime and

let people die from untreated other diseases, with marginal corona benefits - at best. 21th place!

I think the European Union for once - an economy the same size as the US - should flex some muscles. Squeeze heavy damages from any medical company thinking they can break contracts without consequences. If you stop medical deliveries the result should be no medical exports from the EU: vaccine stuff, masks, syringes, ventilators, etc. The EU is at present a substantial *net exporter* of vaccine. Papers note that eg Sweden gets 3.5 million Astra Zeneca doses less than contracted, as medical companies ignore promised deliveries. It's called "tit for tat" in game theory and it has proven to work. If someone cooperates, do the same. If not, do the same. Then you can try to cooperate and see if you get a positive response - if not, stop.

Not that I'd imagine that the Head Honchos Of Things read *Intermission* that carefully, perhaps not at all...but whatever's done, it must be done now. Every extra day of unnecessary virus shite costs billions. 100+ medical companies have been developing corona vaccines, according to the papers, and soon a lot of more vaccine brands will come to market. Later in spring or by summer, we'll have 57 vaccine brands to pick from, on the shelves beside all the breakfast cereals. But we can't wait until later. Get going, dear EU, squeeze bastards trying to avoid fulfilling their obligations. Get people vaccinated so politicians have nothing to blame for their opportunistic spectacles.

We should build a wall against the virus. Eh, not in Berlin, maybe a Big China Wall? And make them pay for it! Make Europe great again! From now on, it's Europe first.

United we stand, divided we cough...

--Ahrvid Engholm

When SPRING has come,
is there's a risk it will . . . BOUNCE BACK?

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

I must finish the report on skiing began in #106. The World Championships in cross-country skiing had begun, finishing after the deadline. Now there are three tales, of the Good, the Bad and the Ugly.

Let's start with the Good, from my Swedish perspective: Frida Karlsson. No, she didn't win the 30 km race, she did win a medal - a bronze one - but it's the way she did it! Norway's Therese Johaug, the Locomotive, won the gold, which was what everyone expected. She was unbeatable. But when 1/3 of the race was left Frida crashed and the ski of Norway's Weng went over her left arm. Frida had to ski in extreme pain in the arm for the last 10 km, yet being close to even grab the silver.

After the finish Frida collapsed in the snow, cried out in pain, grabbed the arm and was taken care of by team leaders and medics. She was rushed to hospital in an ambulance to have X-rays taken. Fortunately it showed that no bone was broken, but the arm was very bruised and looked twice as thick as usual. When she finished the race her head simply overruled her body. That's having guts

and a winning instinct, to overcome hardship and pain. She's only 21, a huge talent with 6 medals in 8 international championship races. Frida K, remember the name, soon No 1 woman cross-country skier in the world.

On to the Bad: the Swedish lasses were favourites to win the relay. Norway had Johaug, but the three other members of their team were weaker than the Swedes. I checked the odds: Sweden was at 1.5, Norway at 2.5. 1 buck on Sweden gave 1.50 back, with Norway second favourite not unsurprisingly. But already on the first leg we saw something was wrong. The Swedish team had the new sprint world champion Jonna



Frida Karlsson with pain in her arm after the finish. Sundling, who struggled uphill and even had to go to fishbone skiing

(from the pattern when you climb). She

lost 12 seconds on her leg, quite a lot! Next leg's Charlotte Kalla had it even worse and lost over a minute! Afterwards a leader said: "We saw Jonna had uphill troubles, and made a quick fix to put more grip wax on Charlotte's skis." That was a disaster and Kalla got skis like lead. Ebba and Frida on legs 3 and 4 held their ground (legs 1-2 were classic, 3-4 free style where waxing was easier) but the damage was done and the favourites finished...sixth. Norway won, alas. A positive result of the Swedes slipping from the podium was it thus opened a spot for the Finns, who could grab the bronze. Very good for them! Say *Tack, svenska flickor!* ("Thanks, Swedish girls!"). In the shadow of this waxing fiasco, the Swedish men's relay team came only 4 seconds from a medal, which was better than expected, though close doesn't give you a cigar.

The championship ended with the men's individual 50 km and the Ugly bit. Norway's Johannes Kläbo and Russia's Alexander Bolshunov fought it out the last 100 metres of the finish. The Norwegian squeezed himself from behind in front of the Russian, who fell, broke his ski pole and finished third because of this. The Russians protested and Kläbo was disqualified for having caused the Russian to fall. A Norwegian counter-protest was rejected and Kläbo finally withdrew further protests. Bolshunov was awarded the silver. But the Norwegians could still be happy since they got the gold medal, as Emil Iversen could pass the two others because of their tete-a-tete. The best Swede Jens Burman finished fifth, which was actually a step forward.

In the final tally Sweden landed on 7 medals, all won by the girl's squad and their best result ever. We came second in the "medal league" behind Norway's 17 medals, but they had a good men's squad too and got extra medals from ski jumping events (Sweden hasn't had any top ski jumpers since the 1980's with Jan Boklöv, a legend who invented the V style).

The last World Cup in Switzerland the week after the championships also gave some decent results.



Kläbo and Bolshunov slugging it out. The Russian was first and had the right of way. You see his ski pole breaking.

Jens Burman who made a couple of near-podiums in the Worlds, finished fourth in the first Swiss race and then his first podium, third, in the very last World Cup race of the season! He beat both Bolshunov and Kläbo. A big leap forward! Ebba Andersson on the women's side finished third and



Maja, Linn and Johanna display the Nations' Cup trophy for being the best women's team of the the XCS (=X-Country Skiing) World Cup, despite bad wax and injuries.

second in the two Swiss races, as well as third in the World Cup totals.

The weekend after the World Cup

ended, in the separate Long Race Cup (50+ km), Ebba won the 54 km Vålådalen Race (replacement for the Norway's Birkebeinerrittet, moved to Sweden due to Norwegian corona bans). Add two individual champ medals - Ebba had an excellent season!

And in the World Cup the Swedish ladies' team won the Nations' Cup, something the Norwegian women had earlier won 11 years in a row. Despite bad waxing and injuries and some abstained cup weekends, they proved to be the best team.

Finally something sweet. During the World Championships photographers caught the Swedish double team sprint world champion Maja Dahlquist in the arms of Kevin Bolger, a member of the US ski team. They had met earlier during the World Cup season. Maja confirmed they are going together and hope to come to a training camp in the US before next Olympics, if the damn virus permits. The Swedish team leader said they urged athletes not to mingle, but "sometimes love will find ways...".



Kevin+Maja=True



One evening I saw kids playing the Harry Potter game quidditch on a small sports field in Stockholm. Notice the goal rings. They ran with small broomsticks between their legs. The pic is from some distance and thus bit blurry, because I didn't want to disturb them.

Fan Invasion of Lapland

As the whole world has gone bonkers there are few events for me to attend and report from. Instead I have for this issue pictures from last summer's trip to Lapland. The fault of the virus too! I went with my brother in his SAAB, only because he had to cancel an intended trip to Switzerland. He planned to take his son (my nephew) Elmar there on a training camp. Elmar is a national level medium distance runner. But then the Swiss closed the borders on short notice. So it was Lapland instead, my third one the last three years. (I have covered the earlier ones in previous issues, as faithful readers know. In my history reports I have also covered the cult classic film *Space Invasion of Lapland*, 1959.)

Now the pictures, though they only cover some from the trip. Other things from Bellvik were in earlier reports!



We stopped on the way up in Kungsberg where my granddad (dead long before my time) lived and operated a travelling cinema in the 1920's. The 78rpm record player for sound to the shows and movie posters from the silent era: "Her Sacrifice" (left), "Broder against Brother" (right). Partly hidden is "Children of Labour".

**Vote for Gösta * -
unlike others he won't fake it!***

***Rösta på Gösta **Borde nitas!**



Enroute we had lunch by the 90 metres Västanå Rapids, shown here. It's one of the tallest waterfalls of Sweden, but of course having more water in the spring when snow melts.



Västanå had a small museum about the iron works that used to be there and how people lived in older days.



Somewhere in this pic is a reindeer. We drove past it fast and it got blurry...



My brother Johan, at the grave of my father and mother. In the background Järbo church.



At grandma's house in Bellvik, southern Lapland. She ran the village post office there until 1969



Lapland's coat of arms: A wildman with a club!



Two of my cousins were also there. Erik and Anders outside their cottage, which is ca 200m from grandma's house.

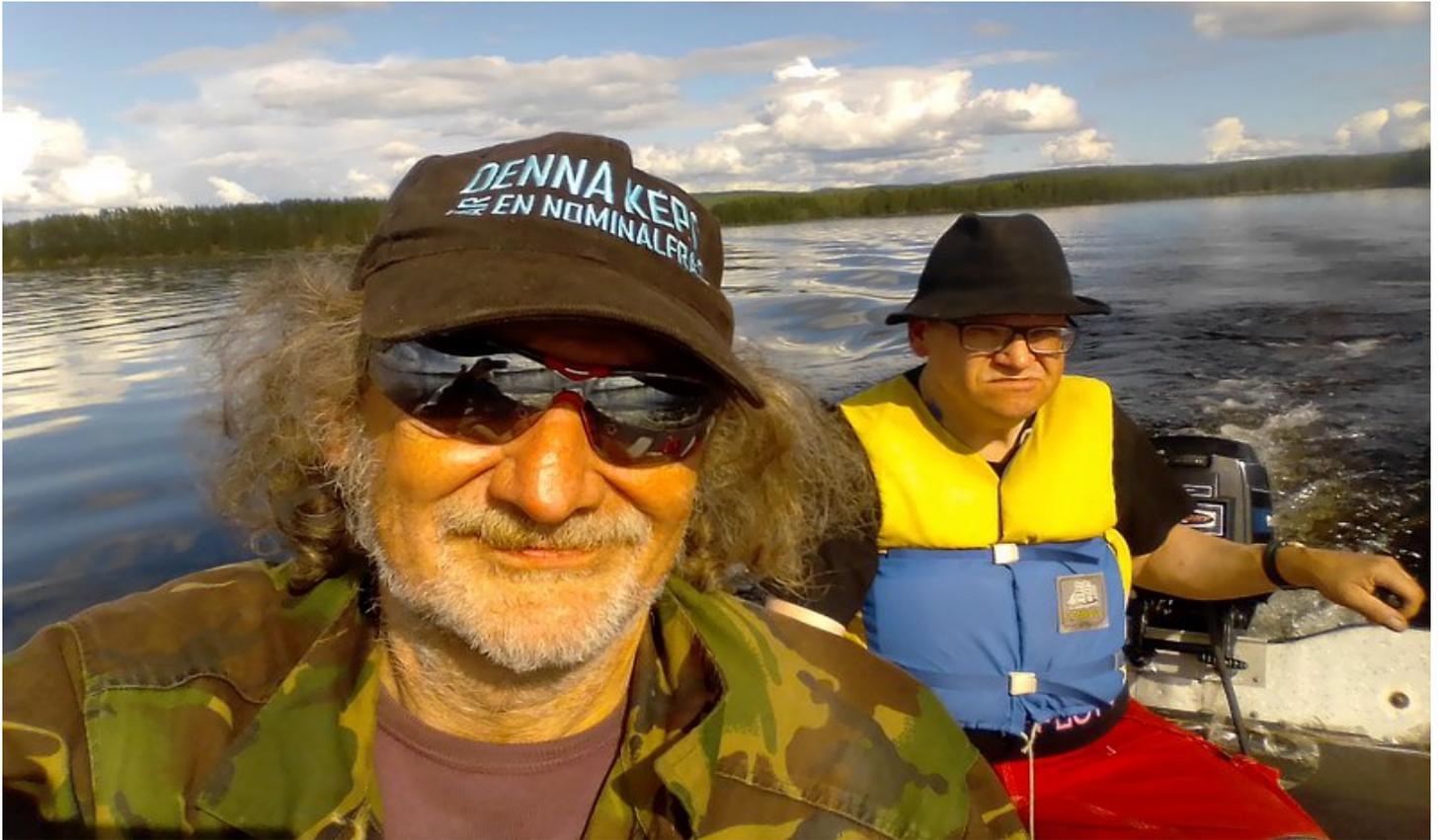


"Lapland", possibly (unclear) meaning "Wilderness in the North", is core land of the reindeer herding Laplanders, "Scandinavia's indians". Of the Sami*, in their language, only a minority are herders today. An estimated 80-100 000 of them live in Sweden, Norway, Finland (which also has a province named Lapland) and Russia.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sámi_people

* Swedish TV has BTW daily news in Sami.

The nearby town of Dorotea has a second hand shop. Anders exploring.



One day we went out on Lake Bellvik for a barbeque. Anders runs the outboarder like a pro.



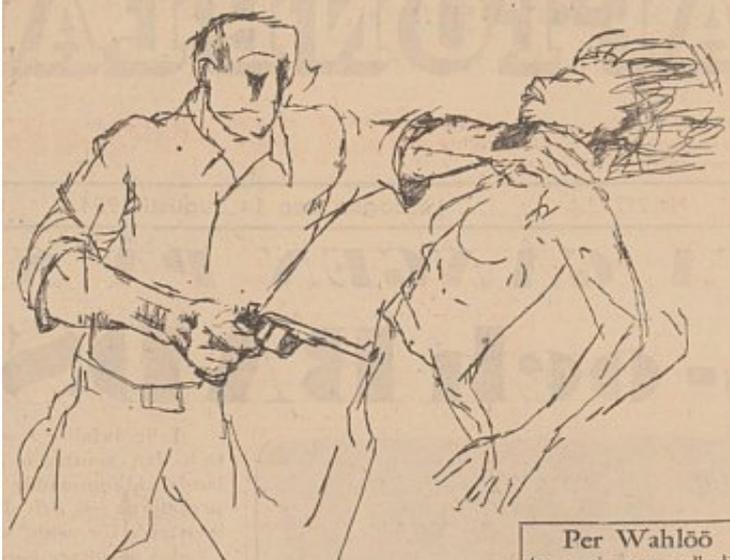
One of the women of the village had turned her house (used as summer house) into an antiques and second hand store. Some of the stuff. She had four rooms full of things. I remember finding eg a couple of history books I liked. Open only in summer time.



Me, Anders and Erik on Old Woman's Island. The local fishing association has set up a shelter and fireplace.

HISTORY CORNER

1.000 unga författare i återvändsgränd



MAN SKULLE knappast tro att den unga generation, som nu håller på att växa ur barnskorna, över huvud taget trängtar till att bruka sin penna. Men det gör den trots allt — trots veckotidningar, seriemagasin, dåliga filmer och andra produkter av en hänsynslöst kommersiellt nöjesindustri. Viljan att skriva är svår att utrota, och än så länge kan den lockas fram, om än blott av feta löften om prisummon, ryktbarhet och ära. Då och då vänder sig även utgivare av de mest spekulativa tryckalster till sin läsekrets med erbjudanden att delta i litterära pristävlingar — det låter flott, och reklamiset kan ju inte minst tjäna till att visa nya genövar till den dåliga smakens eftersträvan av medelproportionalitet.

När jag senast som medbedömare var i tillfälle att ta del av ett dylikt material rörde det sig om en noveltävling, riktad till ungdomar under tjugio år, och eftersom ej mindre än ett tusental förhoppningsfulla skribenter hade härmanat kallelsen att ge ett detaljerat inlämningspapper på vad man helst ville se i spalterna tänades också hoppet om en ganska rikhaltig provkarta. Kanske inte individuallistik, ju inte i tiden, men skiftesrik i alla fall... Måhända var denna förhoppning föremåten — i varje fall visade den sig vara grundligt felslagen.

AV DET STORA antalet bidrag visade sig ca 600 vara mycket närliggande — 412 utvecklade till råga på allt en nästan identiskt likartad intrig. De övriga sönderföll i två påtagliga huvudgrupper av kurrös och avigt berättad natur. Man skrev om sorg, vild, och rymdresor, inspirationskällor var en film och två ytterst suspekta planter ur den litterära undervegetationen. På den romantiska avdelningen sattes Sorgen, den sublima Himlansmärke, definitiva, i högsta. Vad som hände var i kortast följande: De unga konstnärerna träffades på dansbanan, betraktade varandra ett öredigt ögonblick och skyndade livigt till närmaste liggande Himlansmärke lycka, bröllop för örren, men då...

"Hon slannade och vände sig mot andra sidan vägen, där han stod. Hon såg hur han rusade ut i gatan. Hon såg också motorcykeln, som kom rusande. Hon skrek till och ögonblicket efter blev han överkörd."

— Bengt... Hon rusade ut på vägen och kastade sig på knä. Britta, mullade han. Hon såg att det kostade honom svår möda att få fram det enda lilla ordet "Britta". Att det inte var något att göra förstod hon. (1) — Du får inte dö, viskade hon. Men han var för svårt skadad för att överleva, det spred sig ett beende över hans ansikte, han drog en suck — och dog."

I 412 vackra sommarsagor med halmtackar, nakenbad och andra tillbehör lösmördras till slut lyckan på öppen landsväg. Där sätter man också punkt för bekvämlighetens skull. Sorgen har rövarat marknad, den som finns kvar är för evigt förtappad, förlöste. I de enastaka fall

där författaren gjort ett försök att "fälja upp" utvecklingen går det så här:

"På dagen för sin planerade bröllopsdag, som aldrig blev av, avled hon. Hon hade söjt ihjäl sej. Det var ett hårt öde..."

VARIFRAN emmaner nu detta? Är det skillingtrycken eller den gamla goda löwenhjelmska romantiken, som spökar? Ingalunda. Förebilden ligger betydligt närmre i tiden och är avsevärt mera lättillgänglig.

Det fanns en film, som ingen kan ha undgått att höra talas om även om han inte har sett den — den bette "Hon dansade en sommar" och handlade just om ung lycka, förstörd av en trafikolycka. Den var en framstående filmindustriell produkt, enormt publiklockande, och skickligt befriad från underdågs litterära ambitioner, precis som en film skall vara, för att kunna gå direkt till publikhjärtat. Den sågs av fler människor än någon annan svensk film någonsin gjort, men ändå väntar man sig knappast att den skulle göra ett så övervuldigt intryck att den efter ett par år skall förmå hälften av deltagarna i en novellpristävling att nöja sig med att helt enkelt rekapitulera de mera handgripliga avsnitten ur scenariot.

ATT UNGDOMENS drömmar och hänger sig åt påtaglig överkastning av olycksrisken i trafiken är väl inte särskilt otyckligt, men det är ganska beträckligt att en film, som blott borde vara en flyktig underhållningsvara och som aldrig varit tänkt som något annat, skall tjäna som inspirationskälla eller snarare plagieringsobjekt när det gäller att lufta egna liteträna ambitioner. Man kan emellertid välja sämre förebilder än "Hon dansade en sommar" — och man har också gjort det.

"Jag hakade upp hans arm och slog till honom över ansiktet med skjutlärjel. Bledet strömmade i en fos ner på skjortan. Med ett slag över munnen drev jag ner alla tänderna i halsen på honom och han ramlade ihop som en hög gamla kläder, spottande blod och tänder. Jag körde in pipan mellan revbenen så det krasade och väste:

Erkänn, din..."

Men han hade slutat att andas."

Vad är detta? En kriminaldäres memoarer, en brottningsbekännelse inför domstolen? Ingalunda, bara en svensk tonåring, som tror sig ha skrivit en detektivnovell. Exemplet är på intet vis ensamt, det skulle tvärtom kunna mångfaldigas nästan hur länge som helst. De s. k. äventyrsnovellerna, drygt tvåhundrafemtiota tusen, överflödar av orgelstasiska våldsbeskrivningar, folk "kolapsar som köttber", "får arsläktet buliat till blodig köttfärs", "fullkar ihop med krävan full av hly" och "spottar blod och tandflisor" på var och varannan rad.

I NAIVA och stillistiskt undermåliga vändningar, till synes hämtade direkt från dåliga översättningar av

Per Wahllö

har suttit som medbedömare i en noveltävling för ungdomar under 20 år. Det var en särdeles upplevelse.

den värsta vulgämerikanskan, konfronterar man med det ensa råddet, mera häpsnadsväckande brutalt än det andra. Fjorton- och femtonåringar skildrar i jag-form hur deras hjärtat misshandlar en älskemänniskan efter den andra till döds, hur de styckar lik och kallblodigt "pumpar folk fulla med hly". Uttryck som "låt jag honom ha det mellan ögonen" rorer blott alltför tydligt ut språnget till alla döda.

EFTER ATT med stigan de häpnad ha tagglat igenom dessa 250 bloddryppande, illa skrivna våldspekoraler av vanliga svenska tonåringar, skaffade jag mig några av de magasin, som sköljdes upp på pappersaffärernas diskar just den veckan. Det första jag öppnade var "detektivromanen" Dubbelspel, författad av en person vid namn S. Gordon Gurwits, utgiven av Romanförlaget och distribuerad i massupplaga till det facila priset av 35 öre. Det må tillätas mig att i korta drag återge kontentan av innehåll.

Huvudpersonen, som slymlade med en nämnting i uppdragsväkt (inte närmare specificerat), hann inom loppet av 90 sidor (obehövt illa översatta) egenhändigt misshandla fem människor till döds under ytterst makabra former. Förutom dessa avlivnings procedurer avver de raskgubbar, som dånting verkar han ett otal slagamål, varvid motståndarna hastigt förvandlas till "medvetlösa köttkumpar", "biologiska röror", "bögar av lump" eller "kvidande biologiska bytten". I sista kapitlet lämnar den literära upplysningen att han "arbetar för en stor och god sak", han får personligt erkännande av "en gråhårig, högt uppsatt man i Vita Husset", avslöjas som officer i flottan och blir bortgift med en blond högbermad miljonärsdotter. Detta sällsinnigt visade sig vara en genomgående rygråd i hela räckan av liknande tryckalster.

VISSERLIGEN har vi alla sett dessa magasin, men vi har knappast haft någon aning om raskgubbar, som döjer sig bakom deras kolorkrånade papperspärmar. Och har man någon gång kommit i närmare kontakt med dem har man väl oftast avfärdat det hela som snuskigt men ofarligt och därmed också tämligen barnslöst. Men när man har läst om alla dessa landsfiskaler med armar som stålslagor och ögon som brännglas, som krossar bo-

varnas lenskalkar med spiskrokar eller skär ner deras tänder i halsen med pistolkolven, inser man att de talanglösa och skrupelfria efterföljarna till Raymond Chandler och Dashiell Hammett lyckats göra ett intryck på en stor del av den svenska ungdomen, som inte kan betraktas som annat än oroväckande.

Det visar inte bara att många tonåringar lever i en våldsprälat drömvärld, där ett slag på kaféten är trivialt och där ett drap ofta är en oundgänglig, fullt legitimerad åtgärd, utan också att en stor del av dem, som verkligen vill skriva, är helt blotta en försvinnad föreställningsvärld i ordalag, som är på god väg att utarmas av de otillståndigt undermåliga översättningarnas misär.

VID BEARBETANDET av dessa berättelser kunde man lätt ha kommit till slutsatsen, att den litterära moderkötningen, som kallas "science-fiction" och som på senare år firat lavinartade framgångar i de engelskspråkiga länderna, nu är på väg att genombräta publikgränset i Sverige. Detta har tidigare varit ganska påtagligt, framför allt här den filmunderhållning av denna typ, som hittills funnit vägen till våra biografers, rönt ett mycket obetydligt intresse. För bött ett halvår sedan var det tillfälle att närvara på en utvald samling svenska ungdomar användes som försöksobjekt vid en s. k. "preview" av den i USA omåttligt populära seriefilmen "Radar-männan från Vämen". Resultatet blev den gången nedslående för den tilltänkta — högst kommersiellt anlagda — importören; provpubliken gäspade ihjäl smörjan, vilket var precis vad den förhållande. Men sedan de flesta kolorkrånade sveckotidningar på senare tid gått vika för science-fiction-trycket och presenterat den ena rymdförelösten mera stupad än den andra står det klart att genren står inför ett brett upplagt genombrott på den svenska marknaden.

Först som sist måste det konstateras, att det visserligen finns god science-fiction, sådan som så långt det är möjligt bygger på korrekt relaterade vetenskapliga fakta, såväl i den underhållande, missledande och enkladiga delen av produktionen är i förkrossande majoritet. Tyvärr visar det sig också att dessa alster, som rymler betydligt mera "fiction" än "science" och där själva fantasien gjorts till monoton slentrian, fått tjänstgöra som inspirationskällor. Och så blir det ett myllrar av rymdresor, vilka till sist lyfter på någon okänd, paradiskisk planet, en kollektiva blom, där maten växer på träden och där jordmänniskornas "strålpistoler" i lifart mejar ned de legitima mariögarna. Det är förbluffande att något med en så pretentiös stilhet som "science-fiction" kan bli så frötsamt och einsprerakt — och det ger en färd förnek av den kommande tidens textimport från redan science-fiction-frästa länder.

NATURLIGTVIS fanns det bland dem tusentals mycket stora författare också några få som röjde en varm och äkta böjelse att sätta tankar på pränt, men det förmår knappast mildra ett negativt slutdomme. Vad som ovan sagta visar med all önskvärd tydlighet, att god litteratur lika väl som egna intryck i alltför stor utsträckning tycks ha spelat ut sin roll som inspirationskälla för den ungdom, som verkligen "fortfarande" vill skriva.

Namn och böcker

DEN ENGLESKA ransonerings upphävande efter förtien har förutits med en stor utställning av kokböcker i Times Bookshop i London. Utställningen omfattar kokböcker från 450 år — den äldsta är tryckt år 1509 och har den rättframra titeln "This is the Boke of Cookery". Livsmedelsminister Lloyd George som öppnade utställningen var djärv nog att förmedla att ransoneringsnåden gjort engelskmännens mer än medelått om kokkonstens betydelse. Men som verkligen stunden som så länge är har brutit på den punkten, frågar sig skeptiskt lika-engelsk vän av bordets nöjen.

As promised, the history digs continue, but scaled down a bit. One thing I've been doing for many years is promoting new writers. In the early 90's I started an sf/f writers' group, which later developed into the writers' E-mail list SKRIVA, which now has been running for 24 years, including 21 years of an annual short story competition. So of course I became interested when I stumbled upon an article by the legendary Per Wahllö, talking about young writers. Together with Maj Sjöwall he wrote the Martin Beck crime novels, which is the spark that ignited the Scandinavian crime fiction wave, if a wave can be ignited. His long article about amateur writers comes from when he was in the jury for a competition for young writers, and it was in Aftonbladet August 14, 1954, "1000 Young Writers in a Blind Alley":

You would hardly think the young generation now coming of age would at all be interested in using a pen. But it does despite all - despite weeklies, comic books, bad films and other products of a ruthlessly commercial entertainment industry. The urge to write is difficult to eradicate, and it can still be brought forth, if only by fat promises of money, fame and glory. Now and then publishers of the most speculative print worked turn to their readers to offer literary competitions - it sounds dandy, and the result can if nothing else serve to show new roads to the bad taste and a sought after potential of mediocracy. When I recently as a judge was in the position to take part of such material it was a short

story competition aimed at writers under 20 years of age, and the hope arouse of getting detailed samples as no less than a thousand listened to the call to give comprehensive answers to what they would rather see in print. Perhaps not on individual basis, as individualism isn't with our times, but at least varied... These hopes were perhaps presumptuous - they anyway proved to be wrong. Of the great number of contributions ca 600 showed to be very similar - 412 even developed an almost identical plot. The others split into to substantial categories. They wrote about violence, grief and space journeys, inspired by one film and two very suspicious plants in the literary undergrowth. In the romantic department Grief, the sublime, cliché-like, the definite, was put on the high ground. What happened was briefly this: the young couple meet on the dance floor, looked at each other for a brief moment and hurried away to the closest place to lie down. Heavenly happiness, marriage next, but then...

"She stopped and turned to the other side of the road. She saw how he rushed out in the street. She also saw the motorcycle coming in speed. She screamed and at the next moment he was overrun.

'Bengt...' She rushed out in the street and fell on her knees.

'Britta,' he murmured. She saw that it took much effort for him to produce the single little word "Britta". And she understood that there was nothing to do.

'You cannot die,' she whispered. But he was too badly hurt to survive, a smile spread over his face, he sighed - and died."

In 412 beautiful summer tales with haystacks, bathing in the nude and other accessories happiness is assassinated on country road. And there it ends in all convenience. Grief has conquered the market, and what is left is forever lost, finito. In single cases when the author has attempted to follow up it goes like this:

"On the day of their planned marriage, which never happened, she died. She died of sorrow. It was a hard fate..."

From where does all this come? Is it the "shilling prints" /popular 19th century leaflets in Sweden/ or the good old Löwenhielm romance /from a popular author/ playing ghost? None of it. The inspiration is much closer in time, and much more easier at hand. There was a movie no one can have missed hearing about even if you haven't seen it - it was called "One Summer of Happiness" , dealing with young happiness destroyed by a traffic accident. /Script by Eugen's brother Volodja Semitjov, as you saw in last issue./ It was a successful movie industrial product, catching the audience, skilfully freed from underlying literary ambitions, just as a film should, to directly reach the heart of the public. It was seen by more people than any other Swedish film ever, but still you hardly expect it should make such an overwhelming impression that it after a couple of years will make half the participants in a short story competition to simply recapitulate the more direct parts of the scenario. That the youth dreams are about to be hardened by grief and indulging in overestimating the risk of traffic accidents is perhaps not so bad, but it's doubtful that a film that shouldn't be more than shallow entertainment, never intended as something else, shall be the inspiration or rather source of plagiarism when it comes to show your own literary ambitions. You may however choose worse things than "One Summer off Happiness - as some have done:

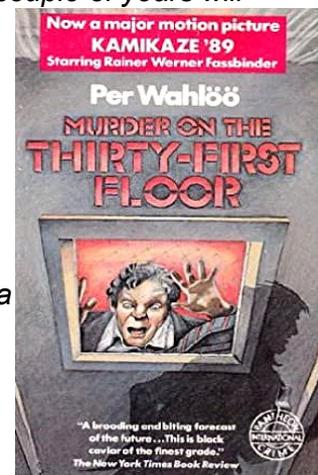
"I hooked up his arm and hit him in his face with the gun. The blood flooded down the shirt after a blow to his mouth I pushed all his teeth down his throat and he collapsed like a bundle of old clothes, spitting blood and old teeth. I pushed in the barrel between his ribs to a crushing sound and hissed:

'Confess, you...'

But he had stopped breathing."

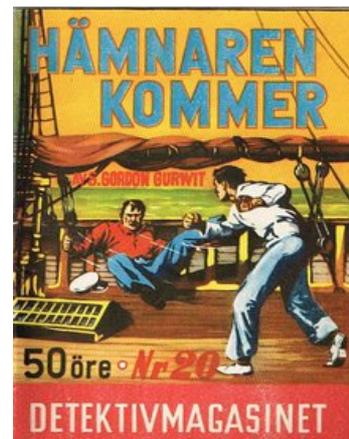
What is this? The memoirs of a criminal madman, the confession of a criminal in a court? Nope, just a Swedish teenager who believe he has written a crime story. The example is in no way unique, to the contrary, it is repeated numerous times. The so called adventure stories, c 250 out of 1000, were overloaded with orgies of violence, people "collapses as heaps of meat" getting their "face hammered to bloody minced meat" to "spit blood and tooth fragments" in each and every second line. In naïve and stylistically inferior phrasings that seem to be picked directly from bad translations of the worst vulgar American, you are confronted with one brutal deed after another more astonishingly brutal. 14- and 15-year old describe in first person how their heroes batters one guy after another to the death, how they chop up bodies and with cold blood "pump people full of lead". Expressions like "I let him have it between the eyes" all too obviously reveals the source of all this. If you take the trouble to research this a little closer, circumstances of very worrying kind are revealed. Under the now often misleading description detective magazines hides a river of terribly substandard literature of violence. These books are published e v e r y w e e k and their print runs aim towards astronomical figures. They are sold everywhere, by tobacconists and in kiosks, on trains and boats, and they are

grabbed by the readers in great numbers. After having dragged myself through these 250 blood-ridden, badly written pompous violence stories by ordinary Swedish teenagers with rising astonishment, I acquired some of the magazines that are washed up on the desks of the newsagents this week. The first I open is the "detective



Wahlöö's sf novels.

novel" titled "Double Play" written by a person by the name S Gordon Gurwit, published by Romanförlaget and distributed in a big print run to the neat price of 35 öre. /ca 7 1950s cents/ Let me be excused to briefly recapitulate the contents. The main character who takes cases of not very specified types had time to within the space of 90 pages (in incredibly bad translation) with his own hands beat five people to death in very macabre circumstances. Outside these procedures of slaughter he goes through a number of fights during which the opponents are transformed to "unconscious lumps of meat", "bloody hotchpotch", "heaps of rags" or "whining, blooded packages". In the last chapter we are given the laconic information that he is working "for a big and good cause" and gets personal recognition by a "gray-haired, high official in the White House", is revealed as a naval officer and married to a millionaire lady with big breasts. These ideas are shown to be the backbone of a line of similar printed matter. We have all of course seen these magazines, but we've had no idea of the cruelty that has lodged behind the coloured paper covers. And have you come in contact with it you have tended to dismiss it all as nasty but harmless and thus of no danger. But when you have read about all these sheriffs with arms like steel hammers and eyes like torches, who break knee caps with ironware or crush teeth down the throat with the gun butt, you realise how talentless and immoral followers of Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammet have managed to impress a big part of Swedish youth, which must be seen as very worrying. It not only shows that many teenagers live in a violence-ridden dream world, where a blow on the jaw is trivial and manslaughter often is a necessary, wholly legitimate action, but also that many of those who really want to write are driven to reveal a twisted world view in wordings on their way to being depleted by the miserably substandard translations. Working with these up to 1000 teenager works you could also note that the literary fashion called "science fiction", which in later years have seen an avalanche of success in the English language countries, now is on its way to break through public resistance in Sweden. It has earlier been obvious, most of all as this type of movie entertainment, which this far found its way to our cinemas, have met with an insignificant interest. Only half a year ago I was in the situation to be present when selection of Swedish youth was used as test subjects at a so called "preview" of the in the USA incredibly popular movie serial "Radarmen from the Moon". The result must at that time had been disappointing for the prospective - very commercial - importer; the test audience gasped at the rubbish, just as it deserved. But since most of the coloured weeklies lately have budged to the sf pressure and presented one space serial after another, each one more stupid, it is clear that the genre stands before a broad breakthrough on the Swedish market. Of course you have to note that there naturally are good sf films, which as much as possible is built upon correctly related scientific facts, but the substandard, misleading and simplistic part of the production is in overwhelming majority. Unfortunately it shows that these have more "fiction" than "science", and imagination itself has been made into monotonous routine, becoming the inspiration. We get a myriad of space journeys ending up on a paradise planet, a cliché scenery where food grows on the trees and where the Earthmen's "ray guns" quickly cut down the legitimate landowners. It is staggering that something with such a pretentious label as "science fiction" can become so tiresome and uninspired - and it gives bland pre-taste of coming text imports from already sf-devoted countries. But of course among these 1000 very young writers also some who showed a warm and real urge to put thoughts in print, but it isn't enough to make the final evaluation milder. What is said above clearly shows that good literature as well as your own impressions in a too big extent seems to have lost its ability as a source of inspiration for the youth that still really wants to write.



An immor(t)al Gurwit tale - Revenger Arrives. If you google around you find he wrote some skiffy too.

I have two reasons for bringing Wahlöö's old article up. First, he is a giant in the field of popular literature, the father of Nordic Noir crime fiction with the Martin Beck series (the mother of course being Maj Sjöwall, his co-author). Secondly, I have myself been involved a lot in short story competitions, through Fantastiknovelltävlingen ("The Fantastic Short Story Contest") organised by the writing list SKRIVA yearly since 2000. Through the years I must have seen and read more than 2000 amateur short stories, through the contest but also in editorial positions (*Nova SF*, *Teknikmagasinet*). This gives me reason to doubt some of Walhöö's statements.

He cannot have read 1000 short stories! That would take months, for a simple newspaper article. It takes me up to a week to read 100 from the SKRIVA competition. And the statistics he gives, there are exactly 412 stories with the plot from "A Summer of Happiness" seems - to put it nicely - rather improvised. He has of course only read a sample of the stories, but he has a mission: to tell us about what he sees as bad trends among young writers. I think he exaggerates a bit... Of course it's unimaginative and cliché-ridden to copy the plot from a film (BTW one of the most successful in Swedish history, ie not by Ingmar B, famous abroad for launching "Swedish sin"...). And to drench your story in blood isn't a good idea, and makes it boring rather than exciting.

But he must have cherry-picked the bloodiest crime-story magazine he could find. I have read a fair amount of "hard-boiled" crime tales. And also a number of these cheap crime pulp-like crime mags from the 1950's. I don't recognise his description. Usually there is only one murder (by the villain, who the hero will catch), gunfights are rare and I don't remember any teeth being hammered down the throat. There are fist fights but they end fast, with a silent unconsciousness as major outcome.

As for the sf he goes into, his opinion is clearly formed by the wave of Earth-Invaded-By-Monsters films coming from the B-side of Hollywood in the 1950's, movies that are ight years from Academy nominations. (But personally, I love those old Earth invaded flicks! A bheer, popcorn and a film with a monster showing the zippers in the back, that's a great evening! Though I see what Wahlöö means.) As for sf literature, Wahlöö can't have read much. The standard was at this time on the rise. Campbell's "golden age" had made it's mark, we got Galaxy, the Mag of F&SF, etc.

That he was a bit fast with dismissing skiffy is curious as Wahlöö himself dived into it later. Beside his now classic police procedurals he wrote sf novels like *Murder on the 31st floor* (1964) and *The Steel Spring* (1968). The first was BTW filmed in by no other than RW Fassbinder, under the title "Kamikaze 1989" (from 1982, available on-line if you look around)! It is however true that amateur stories lack a few properties of better fiction. From a long experience with amateur stories I'd like to point to some, though much more could be added:

1) Plan your story in advance. All details aren't needed but you should have the general idea of the story, and know how it ends. Twist-ends are nice...if they are *truly* original and unexpected.

2) Many have no idea of how to construct a plot. A plot is a chain of events about someone overcoming some hardship, revealing something important or solving a problem. One event logically leads to next and in the end everything is made fine or the character and reader has learned something from it. (It's at least the most common and basic way a plot works.)

3) Many are just babbling on and on and on. But you should write in scenes, and jump from one event to next. You skip trivial things in between. Many amateur writers describe all events 24/7. You should know how and were to cut, or the story becomes too long and boring. You must cut! It is called *short stories*, remember.

4) As it is a short story, you start when things begin to happen, not before. And make sure the reader gets a grip of what the story is to be dealing with, within a couple of paragraphs at the very beginning.

5) Too many adjectives, too long sentences, too many quantifying words ("much", "many", "none" etc), dialogue that reads like lectures, too detailed descriptions of people's faces and clothes, too long or short paragraphs, overused idioms, phrases and metaphors. And remember that understatements are often more effective than exaggerations.

6) In sf, avoid total ignorance of science. It doesn't have to be entirely scientifically accurate but avoid the worst mistakes. Do just a little research, google for facts and make it sound plausible. In fantasy, skip the group or hero on a tiresome quest for a magic sword, a jewel, an ancient secret or...a ring. In horror, don't think you too are Lovecraft, and why are youth gangs always vampires?

7) Variation is the key. Mix long and short sentences. Alternate show ("gestaltung", descriptions) with tell (reporting events). Give people in dialogues different ways of speaking. Get some humour into what is serious, or vice versa. Describe what all senses register. Etc.

But much more could be said.

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About panic caused by an sf show, a parallel to Orson Welles and War of the Worlds incident (covered earlier in this eminent fanzine) happened in Britain in the early 1960's. As Svenska Dagbladet reports February 22, 1959, "TV Program About A Satellite Causes of Panic":

Commercial British TV has been guilty of what all of public opinion thinks is an unforgivable error, as it in an intro to TV play of sf type arranged for a "technical break" in the ordinary schedule for an "important public announcement", saying that an "unknown satellite" had been spotted outside London. Scotland Yard immediately received a large number of disaster calls from TV viewers who had believed it was real and not the imagination of a TV producer, and both the TV company in question and a large number of newspapers had their phone lines blocked by an upset TV audience. The reaction of the public seems to have come as a complete surprise to the program directors, who could only stutter a half-hearted apology. But a complete investigation has been promised. Labour says they will bring up the issue in the House of Commons next week, and it is quite possible that they will use the event for new attack on commercial TV which the party has always been sceptical towards. Already during the program the TV management realised everything wasn't as it should. Before the show was over a TV employee announced the TV company was sorry for what had happened, if it had made people worried in the way the program had been presented. A little bit later the TV management announced that it deeply regretted the worries, though unintentional, that the public had been caused through very bad judgement. Many TV viewers were overcome with total panic when they heard the false "news broadcast". Many people ran out on the streets to watch the "unknown satellite". One man afterwards explained that he considered suing the TV company for the damaging effects it has had on his sick wife. The TV critic of The Times doesn't hold back the words in his comment to what happened: "This if anything was a good example of to what contempt some TV idiots hold their audience. They believe that most people are so tied to their sofa that they can switch their attention from the threat of imminent death to a third-rate play and ads for washing machines without any other feeling that the one from having a nice change", it says in this critic's verdict on the TV channel.

Via Gøogle I found a TV drama named "Before the Sun Goes Down" aired February 20 1959, which must be what this is about, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0421702/> "Two lonely souls find romance together as London is threatened by a satellite in space." It seems not uncommon a TV or radio show to be taken for real. But I wonder if the panic among the British public really was that big?

Here's an even stranger story - people taking a peace of fiction in a magazine for real. Since it was

Skräckhistoria vållar full panik i rysk stad

MOSKVA (ÅB) Full panik utbröt nyligen i Svarta havs-staden Tuapse, där invånarna greps av fasa och skräck sedan de läst en science fictionberättelse om hur en flammande massa hotade att förgöra jorden.

Den dramatiska skildringen — av författaren I. Kris — publicerades i tidningen "Lenins väg" och redogjorde för hur en rysk astronom upptäckte en "gigantisk flammande massa" nära solen. Massan hade enormt hög temperatur och närmade sig den "syndfulla jorden" med en hastighet av 240.000 km/tim. Panik sades ha utbrutit i den kapitalistiska världen, där folk övergav alla sina timliga ägodelar och försökte komma undan hotellet från rymden.

Till yttermera visso hade "borgerliga vetenskapsmän" lyckats förflytta sig till en ny måne och planerade att "tillintetgöra

kommunismen" med hjälp av denna.

Enligt tidningen Röda Sovjet blev skräckskildringen för mycket för vissa av Tuapses invånare, vilka fick sina nerver förstörda och överallt i staden talades om att jordens undergång var förestående. Det gick så långt att en del av befolkningen började sälja hus och boskap.

När följetongen kommit så långt ryckte författaren in som räddare och rapporterade att ryska vetenskapsmän bombarderat den brinnande kometen och hindrat den från att nå jorden. — UP.

printed as a serial some must have known it was fiction (news aren't done as serials). It happened in the Soviet Union, as described in Aftonbladet, September 16, 1957, "Horror Story Causes Full Panic in Russian City":

Full panic recently broke out in the Black Sea city of Tuapse, as inhabitants were filled with dread and horror after reading an sf story about a flaming mass threatening Earth. The dramatic account by the author Kris was published in the magazine The Way of Lenin and told how a Russian Astronomer discovered a "giant flaming mass" near the Sun. It has an enormous temperature and was coming closer to the "sinful Earth" with the speed of 240 000 km/h. It was said that the capitalistic world was in panic, where people abandoned all their earthly possessions and tried to escape the threat from space. To add to this "bourgeoisie scientists" had managed to escape to a new moon from

with they planned to "destroy communism". According to the newspaper Red Soviet, this horror tale was too much for some of the inhabitants of Tuapse, whose nerves were shattered and everywhere in the city people talked about that the end of Earth was nigh. It went so far that some began to sell their houses and cattle. When the serial had come that far the author jumped in as a saviour and reported that Russian scientists had bombarded the burning comet and stopped it from reaching Earth.

I can find two reasons for this strange story. Either that Soviet newspapers reporting the panic lied or exaggerated to make propaganda or imprint readers with some morality point. Or the news reporting in the USSR was so untrustworthy that people were apt to believe anything. The old communist countries were prime examples of Fake News. But now people take things on some new invention called "Internet", or whatever, for the truth! Warning! Any day someone will begin to make

small electronic sort of magazines on this Interweb. That'll be PDF - Pretty Damn Funny!

Soviet authors had an even harder time. We read in Svenska Dagbladet March 22, 1959, "*Russian Sherlock gets tough sentence literary disciplining*":

The Russian Writers' Union will on the coming convention have a hard line against writers "who betray the principles of communist art", Komsomol Pravda declared on Saturday, the magazine of the communist youth organisations. The magazine claimed that many old-fashioned writers considered big names these days only write trivial things with commercial intentions. They pointed especially to Nikolai Shpanov, who have written a great number of books, eg Incendiaries, a bestseller about Hitler coming to power. Shpanov was accused of trying to write sf without knowledge of the scientific facts. It was also claimed that he imitated Sherlock Holmes in a series of stories about a Russian detective. Some of the stories are said to be pure plagiarism. Komsomol Pravda thinks such works "only make our youth more stupid".

One may fear that this official condemnation didn't make life easy for poor Shpanov, who died just two years later at the age of only 65,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikolai_Shpanov He wrote more sf, in 1939 before the war, Incendiaries, a very foresighted Alternate History dealing with an upcoming war with Germany. I would BTW have liked to read Soviet Sherlock Holmes stories: "*One morning when I Comrade Watson woke in our shared apartment, sharing with with five others, in the collective block Uvelichitelnoye Steklo on Baker Prospekt, Sherlock Holmevich asked if he could borrow a tobacco ration coupon...*"

1953 was the year when the sf genre made its public breakthrough, as articles that year soared in Swedish newspapers about this new space fiction. Earlier I have covered all the naming competitions to give these new American yarns a Swedish name, as "science fiction" was considered too obscure (but it finally won out). A note I missed before about one of the naming contests, in Expressen, February 20, 1954, "*It is said...*":



...that the Swedish language has acquired a new word, teknovision. That's the result from a competition which the Bonniers magazine on books, Bonniers Nyheter, has had together with Teknikens Värld, about the best Swedish name for science fiction, which you these days see everywhere. There were two first prizes, The engineer Karl Bergman from Huddinge with teknovision and Hans-Erik Persson from Åstorp with Futurama.

I think I missed futurama when I covered the naming competitions before. Have you, dear reader, BTW read any good futurama recently? I liked the stories from the days when Campbell did Astounding Futurama! With folks like Asimov and Clarke, who'd later write books like Rendezvous

with Futurama!

More on the future, a "*Future Prize*" awarded to Göran Bengtson says a notice in Dagens Nyheter June 12, 1973:

This weekend there has been an sf convention in Lund when a statuette was handed out. The receiver was Göran Bengtson, culture producer on TV. He has been very fruitful for sf, since he now and then does radio and TV programs on the topic and writes critique in Expressen too. The award is made by the wood carver Urban Gunnarsson and is awarded by the Swedish Academy for SF, which this year celebrated it's 10th anniversary. In the Academy we have PhD Ingvar Svensson, Uppsala (constant secretary), editor Sam J Lundwall, Stockholm, translator and critic Roland Adlerberth, Lerum, BA Lars-Olov Strandberg, Stockholm, photographer Christer Landergren, Stockholm, and PhD Leif Andersson, at this time at the University of Bloomington, Indiana, USA.

I bring this up to have the opportunity to make a few fannish notes. Göran

Rysk Sherlock får hård dom Litterär räfst

MOSKVA. (AP) Ryska författarföreningen kommer på sin nästföljande kongress att gå hårt åt de författare "som förräder principerna för den kommunistiska konsten", förklarade på lördagen Komsomolskaja Pravda, de kommunistiska ungdomsorganisationernas organ.

Tidningen hävdade att många gammalmodiga författare som har stora namn numera bara skriver triviala saker med kommersiella baktankar.

Framförallt utpekades Nikolaj Sjpanov som skrivit ett stort antal böcker, t. ex. "Anstiftare och konspiratörer" en bestseller som handlar om Hitlers maktövertagande. Sjpanov anklagades för att försöka skriva science fiction utan att veta något om de vetenskapliga rönerna.

Det påstods också att han imiterar Sherlock Holmes i en serie berättelser som handlar om en rysk detektiv. En del av berättelserna skulle vara rena plagiat. Komsomolskaja Pravda anser att sådana arbeten "bara fördummar vår ungdom".

Framtidspris



Göran Bengtson — hyllad utan gränser.

I helgen har det varit science-fictionkongress i Lund, och då utdelades en statyett.

Den som fick den var Göran Bengtson, kulturproducent på TV.

Han har varit jättenyttig för sf eftersom han då och då gör radio- och TV-program om saken och skriver kritik i Expressen också.

Priset är tillverkat av träsnidaren Urban Gunnarsson och utdelas av Svenska akademien för science-fiction, vilken just i år firar tioårsjubileum.

I akademien ingår docent Ingvar Svensson, Uppsala (ständig sekreterare), redaktör Sam J Lundwall, Stockholm, översättaren och kritikern Roland Adlerberth, Lerum, fil kand Lars-Olov Strandberg, Stockholm, fotograf Christer Landergren, Stockholm, och fil dr Leif Andersson, fn vid universitetet i Bloomington, Indiana, USA.

Bengtson was well-known in sf circles and went to our cons sometimes. He died in 2006 (last time I saw him was on our 1999 con, he fell ill sometime after that...oh no, the con cheer was OK!) and is said to have been the one stopping Star Trek on Swedish TV! He was an influential guy of Swedish SVT - our BBC - and sort of boss for buying TV shows. Cpt Kirk & Co did get a short test run here in the



A collection of Urban Gunnarsson wooden figurines. Some US presidents, a French one, a British PM, etc.

1970's (nine episodes I think) but that was all. The harshest critic was Mr Bengtson, who instead decided to instead gift us the British Star Trek rip-off Space:1999. A highly illogical choice, if you ask me. The Swedish Academy for SF was never very active AFAIK, and soon faded away. *Urban in his workshop.*



I seem to remember they had some sort of activity on my first con, Scancon 1976, but that was the last anyone heard from them. Fan Urban Gunnarsson mentioned is still

around. He is a very skilled wood-carver, and his statuettes have been seen and used in TV shows, movies, on the cover of *Jules Verne Magasinet*, sometimes for awards (not too often, he is quite expensive) etc. I shared the flight with him on the plane to the Irish Worldcon the other year and sometimes pop in to his workshop is on Queen Street, in central Stockholm.



Me on the yearly business meeting of the Short Story Masters authors' society, early March. An extended, Swedish version of "The Hiccup Plague" from the January ish is in our next anthology. L to r: Me, Ulf Broberg, Kjell Genberg, Ulf Durling, Cecilia Wennerström (outside the picture is our chairman Helena Sigander).

To bee or not to bee, that is the insect!

Anvoi de Commentaires

Excuse my French, but Uncle Google claims that's French for Mailing Comments. Now, first EAPA, then N'APA. So here at last, unintelligible ramblings to intelligent publications!

Henry Grynsten: No, doing a new book (beside The Fandbook). Too much work. And the cultural world wouldn't be interested in hearing about the history of sf and its fandom. You probably have a *lot* of fanzines the Royal Library lacks. Their collection is far from complete. Anna Davour made a database of the SAAM collection before handing it over - just over 4000 titles. I believe the library had ca 2000 fanzines since before, so they only have a total of ca 6000, of the probably 20-30 000 Swedish sf fanzines being published. I believe sorrow fulfills an important evolutionary purpose. Sorrow is a strong negative signal and comes when something bad has happened, often a threat to your survival. Experiencing sorrow teaches us to *try to avoid that bad things*. Being programmed by sorrow to avoid bad things is clearly an evolutionary advantage. Animals may also get an advantage in trying to avoid bad things, but generally I think we should be very careful to assign human properties to animals. They don't have feelings in the human sense. They have action-responses of a rudimentary nature, though it may to a human seem like "our" emotions. We humans are apt to project our own properties onto other entities. Think of eg someone shouting at a lawnmower thinking it is "evil" when it won't start...

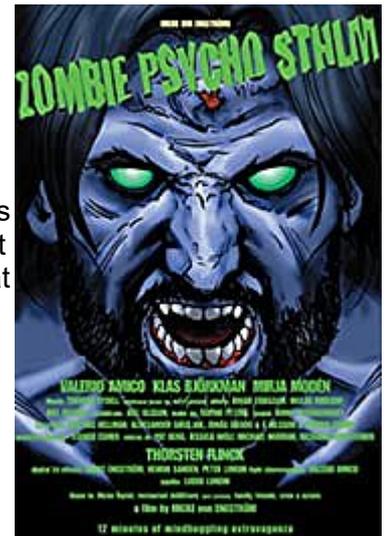
William McCabe: Ca 15% of the Swedes should have had at least one job when you read this, about half the UK figure. But the EU is furious that the medical companies haven't fulfilled their delivery contracts (see my editorial) and has decided on some vaccine export regulations. The EU is a vaccine exporter, but no one thanks us for it as our deliveries are selfishly stopped. EU export may now be reduced or stopped. I'll probably not getting vaccine offer until summer, not that I care much. The other earlier space societies you mention have folded. BIS must be the oldest remaining one. The American Rocket Society ("founded in 1930 by sf writers G Edward Pendray, David Lasser, Laurence Manning", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Rocket_Society) merged with another group in 1963 into the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, a group for professionals in aerospace engineering, and doesn't exist in its original form.

Garth Spencer: No, I won't write a book - too much work, too little interest outside fandom. Some of the things I have covered are "firsts". Sture Lönnerstrands early not so straight career was unknown. The first time "fanzine" was mentioned in Sweden was unknown. Much that I have uncovered about Atomic Noah and Harry Martinson have been unknown. Some details about the family Semitjov must have been unknown. And many other things. BTW, a film maker contacted me, and is planning a documentary about Eugen Semitjov! I have provided him with all the clips I collected and given him my recollections about Eugen. There's a short trailer about this documentary project on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/po0YUmxH17E> Let's see what happens. (The filmmaker is Micke Engstrom, who has earlier made a fine documentary about horror artist Hans Arnold and the horror short "Zombie Psycho Sthlm". Is that the "Engstrom" you talk about BTW?) End of EAPA comments.

John Thiel: I now switch to N'APA comments. Yes, our age is one when things seem to spin faster, with information overload and so on. I don't know what to do about it, except you have to hang on the best you can. Nice with poetry in fanzines. Just wait for me to unleash my poetic friend Comet-John Benzene Jr on you all...

Jefferson P. Swycaffer: I know you can't read the facsimiles of the articles, but I do give translations. (I include the originals, since I send the issues to some Nordic fans who can read it.) The three choices in the Swedish nuclear referendum in 1980 were (if I remember), 1) Build the 12 plans (6 were already up) as planned, no limit on how long they may run (got ca 20% of the votes), 2) the same as 1. except the plants may only run the estimated technical lifespan calculated to 25 years (just over 40% of votes), 3) no more nuclear power plants and close the 6 running within 10 years (just under 40% of the votes). As 1+2 together had a comfortable majority new plants were opened, up to a max of 12. Situation now is that 6 have been closed, but the remaining ones have been boosted in power output to somewhat compensate. There is a debate about new, smaller, more efficient nuclear power plants of a new generation. A known fan, Janne Wallenius (former fanzine publisher etc) is in fact heavily involved in this, having started a nuclear company named Blykalla! Oh no, human development isn't a zero sum game! As we learn more, and can make processes more efficient and increase our technical abilities, it becomes a win-win one! Our technical progress means we can purify water, air, waste etc. Economic growth means we can afford it better! The increasing urbanisation means people move to cities and leave more area for the nature. And so on. The environment wins! And it's impossible to "deplete" any resources. No atoms are destroyed (except for miniscule amounts in nuclear reactors) and whatever we use can be recycled, by adding energy and technical knowledge. The alarmist environmental dogma that progress and growth is "unsustainable" is simply *dead wrong*.

George Phillies: I don't think you did anything wrong with your suggestions for recruiting to N3F. Some fanatics are just like HC Andersen's Princess on the pea. I can't possibly compress all my fandom history research into an article for Fancyclopedia... I have done so much research and it has been presented already





From the 1959 opera "Aniara".

in many different forms. In the 1990's I wrote history articles for *Mimosa*, later reprinted (with some new material) in the fanthology *Swede Ishes 2*. I have the recent ten "history issues" of *Intermission*. British sf research journal *Foundation* will shortly run an article by me (I earlier had another one), probably now in April. But my main work on which I have spent decades, is the 950 000 chrs long - ca 160K words, but here we count length in characters - Swedish fancyclopedia, named *Fandboken* ("The Fandbook"). All this can't be summarised...and interest for it outside fandom is probably nil. But I won't quit. Yes, *Aniara* has been turned into an opera, premiere 1959, also later another opera, a musical, recently a feature film...it has inspired a lot of things, in fact! The 1959 opera by Karl

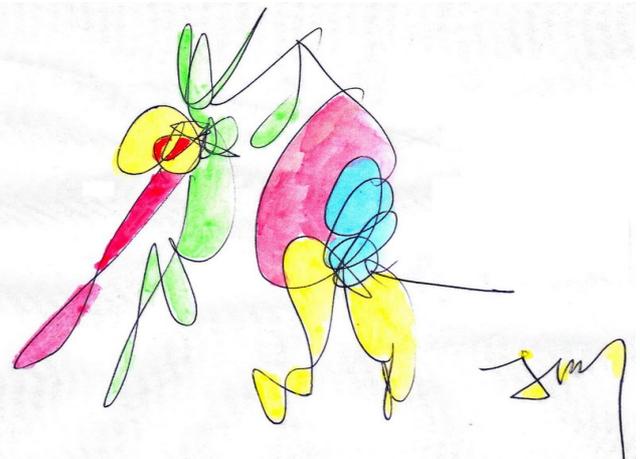
Birger Blomdahl, is said to be the first in opera history to include electronic music, and can be seen on Youtube, here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgZmZnxwBoQ> - with subtitles in English.

Will Mayo: Nice picture of one of those famous covered bridges in New England! We have such here too, but not as many. I enclose a picture of the Vaholm covered bridge.

Samuel Lubell: It remains to be seen how many have died from and just just with the corona virus. I think it is likely that the claimed US figure of "half a million" is inflated, ie it includes a majority of very old and fragile and/or with pre-existing medical conditions who would have died anyway. When the epidemic is over we can sit down and go through statistics in detail. A very important figure is something called "excess deaths". Death figures are very stable from year to year. Extra deaths are those that can be ascribed to the virus, anything below are from other causes. I have calculated that in eg Sweden the virus deaths are "only" 37% of the claimed official figures for 2020, based on official numbers from the government statistics agency. There is a tendency to inflate figures to justify the harmful "lockdowns". They mean huge harm to the economy, mental health, crime rate, kid's education, to deaths from other disease that remain untreated, etc. It has eg been argued that deaths from undiscovered cancer alone will exceed those from this virus! Sweden chose softer measures and is in the bottom third in fatalities, not even counting the probably 63% overreporting. No, protests against cancel culture can't be a reaction to "earlier conservative protests". Demands of quotas for superheroes or gaming characters for certain groups, that children books must have certain contents etc, are namely a *simultaneous* phenomenon and and integrated part of cancel culture, so it can't be earlier. The idea of this ideology is simply: some groups are proclaimed as discriminated and thus comes demands they shall get special advantages, incl having rights to decided what others are allowed to say, what awards may be named after, having quotas in comic books, children's book's, games, movies, etc. But giving advantages to some are discriminatory to those left out, all not belonging to the group to be awarded privileges. As they declare certain groups being discriminated, they totally forget that the *most disadvantaged* are "white" boys from low-income families. And it's dangerous to try to cancel aspects of history or rewriting it. It will only make people more stupid and ignorant of the past! AFAIK what is called gamergate was a reaction to the launch of games promoting feminist ideology. It may not have been pretty, but we must realise that many aren't too fond of feminism. (But I haven't followed what happened in any detail. And Wikipedia's article "Gamergate" is just confusing.) Overall, I have the impression that sf in later years have come to suffer from anti-technological progress-bashing, self-denial, environmental dogma, claims humans are a pest just destroying things, collectivist ideologies like "identity politics" and populist "-isms". That goes against what can be argued are core values of science fiction. I have always seen sf as literature for a positive view, for *individualism*, not for marching in step in a collective and seeing things through dark glasses. Sf is about technological and scientific *progress and growth*, for *personal freedom*, not the notion that such is just "unsustainable". Science fiction isn't introvert, for restraints and conformity, but for openness, the strength of mankind's creativity and expansion further out in the universe!



And with these perhaps inflammatory observations, I think it's time to finish...and flee as fast as possible! At least until next issue!



What's this? A mosquito on a masquerade? A Certain Virus? Or...?Artist Lars "LON" Olsson baffles us!

And with these perhaps inflammatory observations, I think it's time to finish...and flee as fast as possible! At least until next issue!

--Ahrvid