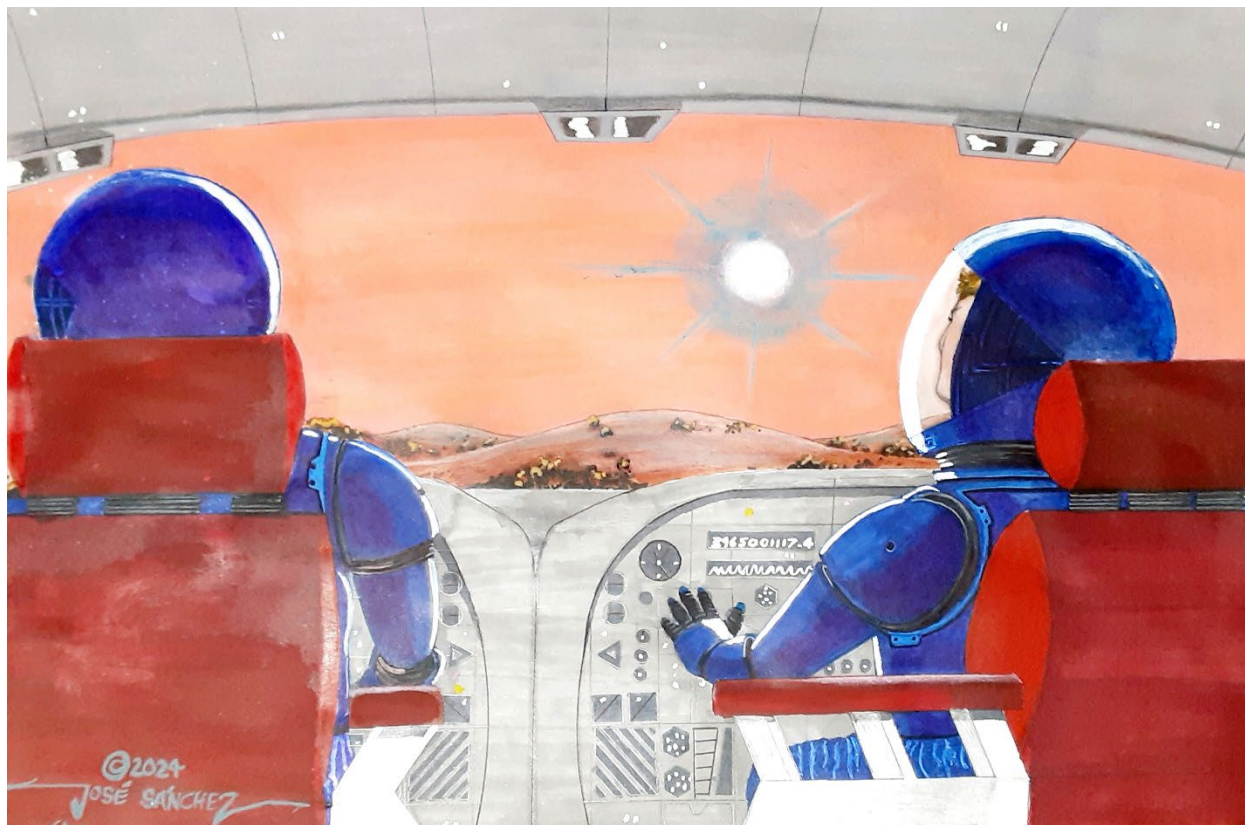


THE OBDURATE EYE #47

January 2025

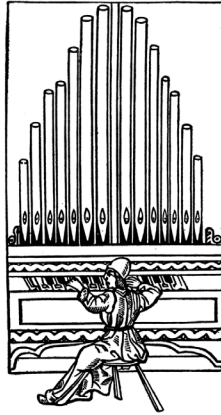


*Two guys tooling across the Martian desert,
each one wondering if he remembered to close
the garage door when they left*

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THE OBDURATE EYE #47, January 2025, a personalzine from Garth Spencer, 6960 Doman Street, Vancouver, BC CANADA V5S 3H7, Email garth.van.spencer@gmail.com or hrothgarweems@gmail.com . Garth acknowledges that he does this on the unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəyəm, səlilwətał, and skwxwú7mesh peoples.



The organ of no clique or party

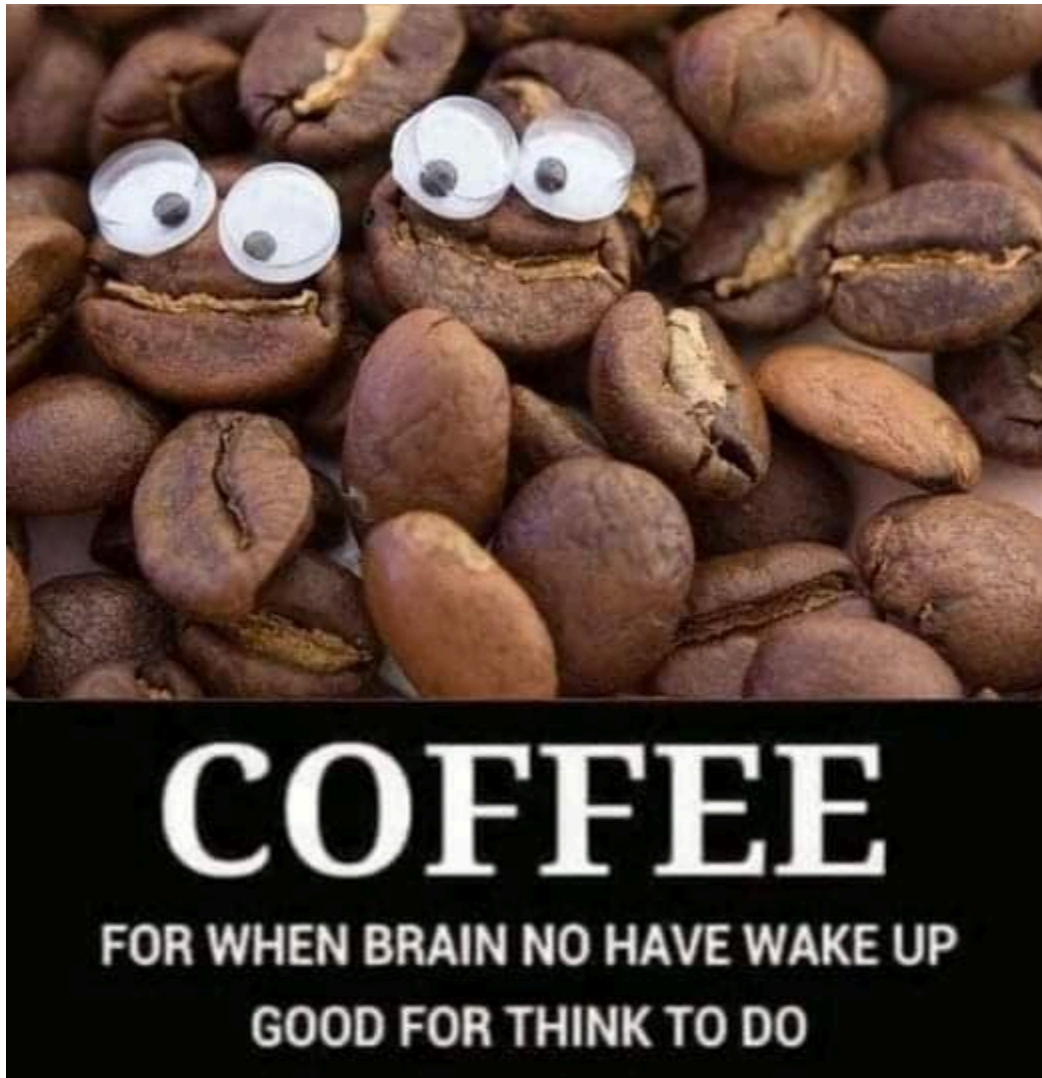
Art Credits

José Sanchez cover
Clipart, or ads in N3F fanzines everywhere else

The Flaccid Tissues of Long-Dead Issues

I've been resisting this for a long time, but I have to admit that the fandom I joined in the 1980s doesn't exist in my part of Canada anymore. I don't have the resources to go to general-interest, fan-run conventions regularly; I can only correspond with fanzine fans elsewhere; my interests are represented by no local SF events, and in fewer and fewer regional conventions.

So be it.



Locs to Obdurate Eye

**Lloyd & Yvonne Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2,
December 23, 2024**

Thank you for issue 46 of *The Obdurate Eye*. Sometimes, in order to speed myself along to get caught up, which is something I always seem to be doing, I will print out a copy of the zine and take it with me to work, a coffee shop, etc. I made notes on this issue, and this should be a relatively long loc. Now to see how notes translate into comments...

It does sound like the Universal Life Church has a better grip on modern reality than do most modern religions, especially today's Christianity, mostly taken over by sociopathic politicians and charismatic billionaires. These days, I don't think the Pope would be all that welcome on this continent.

((There used to be a widely shared, level-headed attitude that people are going to have different family cultures, including subscribing to different god-shops, political parties, and sports teams, and that it takes all kinds to make a community. Some people remember this and some people don't, in our generation. You have to wonder when good sense went out of fashion and when people will regain it.))

Should the Bible be taught in public schools? No, I thought that's what Catholics schools were for. It should be available in the public school's reference library, seeing that it is a historical document. I should not be used as a blunt-force instrument with which to beat those whose decisions, choices, or orientations the religious disagree with. There should be a variety of books to study and learn from. You might say there's a lot you learn in school you will never use, but we should remember that the main thing to learn in school is to learn how to think.

((There used to be another widely-shared, level-headed attitude that this is a civil society, not a religious one, but the widely-shared misconception that ours is a Christian country – not to say a Protestant, or Presbyterian/Calvinist/Baptist one – seems to have overwhelmed the level-headed attitude. Guess it's a matter of who advertises widely on broadcast and social media, or how sheltered a lot of people's lives are. If North American schools adopted the policy of British schools and had comparative religion classes, it would be another matter, but it isn't like that's going to happen.))

My loc...three weeks back from LA and Loscon 50! We did have a great time, saw lots of old friends, made some new ones, promoted Amazing Stories, and enjoyed three full days of fannish activities and discussions. Our thanks to Sherri Benoun, Christian McGuire, Elayne Pelz, Betty Klein-Lebbink, and so many more who made that weekend memorable. Sherri will be the chairman of Loscon 51 next year.

Forty-seven years, and wanting that gold watch? Well, I'm greedy that way. I'd want one for Yvonne, too. She's been in fandom as long as I have. I have no idea if I will be involved in fandom, or even alive in 2030, but I should have a look at the Edmonton in 2030 website. Yvonne and I have submitted ourselves as potential nominees for Auroras, but we still have some questions to ask of Murray Moore. We will need to renew our CSFFA memberships soon.

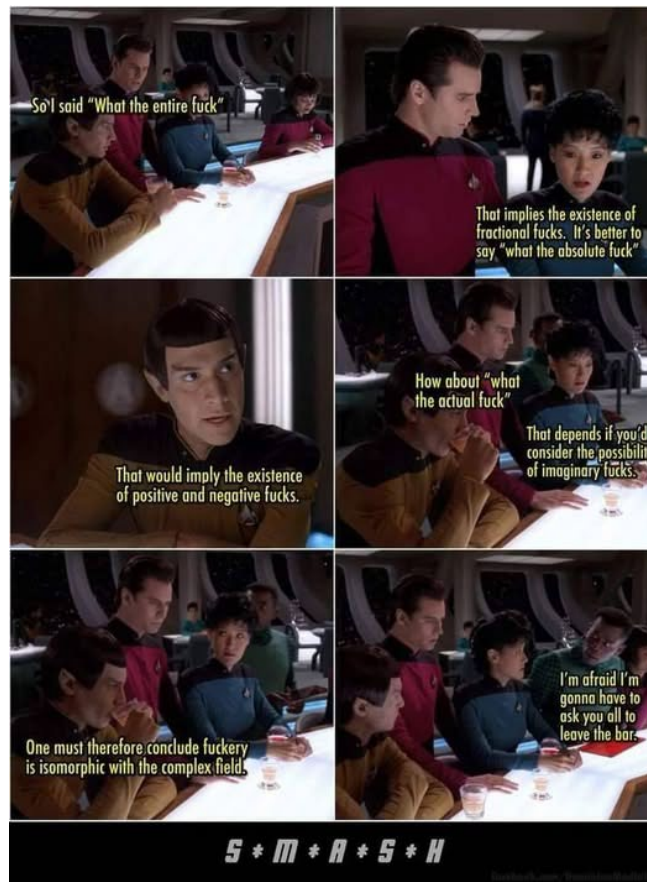
Perhaps to get everything done, Jean-Paul Garnier has a TARDiS or a TimeTurner. I only saw one of him at Loscon, so maybe he's just more efficient at time management than most of us. Great to meet you at Loscon, Jean-Paul, and same goes to Heath Row.

George Phillies said his last several fanzine review editors died. I had no idea that reviewing fanzines was so dangerous. Just as well I never got more into the review part of things. Maybe it's the KTF reviews that are so dangerous.

((Back in the 1980s, when I asked E.B. Klassen to review some fanzines, he started his column with a joke about how I made him an offer he couldn't refuse, sort of like I was The Godfather in local fandom. What a kidder.))

Well, this was a long loc, but perhaps not as long as I had thought. It is close to the bottom of the page, though. Many thanks for this issue of the *Obdurate Eye*, and Yvonne and I wish you a great Christmas (it's almost here), and a happy 2025. You might have received our card recently, after the strike, Canada Post was quite efficient at dealing with the piles of unsorted mail. See you next ish!

We Also Heard From: George, Perry, Hugh A.D. Spencer, John Thiel, David "Murdock" Malinski (*"I really believe you would benefit from study and reading of Meditations by Marcus Aurelius"*)



While You Weren't Looking

Canadian Unity Fan Fund Officially Ended

Garth Spencer, the last CUFF delegate, has declared the fan fund over and done with, cancelled, ended, and dead of attrition. In the last CUFF newsletter, he wrote:

“Despite my best efforts to spread the word to conventions and clubs, very few people have responded. I really didn't realize how *unknown* fan funds are, to contemporary fans.

“Very few people have made bids on the items CUFF offers for sale.

“No Canadian conventions have offered to host a fan fund delegate. This is a problem because scheduling the CUFF nomination and election process depends on when the destination convention is scheduled. (Nominations and election also depend on fans knowing about, and participating in this fan fund.)

“Nobody has expressed an interest in standing as CUFF delegate in 2025 or 2026. Admittedly, I haven't gotten as far as soliciting candidates.

“So, I'm giving up.

“If fans in Canada just don't know or care what a fan fund is, there is not much point in doing this anymore.”

(Garth Spencer, *Shooting My CUFFs* #13, January 2025)

The Very Last Orycon

from the OryCon 45 chair, Diana Cerasin:

“As many of you have heard by now, the OSFCI board of directors voted on the competing bids for OryCon 45. Both bids were given time to present their ideas and goals, and both were opened for questions and commentary from everyone present. The OSFCI board voted in favor of the bid I submitted; part of this bid was an agreement that OryCon 45 will be the final OryCon-branded convention supported by OSFCI.

“Our reasoning for this condition is to create space for OSFCI and the fan community to innovate: new panels, new structures, new creative outlets.

“We want to foster an expansion of ideas, for what kind of convention you would like to see, even possibly a one-day event. There is room at the table for you. The world has changed since the birth of OryCon. Technology, social media, and our community has grown in so many ways.

“I want to celebrate OryCon's history by inviting as many past Guests of Honor as possible to be panelists. I want to remember the good times, the laughter, the community at large. I have assembled a staff of individuals who have the desire to share their love of the fan community, the authors, the artists, and the vendors. We want to bring this dream to you.

“As the cliché says, when one door closes another opens. Another desire is that we mentor and prepare a younger generation to explore these new avenues of the expressions of our fandom. My vice-chair Louisa Ark is an example. A second-generation convention runner, she's taking advantage of this opportunity to learn first hand what it takes to run a convention: what works, what doesn't, and how they can improve upon what's been done in the past to make any future project they work on shine.

“We want your ideas of what innovations you see in the future of an Oregon Convention, new panels, new fandoms. Until then, our vision is to make OryCon 45 be the best one that we possibly can. Stay tuned for upcoming announcements of guests of honor and what we have in store for this year.”

(Diana Cerasin:

<https://www.facebook.com/orycon/posts/pfbid02HCuFzJHS1keYEc4ddRDehzFZchyGGqpTftAZ594LaN3fb6RDneBZaZerRCJqecTRl>)

Broken Pencil Goes Out of Publication

Hal Niedzviecki, founder of *Broken Pencil Magazine*, announced its closure on November 30, 2024. He wrote:

“... I have been honoured to hear directly over the years from so many zine makers and authors who told me that a review in *Broken Pencil* changed their lives, giving them a sense of community and direction when they felt alone in their creative pursuits. For 30 years, *Broken Pencil* stood for self-expression, a celebration of the unconventional, and a home for self-described “weirdos” – like me – who sought refuge from mainstream culture. Our coverage ranged from showcasing Hong Kong democracy agitators and indigenous environmental artists to exploring niche creative works, from punk rock to vegan cooking to Afro-futurism, always in the spirit of free speech.

“Unfortunately, the values of the zine and small press community have shifted. In recent years, the relentless pursuit of ideological purity and identity politics has overshadowed the core mission of *Broken Pencil*. Recent events, including online harassment over my personal beliefs, a petition demanding that I resign from the publication I founded, that the magazine formally support the Boycott Divest And Sanction Israel movement and devote an entire issue to the conflict in Gaza, and the withdrawal of authors and sponsors from our Canzine festivals in Ottawa and Toronto, are emblematic of a broader issue. This cultural environment has become incompatible with the values of free speech, independent thought, and meaningful dialogue. ...”

(<https://brokenpencil.com/news/broken-pencil-1995-2024/>)

The Continuing Adventures of the Canadian SF & Fantasy Association Professional Development Grant

“In the spring, we announced that **Paola Ferrante** had been awarded our first PD grant of the year. We are delighted to hear that Paola's grant funds were used for mentoring and editing sessions leading to the drafting of her first novel. All the best to Paola in pursuing her publishing goals!

“We are also pleased to announce the recipient of 2024's second grant process, **Andy W. Taylor!** Andy will be using the funds to engage in a book coaching process lasting through March 2024. We hope our contribution can help Andy accomplish his writing goals.

“Andy W. Taylor has been a reader and writer of speculative fiction from an early age thanks in no small part to his mother's frequent trips to the public library with her kids.

“He's a member of the Sudbury Writers' Guild, a graduate of the Viable Paradise writing workshop and Playwright's Junction workshop, and an active member of CODEX writer's forum. Originally from Sault Ste. Marie, Andy currently lives in Sudbury, Ontario.

“His fiction has appeared in *Polar Borealis*, *On Spec*, *FictionVale*, *Sudbury Ink Anthology*, and on the streets of Sudbury. You can learn more about Andy and his writing at www.sooguy.com.

“Stay tuned for our professional development grant news for 2025...”

(CSFFA Newsletter, December 2024)

The UFO Checklist

The United Fanzine Organization (UFO) is a group of small press creators who come together to support and encourage each other, and to promote higher standards of quality in small press. Applicants may contact Chairman Steve Keeter, 10118 Mason Dixon Circle/ Orlando, FL 32821 (stevekeeter@gmail.com). Official UFO Website at <https://unitedfanzineorganization.weebly.com> and the United Fanzine Organization Facebook group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/tfrags>. Newsletter \$3.50 for non-members, \$20 for 6-issue subscription.



One Way to Look at It

TRUMP WINS AGAIN

Opinion by Den Valdron

Just been watching the landscape and it occurs to me that Trump may end up having a very successful foreign policy.

Look at it this way – Israel's ongoing genocidal campaigns are probably going to wind down, for the simple reason that they can't keep up major military campaigns endlessly. Even setting aside the limitations on money and munitions supplied by the US, there are manpower and political issues. So it has to wind down in the next year. They'll go back to low key slow motion genocide, it'll disappear from the news. Problem solved.

The Assad Regime in Syria is gone – in a few months Trump will take credit for that. Either there's going to be a dominant government under the influence of the Turks or Saudis, or the civil war, with no participants that Americans care about or can pronounce will disappear from the media.

In the meantime, the foreign policy wonks will be happy that Russia has lost its mediterranean naval base and air base – this basically eliminates Russia's ability to project power in the Med, the Middle East, Northern or Sahel Africa. Russia ends as a global power – that falls into Trump's lap.

As for Ukraine – well, that's probably going to resolve. Trump's not a friend to Ukraine, so he'll probably push for territorial and other concessions. Zap, peace in Ukraine within a year or so. Not a good peace for Ukraine, but Americans won't care. It'll just disappear off the radar.

North Korea's involvement with Ukraine has been disastrous – their equipment and artillery shells have been shown to be junk. It's likely that Kim was sending top of the line gear. Their soldiers were getting mowed down. The performance has been abysmal. This is likely going to make Kim a lot more careful, less aggressive and provocative. North Korea disappears.

Meanwhile, the middle east that doesn't involve Israel has been calming down – this is due largely to the Chinese who have been helping to negotiate a climb down and reconciliation between Iran and Saudia Arabia and their cold war. Yemen's situation has stabilized.

With the United States not distracted on multiple fronts, we can expect that even the Chinese will proceed more cautiously.

Internationally, then, I expect Trump to do fairly well. Most of the high temperature flash points for America are basically going away on their own. It doesn't have anything to do with anything he did, but he'll take credit.

Now will it stay quiet and positive? For a while maybe. The thing with Trump is that he's not an isolationist. If you think that, you've misread him massively.

He's not an internationalist either, he doesn't give a rats ass about treaties, trade deals, alliances, etc. He signed a free trade deal with Canada in his previous term, that turned out not to be worth the paper its printed on, as far as he's concerned. He doesn't keep his word or honour deals, he just does whatever he wants and the only question is what he can get away with.

Rather instead of an internationalist wanting to manage or engage the world, or isolationist who wants to stay him, he's a predator. In another era, he'd be a pirate. He doesn't want any commitment that binds the United States – no obligations. His approach to international relations is "What are you going to do for me today." Basically "F*** you, gimme."

This isn't the United States of the 1945-1956 era, or the United states of the 1989-2001 era – both these ages saw the US as the hyper-dominant hyperpower, where literally all competitors had fallen off the table. A Predator foreign policy would have worked better then.

The US, comparatively, is much weaker and more vulnerable. But if Trump is going predator/pirate, he'll still swing a lot of power and bully a lot of countries. There's going to be apparent diplomatic and international triumphs from bullying countries. And more apparent victories from pulling out of international treaties and relationships.

Be prepared for Trump appearing to be a big winner, for the first couple of years. He's going to be all about short term success, much of it unrelated to him, but he'll take credit.

What could go wrong? Well, the big flash point is probably Mexico. He's got all kinds of grievances there – he thinks Mexico is robbing the US with its balance of trade surplus, he wants to deport millions of Mexicans, and people in his regime want to deploy American troops into Mexico against drug cartels. Any one of these things could potentially destabilize Mexico and trigger a massive crisis, and he may bull ahead on all three. Watch out there.

A number of US allies are hanging by a thread – both Egypt and Pakistan are literally failed states already with a parasitic corrupt Army running the place. Either one of these countries could fall apart overnight, and that would be a major crisis – particularly Egypt, which has the Suez canal and is adjacent to a mad-dog country. Both countries are just massive bags of unsolvable problems.

Russia is unlikely to show up on the radar – they've taken a massive beating in Ukraine, their economy is wrecked, their military is depleted and their arms industry is discredited. Putin will go back to manipulation, threats, bribery and covert ops. Trump is one of Putin's greatest assets, but he'll have to be used carefully.

Expect Trump to screw around with China once again, and to clumsily alienate allies like Japan, South Korea, Philippines. There's a possibility of a military or political crisis over Taiwan or North Korea, but the most likely fallout will be economic – Trump's ineptitude may well provoke a massive financial or trade confrontation that wrecks the world economy.

Climate related crises? He won't have a clue or a care. He'll probably ignore Latin America, apart from baseline racism. Same for Africa. He's picked fights with Europe, but that will be less a crisis and more a mutual disengagement.

The thing with guys like Trump, self appointed masters of the universe, is that as long as everything is calm, or they're following their own ideas, they're okay.

The trouble is, give them a crisis, they go to pieces. If they're not causing the crisis, then they don't know what to do. They're caught flat footed, and they either do nothing, or they screw it up colossally. If they're not actually in control of events, they don't know how to handle it.

When that happens, goodbye PAX TRUMPICA. Of course, you can't count on that, or predict it. The key feature of an unexpected crisis is that they're unexpected, particularly when you're a narcissist sleeping at the wheel with a predatory rather than pro-active or cooperative foreign policy.

Statistically, sooner or later, the wheels are going to come off, but you can't say when. It's entirely possible that he might cruise through his entire term and subsequent term without problems.

Sooner or later, the rest of will all pay for his screw ups – but that's how it's been his entire life. He's stumbled through catastrophes and failed businesses continuously, but most of the damage and losses are suffered by everyone else.

Bottom line though – be prepared for Trump to come off as a winner for the next few years in terms of foreign policy.



READ MORE ZINES!

Eldritch Science
FanActivity Gazette
Films Fantastic
Ionisphere
Mangaverse

N'APA
The National Fantasy Fan
N3F Review of Books
Origin
Tightbeam

National Fantasy Fan Federation - tufff.org

Locs to Trades

***Captain Flashback* #72 & #73, a fanzine composed for the Turbo-Charged Party-Animal Amateur Press Association, from Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, residing at 11032 30th Ave. NE Seattle, WA 98125. Andy's email: fanmailaph@aol.com, Carrie's email: carrieroot49@yahoo.com.**

It's always entertaining to read about TV horror movie hosts in your zine. It's sometimes educational to read your mailing comments to Turbo-APA. I hadn't been aware there was a Turbocon!

One thing in the mailing comments in #72 that struck me was the number of live theatrical and musical productions people talked about. "Dune: The Musical." "LOTR: The Musical." "Performance," by D. West. I miss so much! (The closest thing I ever experienced was a radio comedy performance, a 10-minute one-woman "Sound of Music" parody on CBC Radio.) Some jokers in Alberta, I was informed, once created a short SF parody titled "Cattlefarm Galactica," but I haven't tracked it down yet.

In #73: I can guess why you found satisfactions in Turbocon that you didn't derive from other conventions – mostly, the pleasure of meeting and conversing with people who are on your wavelength, know and enjoy many of the same things, share the same jokes, and so on and so forth.

Good to hear that there will be a Turbocon II in Seattle, but I cannot attend, since I have committed myself to attending the Seattle Worldcon. I have financial limitations.

***The Stf Amateur* #15, "a bundlezine published by Blasted Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well. com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax."**

Re your comments to me – when I mentioned Jean-Paul GB (don't know why I used those initials), I meant Jean-Paul Garnier, the owner of Space Cowboy Books who produces a regular newsletter, podcast, and small-press publications.

If I understand Cy Chauvin's letter of comment correctly, he tells us Peter Nicholls included a hoax reference in his work *Genre Fiction: The Roaring Years*, telling everyone that John W. Campbell had compiled a sort of guidebook on constructing imaginary galactic civilizations, for the reference of his more serious writers. Now I wonder if *Genre Fiction: The Roaring Years* itself existed. And what about the persistent Northwest Coast legend of the drowned civilization of Sitnalta, the land that will rise again when the Great Big Earthquake strikes? Or the prophecy that the Star People will come again to steal all our Venetian blinds? It's circumpolar, is what it is.

Touching on movie reviews, I watched *Gattaca* and appreciated it; I also saw part of *Predestination*, and immediately spotted that it was based on Heinlein's story "All You Zombies—". It's a curious thing, how some movies get all the attention and others sort of coast under the radar.

SMOF News #4:14, 4:15 & 4:16 <smofnews@substack.com>

At some point you and I have to compare notes on upcoming conventions throughout the next year – your list of upcoming is helping me to fill out a reference list I intend to post on my website. I am concentrating on events in Canada and in the Pacific Northwest, though.

May I reprint some of your news?

***Tightbeam* #363, “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, ... Editors: George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609 & Jon Swartz judgeswartz@gmail.com”**

Interesting reviews of two Christopher Lee horror movies, and Donald Westlake’s science fiction, but no comment hooks.

***My Back Pages* #31, Richard Lynch ed., P.O. Box 3120, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20885 USA; rw_lynch (at) yahoo (dot) com**

Your article on The Fanac Fan History Project reminded me that I have yet to resume sending back issues of a local Vancouver clubzine to eFanzines.com, or to scan and archive back issues of a mid-1980s newszine I used to produce. My bad. I could resume at any time.

Perhaps at some point I can recommend to the good people at fanac.org that they archive the late Taral Wayne’s one-shot, *The Great White Zine*, which is probably on eFanzines.com; it is basically a compendium of Taral’s writings on Canadian fanhistory. R. Graeme Cameron of Nanaimo has also produced several articles on the subject. I am working on a volume on the same subject, but it’s slow going and will probably be a book-length manuscript.

I read with interest your articles on other subjects, from musical theatre through celebrated and much-missed SFPA members, but there is not enough space in this fanzine for all my comments.

***The Zine Dump* #60, August December 2024, A science fictional fanzine about other science fictional fanzines by GUY H. LILLIAN III of 1390 Holly Ave., Merritt Island FL 32952. GHLIII@yahoo.com.**

Thank you, Guy – your irregular list of current fanzines is helping me to fill out a reference list I intend to post on my website.

You’re quite right that I could stand to attend a convention soon. But I’m saving up for the Seattle Worldcon. This is, frankly, the closest thing to a fannish convention I can find.

FanActivity Gazette #4:7, December 2024, e-mail to mindyhunt@scifi4me.com or jphunt@scifi4me.com.

Since you ask, I would say my year has been almost, sort of, slightly, without doubt, presumably, perhaps, under certain circumstances, but not otherwise, blues.

As I said to SMOF News, at some point you and I have to compare notes on upcoming conventions throughout the next year – your list of upcoming is helping me to fill out a reference list I intend to post on my website. I am concentrating on events in Canada and in the Pacific Northwest, though.

Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Association Newsletter, December 2024
<newsletter@csffa.ca>

Thank you for the latest CSFFA news; I trust and hope I have conveyed it accurately in my own fanzine.

Films Fantastic #19, December 2024, Jason Hunt ed., e-mail to jphunt@scifi4me.com

Very honest of you to own up to the delay in the appearance of this zine. I think you can gauge how often a fanzine should come out, depending on the contributions you get within a given time span. You may be justified in producing *Films Fantastic* every other month, or every three months; I don't know how many film and television series reviews you receive.

This Here ... #82, Nic Farey, 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, or Email fareynic@gmail.com

Good to hear your families had good times and good eats this Christmas. I have had too many occasions to overeat, myself!

What really offered a comment hook was Mark Plummer's letter in this issue, when he talks about how changing media changed our experience of fanpublishing. Other fans in my hometown had the experience of using a mimeograph; I went straight from ditto reproduction to photocopying, in the early 1980s. And, rather later, to composing a fanzine on a computer, followed after some time by using email to distribute it. In each case the experience was somewhat like learning all over again how to make a publication. (To a little extent my experience on a student newspaper contributed – I used to paste up master pages for *The Maple Leaf Rag* in somewhat the way I worked on *The Martlet* at the University of Victoria, before the paper divided the composition work from the volunteer reporters – but not many other skills were transferable.) In summary, the process changes, and a faneditor may not carry out all the steps of production alone.

More to the point, I keep hearing occasionally about “Luddites” who insist that only fanzines produced The Old Way count, but I haven't encountered them myself. Neither have I encountered toffee-nosed oldfart fans who are subtly disparaging to anyone under forty ~~aside from maybe myself~~.

What does “GuNToV” mean?

Should I ask who Kim Huett refers to as “Lord Blorp” and “Mr. Ploppy”?

Perryscope #49, December 2024, a personalzine published mostly monthly by Perry Middlemiss, 32 Elphin Grove, Hawthorn, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3122. E: perry@middlemiss.org

All very interesting, especially your reviews of books, and of English- and Japanese-language films. Clearly I have to start broadening my reading and viewing tastes, if I want to grasp characterization and story structure better.

Unfortunately I can’t speak to everyone’s discussions of moving or finding a place to retire, since I’ve always lived in rental accommodations and only imperceptibly graduated into semi-retired status.

The N3F Review of Books Incorporating Prose Bono, December 2024, Professor George Phillies, D.Sc., Editor, published by the National Fantasy Fan Federation, PO Box 143, Tonopah NV 89049 and is distributed for free to N3F Members and archival sites. Address: 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609, phillies@4liberty.net.

Gosh, George, your reviewzine is ... so BIG ... Much too big for me to review here ...

