

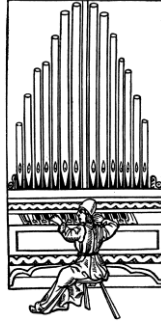
The Obdurate Eye 33

November 2023

A personalzine by Garth Spencer



THE OBDURATE EYE #33, November 2023, 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, səlilwətəl, and sḵwxwú7mesh peoples.



The organ of no clique or party

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My ancestors' rudimentary totem pole figures

Olds (since this isn't quite News anymore)

Do the CUFF Thing: In a previous issue I published a preliminary list of 2024 conventions in Canada, and mentioned we would have to find a convention for a CUFF delegate to attend. (I will try to follow the procedure Fran Skene used in 2022/2023.)

R. Graeme Cameron thought there were only four potential conventions to host CUFF delegates – **Keycon, Halcon, Sci-Fi on the Rock, and Can*con** – and Murray Moore, current president of the Canadian SF and Fantasy Association, reduced it to **Keycon**.

How would Winnipeg, Halifax, Newfoundland or Ottawa fans like to host the next CUFF delegate? I have asked. (Of course, I am assuming I will succeed in finding a 2024 delegate!)

§

Fundraising for CUFF: *What do people want to see* among CUFF catalog items? So far I have listed classic fanzines of yesteryear, which may interest fanzine fans. I have not received any donations of other fannish memorabilia.

One of my intentions was to list for sale chapbooks of several fannish articles, which appeared previously in fanzines such as *BCSFazine*, and which cover topics like how to invent a planet or a language for your stories, or how many micronations or crank theories people have invented. I can also list *Confabulation*: an anthology of fannish fiction, poems, and fictional backgrounds and adventures fans have written about each other, in Edmonton and Vancouver fandom. Does this sound entertaining?

§

The Problem with Fannish Fandom: My guess is that media, gaming and comics fandoms *out-competed* an earlier fandom for the first impressions of incoming fans, so do we need a Fannish Promotion or Outreach Bureau? Don't we have our share of

fanzine-oriented fans who know their way around websites, blogs, and podcasts? What kind of presence and promotion at conventions and in graphic media can you suggest? Now I ask you.

Of course, I am making some assumptions. I tend to identify fanzine fandom with fannish fandom. I tend to identify fannish fandom with a certain approach to reality, just as if we were all emulating Bugs Bunny or Bill Murray or undergraduate pranksters – when faced with any threats, any fannish controversies, or any opportunity to create a satire about fans. You can tell me if I'm off target here.



LoCs!!

Tara Wayne, 7 Oct 2023

I know I made a note about something I spotted in your 32nd issue, but I don't remember what it was. Since I made a note of it, presumably I can find it again, by scrolling through the text.

I don't think it was about Lloyd listing every loc he ever wrote. I've been doing that for a number of years – not from the beginning, but likely for the last 30 years. I have no illusions that anyone will ever need to have that list, or will want to read any of my old locs except in the

context of the fanzines they appeared in. Whether the fanzines will be read is another question...

((I limit myself to recording my fanwritings, in the hope of discovering how much I repeated myself. Then I can stop embarrassing myself and go on to new subjects.))

I'm certain that wasn't what I wanted to write about. Perhaps it was about the imbroglio over the missing women in the land fill in Manitoba. This wasn't an incident I was much excited about, insofar as it ought to have been a simple matter of judgment, but judgment has been pushed out of the news over mainly emotional issues. I had several questions about it. First, just how much money was spent on the Robert Pickton affair? Was it \$186 million dollars? More? Less? How much more or less? It might matter. Also, is the claim that moving the land fill could be a hazard to workers true or untrue? Should workers suffer the effects of toxic chemicals or biohazards that they may be exposed to while searching for the remains of the women suspected to have been buried there? If so, is it sensible for living people to suffer harm in a search for the dead? Or is the threat entirely made up? I no longer trust highly politicized statements of this sort, no matter who issues them.

What does occur to me is that \$187 million would be far better spent improving the lives of First Nation's people currently living in Manitoba, who are in bad need of better housing, clean water, access to better health care and employment opportunities, and I don't think will be well served by purification rituals that do little more than prove a point.

It will be interesting to see how the new First Nations premier balances his priorities. Since this seems to be the end of this issue, that must have been the note I had made to myself to comment on...

I have delivered a new bit of fannish fiction to John Purcell for his new Steampunk zine. I have no idea what he'll call it, but it appears that it was a timely delivery, since I wasn't planning to contribute anything with a steampunk theme. I just wanted to complete my third, and likely last, Sherlock Holmes spoof. It was coincidence that a Victorian detective easily fits into a steampunk background.

I've also completed *Dark Toys* 76, a bit of a monster for a personalzine, at 26 pages. I'm pleased to announce that after a couple of years of wheedling for the material, Marc Schirmeister finally consented to allow me to publish a very amusing article he wrote. I've also added a far more serious deconstruction of Jesus, and my usual complaints about the vicissitudes of life. Why do I go to so much work, I can give no good reason. But the alternative is to become nothing more than a couch potato waiting for the intensive care unit.

((It is your nature to express yourself, graphically or verbally. It is my nature to express myself, writing compulsively whether there is a reader or not. We do what we are.))

Lyn McConchie, Oct 7, 8:24 PM

I am saddened by the article on the murders of Indigenous women in Canada. We regard there as *[sic]* being some racism here (in New Zealand) over Maori, but it's nothing like that. The Maori would never have allowed it and nor would the majority of other races here. If people vanish, we go looking. Those that vanish for years are often white criminals, and not uncommonly they did that often enough that the police shrug. (They were gone last time for several years, family and friends complained and protested, and eventually they were found – and not even slightly pleased about it.) So the 2nd or 3rd time everyone BUT family and/or friends are reluctant to waste the people-power, and I can understand it. Some have quietly gone overseas too, and that can make it pretty much impossible to find them. But if there is any reason to think they're in a landfill somewhere, they ARE looked for and usually found. I hope that soon Canada starts looking closer, harder, and more successfully for those who go missing – of whatever colour and for whatever reason – and bring them home, alive or not. That is real humanity.

((One opinionated acquaintance thought it was a misuse of public funds to search the landfill. Not because it didn't need to be searched, but he thought that the relatives could have started a GoFundMe or Kickstarter fund, rather than asking the authorities to undertake the effort. Not the first issue that came to my mind.))

Mark Nelson, University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia, October 15, 2023

(responding to *Obdurate Eye* #31)

Before I started dating my wife, she had never heard the phrase "silly sausage". The first time I used I said, "You are a sausage that is silly, you are a silly sausage". Now, I feel that I am the silly sausage. For some reason I was expecting you to email me *The Obdurate Eye* #31 - is that egotistic of me ? - and I didn't notice that you hadn't. In fact, I only noticed that you'd published *The Obdurate Eye* #32 because I read the latest email from efanzines.com.

("Silly sausage"? Not an expression I have encountered before.

(It is my oversight that you, and some other people, didn't receive the latest two issues. I have to catch up on how many people I should add to my distribution list. Things have been ... involved, here.))

My casual reading of random things over time has suggested that there are often parallels between Canada and Australia. I've got no idea if these are a consequence of our commonality in history or just coincidence. Perhaps a little of each, but with more weight on the former. When I first moved to Wollongong, I discovered that the university attracted a fair number of Canadians studying to be teachers. I don't remember now if they came to Wollongong to study for a master's degree in education or if it was on a study-abroad program for a year. Why did they come to Wollongong as opposed to any other Australian university? One important reason was that they'd heard that there's good surfing beaches nearby. (I've never been surfing).

(Yes, I realized a half-century ago that the closest parallel to Canada was not the United States, but a country like Australia, or perhaps Brazil – a startling concentration of population on the periphery of a great wilderness, that is.))

Your skill-testing question on a city without cars is interesting. It seems that one of the pop-up idiocies in British politics in 2023 has been right-of-centre politicians getting woked up (a deliberate misspelling) about the 15-minute city. There has also been some nonsense spouted in Australia about the 15-minute city. The concept of the 15-minute city is simply that almost all daily necessities and services can easily be reached by a 15-minute walk, bike ride, or public transport ride from any point. You'd think that having facilities such as basic shops, medical facilities, and schools within easy reach of citizens would be a good thing. Apparently not, am I missing something?

(The fact that people on the periphery of most of the country have the benefits of a concentration of available goods and services? Or the fact that "woke" actually means "awake and alive to the incongruities and hypocrisies of so-called civilization," which is an inherently radical position?))

I picked up two interesting titbits *[sic]* about Singapore recently. Firstly, the Singaporean government is working to a plan where there will be a rail station within 300m of everybody's home. Secondly, in order to own a car in Singapore you need to have a certificate. These certificates were introduced in 1990 to keep the number of cars at manageable levels. A limited number of certificates, valid for only ten years, are released each year. These are available through a bidding process. In 2023 a certificate was USD \$106,000. I'll quote from the article I read.

"Including COE, registration fees and taxes, a new standard Toyota Camry Hybrid currently costs USD (\$183,000) in Singapore, compared with USD \$28,855 in the US."

Does the 15-minute city already exist in Singapore? Strangely, I've never seen right of centre critics of the 15-minute city complain that Singapore is a centre of wokism. You'd be unwise to make such an accusation in Singapore.

((All of this contrasts mightily with the way that railways in Canada have been defunded, and forced to cut back on service, compared to European countries. You would almost think our legislators received heavy contributions from freight trucking firms.))

In our area of New South Wales, fish is not usually more expensive than meat. (This depends upon what fish/meat you want to buy.) As a rule of thumb the more expensive cuts of meat are more expensive on a per kg basis than the most expensive fish. If I remember I will check this out the next time we go shopping. We have a good fishmonger's in our local shopping mall which stocks a range of both freshwater fish and seafood. Their range is not quite as good as it was when we moved here seven years ago. Whether that's a consequence of increasing prices reducing demand, or a decrease in the availability of certain products, I don't know. For example, seven years ago they would sometimes have Sea Cucumbers for sale. They haven't had them for a long time. (We never bought Sea Cucumbers; I have no idea how to prepare them. In fact, I'm not sure if I've ever eaten a Sea Cucumber.) My wife and I both enjoy sea food and it's a regular part of our diet. Though I have begun speculating that when I retire, hopefully in just over a decade, we'll need to reduce our consumption of seafood: it might be priced outside our budget.

Even previously cheap cuts of meat are now expensive, though in some cases that is due to their becoming fashionable. For example, I'm staggered that oxtail now costs AUD \$40-\$50/kg. It's no longer the poor man's food that it once was. Difficult to believe now, but lamb shanks were also once a cheap buy.

Since I wrote the last two paragraphs, we've done our weekly shop. I consequently paid some attention to prices. It seems that most whole fish retails in the AUD \$10-\$20/kg range. (All subsequent prices in AUD.) Fillets for less popular fish are in the \$20-\$30/kg range, fillets for more popular fish are mostly in the \$30-40/kg range. What follows is a random collection of prices - by no means a comprehensive listing.

The upper price range included: skinless salmon fillets at \$39.99/kg (I believe these have also been pin boned), deep sea perch fillets at \$39.99/kg, salmon fillets at \$36.99/kg, wild Barramundi fillets at \$32.99/kg (Barramundi is very popular in Australia), and swordfish steaks at \$31.99/kg.

Fish available in the lower price bracket included: Ling fillets at \$29.99/kg, Atlantic Salmon tail at \$28.99/kg, Snapper fillets at \$24.99/kg (Snapper is another very popular fish in Australia), and John Dorey fillets at \$23.99/kg.

I didn't spend so much time examining the price of meat at the local supermarket. The prices of various pieces of beef were as follows (all prices in AUD/kg): eye fillet, \$60; porterhouse steak, \$40; Scotch fillet, reduced by \$2.50 to \$39; and chuck steak \$24. I noticed that the local butcher's was selling some fancy Scotch fillet at \$65.99/kg.

If this non-scientific sampling exercise suggests anything, it is that we will be giving up the more expensive cuts of beef before we stop buying fish.

((Relative food prices have always been a mystery to me. But you provide lots of hard data from your area, there. I could stand to acquire comparative data from the nearby supermarket here. One of my erstwhile correspondents, Dale Speirs in Alberta, should also be part of this conversation; several years ago he observed how consumers were unwilling, in his perspective, to pay what meat actually cost to produce, specifically beef.))

It's been 30 years since I last attended a SF convention. Of the four cons I attended, at least one of them had a fanzine table which contained a selection of fanzines that you could take away with you. But I don't remember attending a con that had a fanzine room. What happens inside a fanzine room? Can you elaborate? Is it just a safe room for fannish fans to congregate and gossip, away from prying eyes?

((It was intended as a display of fanzines brought by various faneditors, many of them offering fanzines for sale, or trade. Once, you could reasonably expect attendees to know what fanzines were, and to be interested; now, I can reasonably expect they don't know and don't care. I am not sure when most fans stopped being exposed to fanzines of any description – it may have had to do with rising copying and postage costs, and the rise of the Internet and the Web as low-cost means of amateur publishing.))

Following a brief flirtation with fanzine fandom in the early 1990s I had an even briefer flirtation with ANZAPA in 2001-2002. In 2023 I resumed my involvement with both fanzine fandom and ANZAPA. One reason for returning was a feeling that the postal diplomacy hobby has seen better days and that I should shift my fanzine interests to SF fanzine fandom. But it appears that the long term prognosis of both of these fandoms is the same: extinction. But hopefully not until after I am no more.

ANZAPA has been all-digital since Mailing 314 in April 2020. It went all-digital because, due to COVID restrictions, it was no longer feasible to post mailings out to the US. It was also becoming inordinately expensive to mail out each issue. Since going digital there have been no mailing fees. Unlike, EAPA there are no restrictions on the size of contributions as these are combined together to make a single PDF which is made available through Dropbox. I believe that we still pay for one hard copy to be printed out so that there is a complete set of hardcopy mailings. There is now an ANZAPA web page (anzapa.org), though you can't download previous mailings unless you are a member. The OBE is now David Grigg (obe@anzapa.org). The last paper mailing (313, February 2020) contained 334 pages. The most recent electronic mailing (335, October 2023) had 674 pages, though only 570 pages counted for credit. (The missing 104 pages were genzines that are circulated through ANZAPA, but which do not count for minac purposes).

((Thank you for the update on the state of ANZAPA. Heath Row and I have been pooling and updating our information on current APAs.))

Why am I calling myself a silly sausage for not noticing the publication of *Obdurate Eye* 31? Well, inspired by Lloyd Penney's example, as revealed in *Obdurate Eye* 29, I've decided to keep track of my locs. Well, not exactly like Lloyd. My rampant egotism demands that I keep track of the number of times my locs are printed, not the number of locs written. By failing to write a loc of *Obdurate Eye* 31 my total for 2023 will be

reduced by one (*). (My rampaging ego also discounts the possibility that you would have deemed that my loc was not worth printing.)

((I feel challenged enough just to save my fanwriting, in order to find out when I have beaten subjects to death by repetition, and have to move on.))

Mark Nelson, University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia, October 15, 2023

(responding to *Obdurate Eye* 32)

Thanks for your response to my previous LoC, which was unexpected but very nice. Here are my comments on the most recent issue.

Interesting speculation about the appeals of competing fandoms, and whether they are competing for the same pool of potential fans. For the case of postal diplomacy fandom I offer the following thoughts, based upon articles that I've read as I didn't become involved in postal diplomacy fandom until the 1980s.

Many of the early postal diplomacy fans were also SF fans, often quite well-known fans. I should be able to give you better information, earlier in the year I started a project to investigate postal diplomacy games played in the 1960s. For various reasons that project has not progressed as much as it should have done, one reason being that I resumed my flirtation with SF fandom and that has reduced the amount of time for diplomacy related projects. I can say that in 1963 the following SF fans were involved with postal diplomacy, either as players, GMs, or publishers: John Boardman. Ted A. Johnston (AKA David Edward McDaniel), Fred Lerner, and Bruce Pelz.

Many other well-known SF fans were involved in later years. (Perhaps I'll send you a more comprehensive list next time. But for starters: Don Miller and Charles Wells.) Postal diplomacy also attracted players with a background in wargaming and board gaming. Some of these would move into SF fandom as the boundaries between the two fandoms were fluid at this stage. Later, it became uncommon for individuals to be active in both fandoms: fan activity across two fandoms is pretty much a zero-sum game. Still, my experience is that many diplomacy fans are also interested in science fiction and if there was no diplomacy fandom I suspect that some of these would have become active in SF fandom. Well, they would have become active in SF fandom had they know about it. Which links into your point, how do people discover SF fandom? Or perhaps to be more accurate, how do you attract fanzine-orientated fans? Looking at the biographies of ANZAPA members it's interesting how many of them discovered fandom via science fiction clubs at university. How do you attract the late bloomers?

((A point well taken. My experience is that college or university clubs were a primary entry point to SF fandom; or, at least, young adults ready to graduate from high school were primary candidates for fandom. Other people had other perspectives, though – one president of the first club I joined was concerned to present the club as a safe place for minors to join in.))

Postal diplomacy fandom is slowly dying as deaths reduce the number of people interested in playing games by 'post'. (Actually, almost all postal diplomacy games are not run by email and the fanzines are distributed by email.) Who wants to play a game by 'post' which might take two years to finish, when you can play games much quicker

via websites and the like? It used to be that if you wanted to play diplomacy you pretty much had to play it by post or play it a convention. That's no longer true.

((The impact of online technology strikes again.))

Is fanzine fandom the same as fannish fandom? I suppose it depends upon what you mean by fanzine fandom and fannish fandom... At least in the late 1980s and early 1990s my impression was that some fans considered fannish fandom to be a subset of fanzine fandom. And by some, I mean the two that I saw regularly.

((Truer to say that fannish fandom was a phase when the focus of many fans shifted to a more detached, amused outlook on mundania and fandom alike, and many fanzines adopted the fannish outlook. I admit, I tend to conflate fannish and fanzine fandom, because when I joined in the early 1980s I didn't see the difference; other fans, and older fans, have asked me what "focal point" fanzines I would reference, which is not the first thing that occurs to me. I might have named any number of genzines from the 1970s up to the present – Rune, Mimosa, The Spanish Inquisition, Neology, Chunga, Plokta, The Proper Boskonian, The Monthly Monthly, Torus, what you will – and I would still miss crucial titles featuring classic fanwriting.

((When I first realized that fanzines and fannish fandom have to be explained to contemporary fans, I collected as many samples of fanwriting that struck me as fannish, obtained permissions, and reprinted them as an anthology, titled Confabulation.))

I do not think that it's "terribly anal" for Lloyd Penney to record the locs he has written: 6,000 to 7,000 is an impressive commitment to fandom. Lloyd can sit back and reflect in the observation that he's been an inspiration to me to keep track of my activity, though I'll be impressed if I can get my count to 100 before gafiating.

It hadn't occurred to me because I hadn't thought it practical... But if Claude Degler can contact you from beyond the veil, then the problem of recruiting fans into fandom has been solved. Instead of trying to recruit new flesh and blood fans you should be putting your energy into recruiting the dearly, and perhaps the not-so-dearly, departed.

(("Claude Degler" is no more Claude Degler than I am Conan the Librarian. Sometimes people like to use aliases, con badge names, noms de plumes, or other alternative identities. As the writer said, you haven't lived until you've been someone else.))

Today (15.10.23) Australia voted to amend its constitution. A majority of voters across Australia must support any amendment to the constitution (an overall YES vote of more than 50 percent). Furthermore, the measure must also be supported by a majority of voters in a majority of states. As there are currently six states, that means that it must be supported by voters in a minimum of four states. The provision of a majority of voters supporting a measure in the states means that voters in the two territories might consider themselves second-class citizens. Voting in Australia is compulsory. Or more precisely: it's compulsory to collect a ballot paper and submit it. Since federation in 1901 there have been 45 referendums, only eight of which have passed. Of those eight referendums, eight of them are bipartisan support.

What was the topic of the most recent referendum? It proposed amending the constitution through prescribing a body called the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. This body would be allowed to make representations to the Federal

Parliament and the Executive Government on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The proposal was defeated in all six states and one territory.

I doubt many of your readers will be interested in the ins and outs of it. However, there are parallels in the history of racism in Canada, as discussed by Den Valdron, and the history of racism in Australia. It's clear that a great deal of the NO campaign was carried out on social media. There are many examples of social media messages that do not have even a passing resemblance to truthfulness.

(As an aside: One of the arguments used by the NO campaign was that it would divide Australians by giving some Australians more rights than others. Giving the rules relating to the passing of a referendum it could be argued that Australians living in States are privileged over those living in territories.)

Australia has strict laws relating to truthfulness in advertising. Truthfulness in advertising materials for commercial products. Those canny federal politicians, on both sides of politics, were quite careful to ensure that political adverts were exempt from truthfulness in advertising legislation. It remains to be seen whether the two sides of politics can agree to extend the relevant legislation so that political campaigns are required to be truthful.

To provide an echo of Den's article: One of the untruthful comments circulating on social media was the proposition that if the referendum was passed then Indigenous Australians would be able to claim title over houses owned by non-Indigenous Australians. A more preposterous form of this claim was that the United Nations would be able to take over control of land rights in Australia. To back up this claim a video circulated of the Australian Prime Minister making a statement to this effect. This was not a deep fake video. The Australian Prime Minister had made a statement to this effect. But he made the statement in the context of discussing fake claims that were circulating on social media. If you hear the sentence before the circulated claim it's clear that this is the case. That's a clear example of non-truthfulness in a political advert.

Lloyd & Yvonne Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2, October 20, 2023

Finally, I am mostly caught up, and can respond to a single issue instead of a stack of zines. With that, this is a loc on *The Obdurate Eye* 32, and it goes something like this ...

Fanzine fandom is fairly obscure when it comes to a Worldcon or any other convention. I have told friends what I do with fanzines, and I get generally blank looks, but then, I might be giving off those blank looks if it hadn't been for Mike Glicksohn and Mike Wallis, who showed me lots about fanzines, what to do with them, how to contribute, and what is expected, and then all about apas, and how to participate there. Perhaps we need a team to promote fanzines, but then we seem to keep zines close to us, and push out outsiders, to our detriment. There are other groups who would call such a team a Welcomittee.

((Really? Well. My plan for a revised website with introductory information about fandom is justified, then.

((All it takes is a few people with one good idea ... Is that a bit too much to expect under current conditions?))

My letter ... I have found out that the GPTZero programme that finds which parts of your writing may be AI-generated is of no use ... it was created by the companies who keep the AI programmes going, so they are not objective. We are finalizing the preparations for our trip to Rochester, New York, and we are leaving this coming Thursday.

It is great to see that Wab Kinew is the new premier of Manitoba. Indeed, Wab is an Aurora Award winner. I imagine you're seeing the same reports on the Chinese Worldcon from Rob Sawyer, one of only three Canadians in attendance. Looks like it will be the biggest and best Worldcon in history, with the largest attendance. It will make every succeeding Worldcon look faint and small by comparison, but seeing how few North American were actually in attendance, perhaps the Scottish Worldcon next year will still be quiet successful.

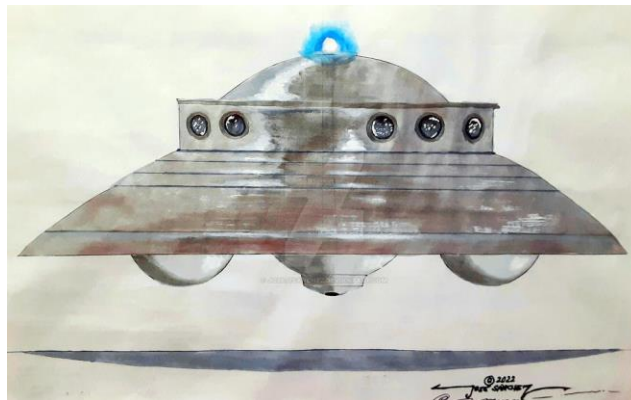
((No, I haven't seen a word from him. Barely a word from anyone else, either. I am already getting hints, though, that this committee is doing some few things very well, while in other respects they are fubarred. Size is not my criterion of quality or success, anyway.))

Off it goes, it's been a very busy day, and we are a little drained because we got our latest COVID and flu shots today. With all of this, I am ready to go to Rochester ... so many big comic cons are being described as super-spreaders for COVID, so looks like we at least have some more resistance to it now. Thanks for this issue, looking for more.

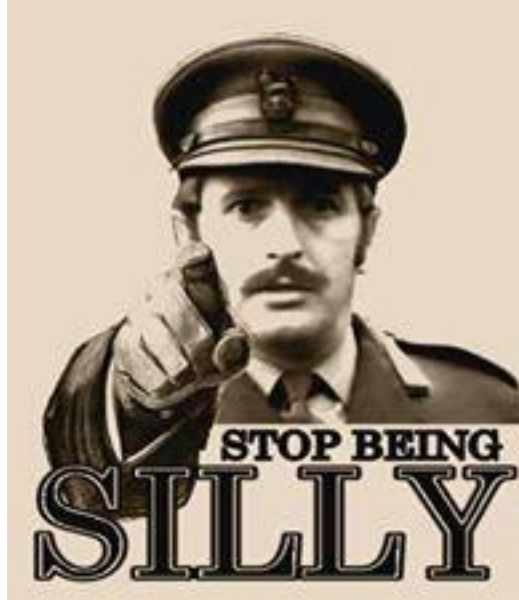
We Also Heard From: Perry Middlemiss, Kathleen Moore,

Features

the United Fanzine Organization (<https://unitedfanzineorganization.weebly.com>).



“Look up in the sky! It's a salad bowl upside down ... it's a parabolic reflector ... No, it's a chicken incubator!!”



Zines

Claude #1, “written, edited, proofread, and published by Claude Degler. No, that's not my real name but will do ...” Claude.Degler@outlook.com

Dear “Claude,” taking time out from mundania – or from baiting the politically naïve, or from anything – is always a good idea; it gives you perspective. Maybe sometime I should take a time-out from fanpubbing. It’s a pretty free-form medium, except that you dropped the ball when you omitted your return address. (I suppose some people registered what email address it came from, as I did.) As you will find from the responses to your fanzine, a few people respond to a new zine, those who respond are either enthusiastic or antagonistic, and at any time you can get completely irrelevant responses. Conspiracy theories strike me as irrelevant responses, but I enjoy them as I do television sci-fi – as a form of low-brow entertainment rather more enjoyable than soap operas. Your review of *Vampires Overhead* reminds me of my friend Graeme’s delectation of bad B-movies; it’s a pity I probably won’t get to see you two on a convention panel together, he’s feeling too frail for much congoing these days.

This Here ... #68, Nic Farey, “Locs & that to: 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, or Email fareynic@gmail.com”

So you’re retiring? I wonder when, or if, I can retire; something I have to prepare for. Due to events I won’t go into I can’t go to Corflu 41, or to any cons in the foreseeable future; in fact I can’t even afford movies, and can’t get TV. So much for the relative merits of recent superhero screen shows my friends and correspondents are talking about. ~~Breadandciresuses~~ Glad to hear you’re in moderately good health, if somewhat short on stamina. I can’t comment on sports or music or comics at all. Read all the locs with interest, but barely any comment hooks for me.

The Stf Amateur, October 2023 (Or: Amateur Stf) “is a bundlezine published by Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile;

323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for members of the United Fanzine Organization and select others, available via eFanzines (<https://efanzines.com>) by the grace of Bill Burns, as well as for the Usual. Letters of comment, cover art, and spot illustrations are welcome and desired.”

Great cover! I wish I had Dan Taylor covers.

(in *Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #81) So we have some of the same TV viewing history in common; I also remember the *Incredible Hulk* episodes with Daredevil and Thor. Vaguely. I didn't think Mr. Fisk's air car getaway was all that great – it was like seeing a balloon drift away with token wisps of steam coming out of some vents, rather than seeing an actual jet-propelled air car in action.

I can't really comment on your book, anime, or radio-show reviews.

(in *Snow Poster Township* #12) So the N3F has tapes and videos and bureaux for making them available. I must be slowing down, or just too busy with other stuff to access them.

Re your comments to my NAPazine: I am quite agreeable to any effort to bridge the gap that has opened between “Fandom Classic” and “Fandom Contemporary.” I just don't expect much to happen. It would require motivated fans in both camps, and I think that fans in both camps are too absorbed in doing their own things.

I'm going to cut this loc short because I'm getting tired and dinner is calling.

Dark Toys #76, October 2023, Taral Wayne ed. “The center of the universe is still 245 Dunn Avenue, Apartment 2111, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6K 1S6.” Email Taral@bell.net.

I see that inadequate air conditioning was imposed on you, and presumably on others, by some authority in Toronto. I see that repairing the inadequate air conditioner is exorbitantly expensive for you. I wonder if there are enough similarly aggrieved people to make up a protest group?

You have pretty much written what I have concluded about our prevailing religious belief system. I have arrived, in my own way, at James Branch Cabell's conclusion – the world wishes to be deceived.

Marc Schirmeister has supplied something I didn't know I needed, an overview of the life and death of *Mad* magazine. Food for thought.

Your description of the Aurora Awards deserves to be quoted, to the Canadian SF and Fantasy Association. At Pemmi-Con Murray Moore asked me, and I consented, to act as their secretary. They have another meeting coming up at the end of this month. To be fair, as I sometimes try to be, I don't suppose they're being clubby, not deliberately, nor realize anyone is in effect being ruled out of participation. It's just the usual Canadian thing, being out of touch and not knowing how to promote themselves – or to include people outside their horizon of communication – even with their best efforts at outreach. I am guilty of this syndrome, too.

The sad thing is that the Auroras were conceived in the first place as a way to spotlight Canadian SF and fantasy – with what results, we now know.

Of course I could say the same thing about the Canadian Unity Fan Fund, with which I am also involved. I keep trying to make these things work.

A good deal of this issue revolves around differing versions of fandom. I defined fandom to myself as a subculture that grew up around science fiction and fantasy, including people with active minds who made a sort of geographically-dispersed community, out of their common interests and points of reference – and their frequent sense of alienation – and which passed through several phases. There were different themes at different times, such as emulating pulp magazines, or sercon list-making and statistics, or fannish fandom, displaying literacy, camaraderie, KTF reviews, and many forms of humour. I just don't see the common ground, the literacy, or the humour in contemporary fandom.

Perryscope #37, October 2023, is an issue of a personalzine published mostly monthly by Perry Middlemiss, 32 Elphin Grove, Hawthorn, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3122. E: perry@middlemiss.org.

You talk about travel, music, book reviews, movie reviews, even television series reviews, Australian conventions, the changing seasons – where do your interest stop?

Your Larrikin's Dictionary definition of "Planetary Romance" was amusing!

Your reviews of mystery novels were surprisingly absorbing. Maybe I should get back to reading mysteries; I have found myself reading and re-reading SF by Stirling and Bujold and Stross, instead of new releases.

The National Fantasy Fan #82:10, October 2023, Editors, TNFF George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net; Jon Swartz judgeswartz@gmail.com

Election platforms, treasury balances, bureaux reports, modern proverbs, round robins, LoCs, an author remembered ... I wonder where the lions are?

FanActivity Gazette #3:5, October 2023, editor Mindy Hunt, mindyhunt@scifi4me.com

Actually, Mindy, I generally feel as if somebody switched out an alien planet for Terra right under my bed, while I was sleeping, and I go around seeing things almost, but not quite entirely, unlike the world I lived in yesterday. I feel this way not just this year, but ever since 1989 or so. I think that's when obviously unqualified presidents started being elected, obviously fraudulent economics became fashionable, music and film and television turned to crap, and fandom stopped being fannish. Onward.

So that's what the novel *City of Endless Night* is about. Sobering, isn't it, when speculation comes close to prophecy. Onward.

So the *FanActivity Gazette* is also running White Dwarf's new-book-release lists? Indeed do many things come to pass.

Time's Arrow, 2022, Jean-Paul L. Garnier, c/o Space Cowboy Books, 61871 29 Palms Hwy. Joshua Tree, CA 92252 spacecowboybooks@gmail.com; <https://spacecowboybooks.com>; A poetry collection.

Instant Message #1002, October 2023, “newsletter of the New England Science Fiction Association. It is published every month with a meeting, usually 11 issues per year. The NESFA clubhouse is located at 504 Medford St, Somerville MA 02145. Our telephone number is 617-625-2311. Our website is <https://www.nesfa.org>. ... To receive the IM by email, sign up at [nesfa.org/lists.html](https://www.nesfa.org/lists.html) for a PDF (im-pdf) or a message containing a link to a PDF and its password (im-announce).” A newsletter brought to you by the makers of Boskone, one of the most famous conventions on the East Coast!

Captain Flashback #59, an apazine for FAPA, “from the joint members Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, residing at 11032 30th Ave. NE Seattle, WA 98125. You may E-mail Andy at fanmailaph@aol.com, and you may reach Carrie at carrieroot49@yahoo.com.”

This Here ... #69, Nic Farey, 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, or Email fareynic@gmail.com

Best of luck with your upcoming retirement!

You're right, the brands and varieties and shows we like will inevitably become unavailable. The first example that comes to my mind is pear-flavoured cider. Now, the two major cider brewers in BC, Okanagan and BC Growers, supply pear cider all right. BC Growers is a little heavy, though, and Okanagan cider sometimes has a chemical backtaste. There is another brewer, Lonetree, which offers a fine cider, but it used also to offer a pear cider ... which I can only find in one liquor store. I hope that isn't because they have the last stock ever manufactured.

Very amusing screen entertainment reviews. I especially enjoyed your review of *Asteroid City*. Very Samuel Pepys, much damning with faint praise.

I see you've encountered a perception that the FAAn Awards is a closed shop for a favoured in-group. I have belatedly encountered the same attitude about the Auroras, the Canadian SF and Fantasy Awards. Of course the discovery is belated, of course the people who believe this don't bother to communicate except by accident. And, of course, the people who are working hard on the FAAn Awards – or the Auroras – are trying and failing to connect with the wider fandom, and not getting the word about some misconceptions going around.

(What does DoBFO mean, by the way?)

Everything else is amusing but I simply *can't* think of anything to say. I must be slowing down.

Alexiad #131, October 2023, c/o Lisa & Joseph Major ... c/o Lisa & Joseph Major, 1409 Christy Avenue, Louisville, KY 40204-2040 USA, jtmajor@iglou.com, <http://efanzines.com/Alexiad/index.htm>

I am startled that you wrote Pemmi-con had a budget of over a million dollars. Clearly the cost of a hotel and conference centre has risen incredibly, or the Canadian dollar is devalued more than I realized.

But I am not surprised that conventions as we knew them may be priced out of reality. That seems to be the trend for fan-run conventions in my city, to say nothing of Worldcons.

Just to give you a laugh: someone said there were no Worldcon bids yet for 2030, apparently in tones of shock and horror, so I have conceived the Worldcon 2030 bid for Port Alberni, BC. If you can find it on the map, you may gather this is not a thriving hub of commerce, much less fanactivity. More on this another time.

Your reviews of *Round the Bend* and *Superman Versus the Ku Klux Klan* commanded my attention. I think it's time I started patronizing the library again, just on the off chance I can find *Round the Bend*.

I noticed a couple of comment hooks in George Price's loc. For one thing: He mentions the "woke political correctness" of Seattle's Museum of Popular Culture removing mentions of J.K. Rowling from its Harry Potter collection. I should say "woke" and "political correctness" are two different things, and rather opposed. I think of Mr. Samuel L. Jackson when I think of "woke," calling out contemporary hypocrisy and exploitation in four-letter words; and I think of prim-mouthed effete academics and bureaucrats when I think of "political correctness," as a pretense that anything uncivilized will go away if we just don't name it, nor offend anyone. (A very Canadian practice, that.) It appears, though, there are people who don't recognize the difference.

For another thing, Price opines that airships haven't been revived, not only because people take airplanes when they don't want to take their time, but also because airships can't avoid storms and can't withstand them. I'm not an engineer, for all I know that's correct. But I thought another reason was that airplanes are convertible to military craft, if a military crisis comes up. Not having a military background either, I don't know if that's just a paranoid urban legend. Onward.

To respond to Mr. Dengrove's comment to me: the story of your surname is rather amazing. I bow to your superior amazingness. My surname is much duller, having come from the Norman French word for a dispenser (human, that is). I am not sure the Normans had much imagination when it came to names for their landed aristocracy.

To respond to your worried inquiry – At last report, from Lee Gilliland, Alexis Gilliland is alive and more or less well. (I came into correspondence with Ms. Gilliland via Facebook, about the time she wondered aloud why she and her husband were being shunned by fandom in their area. As expected, the reasons turn out to be trivial and interpersonal and, come to think of it, rather like political correctness.)

Space Cowboy's Accretion #1, September 2023, and #2, October 2023, Jean-Paul L. Garnier, 61871 29 Palms Hwy. Joshua Tree, CA 92252, USA;

spacecowboybooks@gmail.com; <https://spacecowboybooks.com> . “A small zine covering the monthly activity of the Space Cowboy Bookstore and other things that have occurred in the geek life of author / editor Jean-Paul L. Garnier.”

Congratulations on the release of *Simultaneous Times* Vol. 3! I look forward to hearing how it was received (and how well it sold). Congratulations also on your receiving the N3F Laureate Award in two categories this year!

In a way I feel rather convicted after reading your zine, since I have been re-reading and re-re-reading ebooks by Stross and Stirling and Bujold rather than reading new fiction. But it's a cost-saving measure, as much as a measure of how I retreat into my own little world these days. Bad finances. Much limitation.

You're relaunching *Worlds of If?* Excellent! Best of British luck to you!

Also received:

Ionisphere, October 2023, Edited by John Thiel (Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau/Committee/Office/Front chieftain), 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904. Email address for editor and publication, kinethiel@mymetronet.net. Published monthly for the National Fantasy Fan Federation; **The National Fantasy Fan #82:10, October 2023**, Editors, TNFF George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net; Jon Swartz jon_swartz@hotmail.com; **MT Void #2289 – 2291, Aug. 17, 2023 – Aug. 31, 2023**, “Co-Editor: Mark Leeper, mleeper@optonline.net Co-Editor: Evelyn Leeper, eleeper@optonline.net Sending Address: evelynchmelisleeper@gmail.com”



quasi-normalcy



You know what, fuck it, I don't *want* some frivolous, artisanal, lighter-than-air computer with no customizability, no upgradeability, no reparability, no ports, and a lifetime of *maybe* 3 years if you're lucky. I want a fucking great BEAST of a computer that's designed to last a minimum of 50 years, with ports up the wazoo and optional drives for every kind of media! I want modular components that you can drop in a bog for a year, dry them off, and have them still work fine! I want them to make a noise like "ker-chunk!" when you slide them into place! I want a switch that you pull to turn it on! And I don't want software that constantly forces you to get a pointless, cosmetic "upgrade" every few months either! I want durability! I want longevity! I want satisfying haptics! I want Silicon Valley to go fuck itself!

39K notes



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Alameda, Courtney. WAR OF THE SCALEBORN. [WORLD OF WARCRAFT: DRAGONFLIGHT]. Worlds, 38.99 hc.

Alderman, Naomi. THE FUTURE. HarperCollins Canada, 34.99 hc.

Attico, Derek Tyler. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN SISKI. [STAR TREK]. Titan, 33.99 hc.

Baldree, Travis. BOOKSHOPS & BONEDUST. [LEGENDS & LATTES prequel]. Tor, 23.99 tp.

Banks, Iain M.. THE CULTURE: THE DRAWINGS. Orbit, 75.00 hc.

Black, Holly. HOW THE KING OF ELFHAME LEARNED TO HATE STORIES. [FOLK OF THE AIR]. Little, Brown, 16.99 tp.

Bradbury, Ray. REMEMBRANCE: SELECTED CORRESPONDENCE OF RAY BRADBURY. Simon & Schuster, 47.00 hc.

Britain, Kristen. SPIRIT OF THE WOOD. [GREEN RIDER]. Daw, 31.00 hc.

Brooks, Terry. **SISTER OF STARLIT SEAS**. [VIRIDIAN DEEP #3]. Del Rey, 38.99 hc.

Bujold, Lois McMaster. **PENRIC'S LABORS**. [PENRIC NOVELLAS]. Baen, 12.99 pb.

Burgess, Melvin. **LOKI**. Coronet, 19.99 tp.

Butcher, Jim. **THE OLYMPIAN AFFAIR**. [THE CINDER SPIRES #2]. Ace, 39.99 hc.

Carey, Louise. **DOWNFALL**. [INSCAPE #3]. Gollancz, 19.99 tp.

Carl, Annie (ed). **SOUL JAR: THIRTY-ONE FANTASTICAL TALES BY DISABLED AUTHORS**. Forest Avenue, 26.95 tp.

Cassidy, Nat. **NESTLINGS**. Nightfire, 24.99 tp.

Clarke, Neil (ed). **THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR: VOLUME EIGHT**. Night Shade, 26.99 tp.

Datlow, Ellen (ed). **BEST HORROR OF THE YEAR, VOLUME FIFTEEN**. Night Shade, 26.99 tp.

Dinsdale, Robert. **ONCE A MONSTER: A REIMAGINING OF THE LEGEND OF THE MINOTAUR**. Macmillan, 42.99 hc.

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Gaither, S. M. **THE CALL OF THE VOID**. [SHADOWS & CROWNS #3]. Cornerstone, 22.99 tp.

Garner, Alan. **TREACLE WALKER**. Scribner, 29.99 hc.

Gear, Kathleen O'Neal. **THE ICE ORPHAN**. [THE REWILDING REPORTS #3]. DAW, 23.00 tp.

Hamilton, Laurell K. **SLAY**. [ANITA BLAKE, VAMPIRE HUNTER #30]. Berkley, 37.99 hc.

Hardaker, Caroline. **MOTHTOWN**. Angry Robot, 21.99 tp.

Harrow, Alix E. **STARLING HOUSE**. Tor, 38.99 hc.

Hearne, Kevin. **A CURSE OF KRAKENS**. [THE SEVEN KENNINGS #3]. Del Rey, 42.00 hc.

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Johnson, Jaleigh. **THE ROAD TO NEVERWINTER**. [DUNGEONS & DRAGONS HONOR AMONG THIEVES PREQUEL #1]. Worlds, 24.95 tp.

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Marske, Freya. POWER UNBOUND. [LAST BINDING #3]. Tor.com, 38.99 hc.

Moore, Scotto. WILD MASSIVE. Tor.com, 39.99 hc.

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Ringo, John & Lydia Sherrer. TRANSDIMENSIONAL HUNTER: THROUGH THE STORM. Baen, 36.50 hc.

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Schneiderhan, Caitlin. FLIGHT OF ICARUS. [STRANGER THINGS]. Worlds, 38.99 hc.

Thomas, Sheree Renee, Oghenechovwe Ekpeki & Zelda Knight (eds). **AFRICA RISEN: A NEW ERA OF SPECULATIVE FICTION**. Tor.com, 26.99 tp.

Ward, Matthew. **THE DARKNESS BEFORE THEM**. [THE SOULFIRE SAGA #1]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Wells, Martha. **SYSTEM COLLAPSE**. [MURDERBOT DIARIES #7]. Tor.com, 28.99 hc.

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Yarros, Rebecca. **IRON FLAME**. [EMPYREAN #2]. Red Tower, 39.99 hc.

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Arden, Jann. **THE BITTLEMORES**. Random House Canada, 36.95 hc.

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Brooke, S. J. **BODY ON SCAFELL PIKE**. [JESS CHAMBERS]. Wildfire, 19.99 tp.

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Carter, A. F. **THE HOSTAGE**. Penzler, 23.95 tp.

Connally, Celeste. **ACT LIKE A LADY, THINK LIKE A LORD**. Minotaur, 36.00 hc.

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Sims, Michael (ed). **THE PENGUIN BOOK OF MURDER MYSTERIES**. Penguin Classics, 24.95 tp.

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Thompson, Victoria. CITY OF FORTUNE. [COUNTERFEIT LADY #6]. Berkley, 13.50 pb.

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Urszenyi, Steve. PERFECT SHOT. [SPECIAL AGENT ALEXANDRA MARTEL #1]. Minotaur, 24.99 tp.

Vassell, Charlotte. THE OTHER HALF. Anchor, 37.00 hc.

Walker, Martin & Julia Watson. BRUNO'S COOKBOOK: RECIPES AND TRADITIONS FROM A FRENCH COUNTRY KITCHEN. Knopf, 54.00 hc.

White, S. R. RED DIRT ROAD. Headline, 19.99 tp.

Yakovleva, Yulia. DEATH OF THE RED RIDER. [LENINGRAD CONFIDENTIAL #2]. Pushkin Vertigo, 22.95 tp.