

The Obdurate Eye 37

A personalzine from Garth Spencer

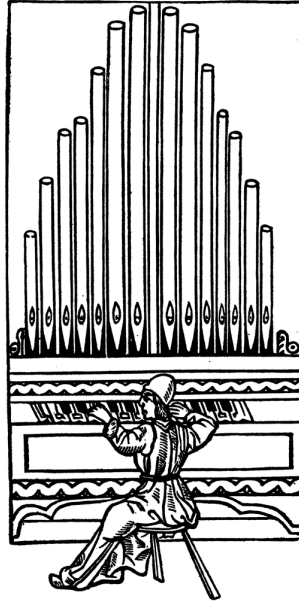
March 2024



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THE OBDURATE EYE #37, March 2024, 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

AI: Alt-world Canadian Armed Forces	cover
Felicity Walker (“Cool Early-Eighties SciFi Fan”).....	p. 1
William Rotsler	p. 4
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José Sanchez (alien vampire)	p. 17



What I've Been Doing

Periodically we have to take stock of where we put our time, and attention, and energy. It is like a budget review. I have been trying to grasp *Adulting*, or *Life Hacks*—or get an overview of human life—and here are my results to date. Maybe everyone has such a general worldview, if only an inherited one. But since I didn't become a real boy I had to make up my own.

Firstly, what are the most practical, material issues anyone has to reckon with?

EMPLOYMENT

So far I have managed to carry on life with part-time employment as a sort of freelance secretary. If I had any drive or ambition, I would have more clients and more employment.

Something I keep being reminded about, whenever and wherever I work, is the difference between colloquial English and the language people use in different professions, ranging from trademarking through auto insurance to web design. It is as if people outside the professions *really can't realize* how laymen or laywomen, customers and clients, will fail to understand or actively misunderstand their terms – application versus registration, debit versus debt, eyewitness versus collateral witness. Even standard phrases such as “bringing an action” or “independent adjuster”, or simply the fact that some shmoe in a suit is asking you questions, can be received as being threatened with a lawsuit, when the guy in the suit is just asking whether an accident victim has physical or memory handicaps, after the accident.

How much about employment and income do we have to know, as average adults, or how much should we leave up to specialists?

FINANCIAL MATTERS

So far I have managed to carry on with a minimal income. It's better now that I have an old-age pension, but in the end I had to avail myself of a low-cost subsidized housing society.

Not having offspring or other human dependents, and not having a car nor owning my own house or land, my taxes ought to be simple. But there is a point, even in Canadian tax returns, when I get confused about what numbers to put on which lines. Must be the way they name things.

How much about budgeting and bookkeeping and tax return preparation do we have to know, as average adults, or how much should we leave up to specialists?

HOUSING

How much about home repairs and property maintenance do we have to know, as average adults, or how much should we leave up to specialists? I am still learning about this.

The cost in terms of money is tolerable, since I am a renter. Still, I am now the house representative to the housing society, and have to keep some records and attend some meetings.

CAT CARE

My most stable relationship is with my cat, Yvette. I am very glad my brother and sister-in-law gave her to me. We've been together for about seven years now.

I wonder, though, if I give Yvette enough exercise, or playtime. Well, she seems happy and healthy.

How much about pet care do we have to know, as average adults, or how much should we leave up to specialists?

APPLIANCES

Taking care of a house and yard – or keeping up with hobbies, or maintaining my digital appliances – partly requires manual skills, and partly some budgeting skills. I confess I could do with more skills than I have.

How much about repairing and maintaining appliances do we have to know, as average adults, or how much should we leave up to specialists?

MEDICAL MATTERS

Compared to other people I know, in my age group, I'm still fairly strong and healthy. But I do live within some limits, due to short-sightedness and the need for dental care. Which reminds me I have appointments to make.

How much about diet and exercise and medical care do we have to know, as average adults, or how much should we leave up to specialists?

LEGAL MATTERS

Off the top of my head I can think of three legal matters I might have to deal with in the upcoming year. The most universal one, and perhaps the least pressing, is preparing a will.

As I have very modest means, the major concerns in my will right now are how to provide for the cat, and where to put all the fanzines and books and papers I have to allocate. Which brings me back to the subject of fanzine repositories, which I raised before. This will be a continuing research project.

I encounter a fair number of misconceptions about our need for financial, medical and legal records, let alone preparing will. How much of this stuff do we have to know, as average adults, or how much should we leave up to specialists?

Secondly, what are the social priorities?

I have not been very good even at conceiving social priorities, let alone carrying out my responsibilities. (I just don't pick up on implications, no matter what tones of voice, facial expressions, or gestures people are using.) I really have to ask what my legal and moral and social duties are, as a son, as a brother or cousin, let alone as a neighbour and a citizen? Because these were never verbally defined.

B.C. HEATHEN FREEHOLD

Sooner or later I had to ask what sort of things I believed in; my several abortive efforts to join something have led me into heathenism, or Asatru. Today I am the Clerk of the British Columbia Heathen Freehold. Mostly, this means that I update the chief executive about our monthly account balances, keep in touch with our Facebook and Discord groups, and report to the annual Althing (the Annual General Meeting). Right now, I am trying to review the membership roster with the members. There are other heathen associations like this, in Canada and other countries.

The COVID-19 pandemic did a number on our activities. Well, it did a number on a lot of societies, as on science fiction conventions.

Just for laughs I have now started a fanzine for my heathen association, titled *Steampunk Viking Klingons*. It sort of worked, in that I started to get feedback on who isn't actually a member of the BC Heathen Freehold, or doesn't want the zine. Whether it ~~provokes~~ motivates people to natter with each other, or whether it ends up proving that the BCHF Discord channel already services the purpose, I have yet to find out.

CSFFA

Since summer 2023 I have become secretary of the Canadian SF and Fantasy Association, which oversees the Aurora Awards and a writer's grant. This basically

means I pay a nominal membership, attend the monthly Zoom meeting, and transcribe and distribute the minutes of the last meeting.

You haven't heard much about the Aurora Awards, have you? See the next column.

CUFF

You've heard quite enough about the Canadian Unity Fan Fund in my previous fanzines to know I am the current administrator, and I'm worried about the level of awareness, comprehension, or support for the Fan Fund. Maintaining the fund is not a problem now; raising some support for it is.

Thirdly ... what priorities come next? Matters of self-expression? Moral and philosophical concerns? Religious fulfilment?

For whatever reason I find myself mainly expressing myself through fan activity, and especially through writing. Maybe I should take up drawing again.

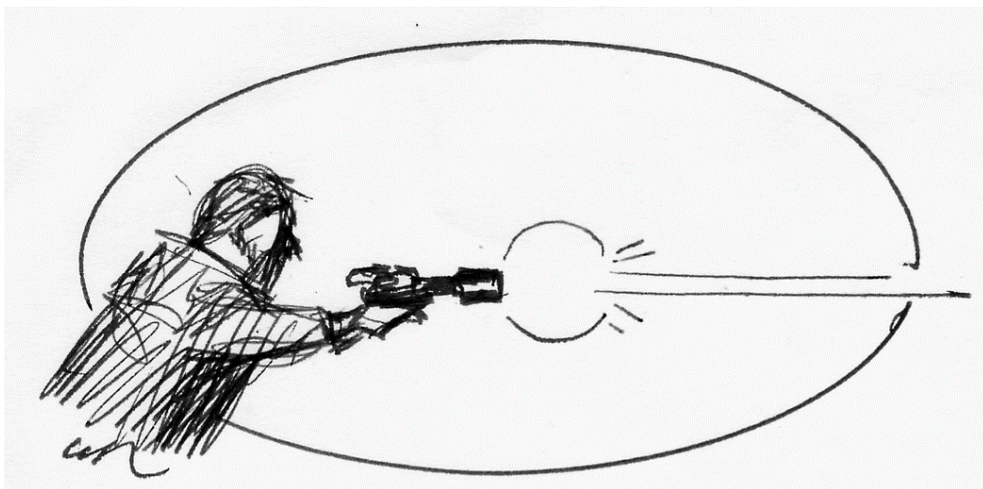
FANACTIVITY and Fanwriting

At present I keep myself occupied with a monthly personalzine and four APAs, ranging from monthly to bimonthly frequency.

FICTION WRITING

It took a lot of wind out of my sails to meet up with actual writers and experience actual critiquing and workshopping. I have begun to wonder if I can tell a story competently, or produce saleable fiction. What am I trying to write, anyway?

MY NEW WEBSITE – See the next column.



To See What's Going On

NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN FOR THE CANADIAN SF AND FANTASY AWARDS

"All members of the CSFFA can now place their nominations for this year's Aurora Awards.

"I did. It's easy. And quick. Why not do it now before you forget about it and wind up putting it off to the last minute or maybe even missing it?"

"Granted, you have **till 11:59 p.m. EDT on Tuesday, April 09, 2024** to get it done but if you get it done now you can pat yourself on the back for a whole month!

"You have extensive eligibility lists to choose from. I'm sure you'll spot your favourites right away.

"You'll be choosing in ten categories:

"Best Novel

"Best YA Novel

"Best Novelette/Novella

"Best Short Story

"Best Graphic Novel/Comic

"Best Poem/Song

"Best Related Work

"Best Cover Art/Interior Illustrations

"Best Fan Writing/Publication

"Best Fan Related Work

"If you are a member (if you aren't, anyone can join for just \$10.00 CAD; Only criterion, you must be Canadian) go to "<https://www.csffa.ca> and place your nominations.

"It's fun, I tell you. Loads of fun!"

(R. Graeme Cameron, Mar. 5, 2024)

THE NEW BLUE MOON DIRECTORY

Heath Row in Los Angeles, and I in Vancouver, recently started updating a list of current Amateur Publishing Associations. The last formal list, *The Blue Moon Directory*, was last published in 2009. I have sporadically tried to create my own list, with sporads between 2018 and 2023. We have been combining and cross-checking our lists. Heath writes:

"It has been 15 years since the previous edition of *Blue Moon Special*, and Garth Spencer and I are collaborating to update it for publication later this year.

“Garth has been reaching out to amateur press associations that we know are still active, and I am emailing this query to people who previously contributed to the project. We'll combine efforts to issue a 2024 directory of active apae to carry on the tradition of *South of the Moon* and *New Moon Directory*.

“If you're currently active in an apa, feel free to fill out [this form](http://tinyurl.com/apa-list) -- <http://tinyurl.com/apa-list> -- or forward this email to the official editor, official collator, central mailer, or other such person. We also encourage you to share it with other apae of which you're aware.

“We're interested in fannish and mundane apae alike, so any apae are fair game.

“If you have any questions, please reach out to us.”

(Heath Row, email, February 27, 2024)

2024 FAAn AWARD RESULTS

“The results of the 2024 FAAn awards (fanzine fandom awards) were announced at Corflu 41 (fanzine fandom convention) on the weekend. 49 ballots were received.

“I'm just going to list the winner in each category, as well as the votes received by any Canadians in that category.

“BEST GENZINE

“Winner: *SF Commentary*, by Bruce Gillespie - 33 votes

“Canadians:

“*Warp*, by Danny Sichel - 3 votes.

“*BCSFazine*, by R. Graeme Cameron - 1 vote

“BEST PERZINE

“Winner: *This Here...*, by Nic Farey - 35 votes

“Canadians:

“*Obdurate Eye*, by Garth Spencer - 7 votes

“*Dark Toys*, by Taral Wayne - 6 votes

“*Opuntia*, by Dale Speirs - 5 votes

“BEST ONE-SHOT

“Winner: *Beyond Fandom: Fans, Culture and Politics in the 20th Century*, by Rob Hansen - 27 votes

“Canadians: None

“BEST FAN WRITER

“Winner: Mark Plummer - 15 votes

“Canadians:

“Taral Wayne - 3 votes

“Garth Spencer - 2 votes

“Dale Speirs - 2 votes

“BEST FAN ARTIST

“Winner: Ulrika O'Brien - 15 votes

“Canadians:

“Taral Wayne - 13 votes

“BEST LETTERHACK

“Winner: Jerry Kaufman - 22 votes

“Canadians:

“Lloyd Penney - 9 votes

“Garth Spencer - 3 votes

“Taral Wayne - 2 votes

“Andrew C. Murdoch - 1 vote

“BEST COVER ARTIST

“Winner: *Idea* #13, by Sue Mason - 17 votes

“Canadians:

“*Dark Toys* #74, by Taral Wayne - 4 votes

“*Dark Toys* #75, by Taral Wayne - 3 votes

“*Dark Toys* #76, by Taral Wayne - 3 votes

“*The Obdurate Eye* #26 (Canadian), by Denny Marshall (non-Canadian) - 1 vote

“LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

“Winners: Joe Siclari & Edie Stern

“Canadians: None

“The FAAn Awards are to fanzine fandom what the Hugos are to regular fandom and the Aurora Awards are to Canadian Fandom.

“I think you can tell by the numbers that fanzine fandom has dwindled to a tiny niche fandom and that Canadian fanzine fandom is an even tinier subset within the tiny niche.

“Still, kudos to those who keep the old fires burning.”

“(R. Graeme Cameron, Mar. 4, 2024)

CANADIAN UNITY FAN FUND

I have written, again, to the conventions in Canada that might host another CUFF delegate. Although it was alarming that I got nearly no response from the first batch of letters I sent out. Maybe I didn't have the right emails and addresses?

I will spend 2024 rebuilding the Fund, and once I find a hosting convention for 2025, schedule nomination and voting periods for the next CUFF delegate.

(Garth Spencer, Mar. 1, 2024)

NEW WEBSITE COMING

For a few years I have been threatening to revamp my personal website as a local/regional fannish information resource. In the last month I buckled down to creating and updating the content for the component pages. That led to the latest round of APA list updates; now I think I should just link to whatever updated *Blue Moon Directory* Heath Row will post.

Similarly, I want to include updated lists of current fan activities, ranging from clubs and cons to podcasts and fan websites.

It is a little daunting to realize how long I have let this go, and how much I have to review and correct. For one thing, I have to reinstate my Vancouver CommunityNet webspace. For another, I have a *lot* of outdated links to update.

So, in the meantime, I have created groups on MeWe, and on Facebook, and on Discord titled “Across the Fandomension,” stocked with the provisional fan information I have now. Already people are responding to point out how outdated some of it is. My most up-to-date, if not complete, information is about conventions in Canada. With this issue I am showing the progress I still have to make on repositories for fannish publications and memorabilia.

(Garth Spencer, Mar. 8, 2024)

**THIS ZINE IS TAKING
ADS NOW – SEND ME
YOUR CLUBS, YOUR
CONS, YOUR ZINES,
YOUR MARKET
LISTINGS, YEARNING
TO BREAK OUT AND
DRAW PEOPLE IN ...**



Full of Sound and Fury, Signifying Nothing

Mark Nelson, Feb. 6, 2024

I don't think I received *The Obdurate Eye* 35. Though it is more than equally possible that I did receive it, but deleted the email before I could save the issue onto my laptop. Though if that had happened, the deleted email should be sitting in my folder of deleted emails. As it isn't, I'll go back to commenting that "I don't think I received *The Obdurate Eye* 35".

Your example about the number zero is one that I use in one of my classes. Obvious things were not obvious in the past. They are only obvious to us now because someone in the past had a fantastic insight. Even when someone has a fantastic insight, it might take a long time for the idea to spread. The number zero is one of the most significant achievements of all time. Without the number zero we would not have positional decimal notation. What is positional decimal notation? It is the idea that

$$1023 = 10^3 + 10^1 \times 2 + 10^2 \times 0 + 10^3 \times 1.$$

Positional decimal notation is implemented (in binary) in every computer chip.

((I hope I have correctly indicated the exponents in the equation.))

Isn't the number zero an obvious idea? The Babylonians did not have a symbol for zero. The Ancient Greeks were unsure as to whether zero was really a number and consequently it was not part of their conceptual framework.

The number zero was probably first introduced by Indian mathematicians, some time prior to 500 CE. (Indian mathematicians were also the first to use positional decimal notation.)

One important idea that escaped Indian mathematicians was the use of decimal points to represent fractions. For example, rather than writing 0.31 they would write 31/100.

Like you, I have been saying to myself for twenty-plus years that I should do some exercise—not more exercise, some exercise. Shall we see how starts first?

I liked your idea about the invented of a universal translator that translates into plain English. We surely need one of these.

((I had forgotten about that idea!))

Mark Nelson, Feb. 8, 2024

When I wrote the equation I was thinking that "this doesn't look as good in an email as it does in my lecture notes". What didn't occur to me then, but has just occurred to me, is that I should take a photograph of the notes and attach them as an image.

((I saw the photos, but wasn't sure I was properly recognizing the first exponent, and some of the plus signs might have been division signs, to my eye.))

Your email has prompted an idea. In a few centuries' time, what will be the obvious ideas that we do not know, because someone has not yet had the fantastic idea? Or could it be that we've had all the very simple ideas? I suspect not, though equally obviously I have no idea what the simple ideas are that we have not yet had!

I have not heard that there

" were Classical Mediterranean cultures that forbade? the expression of fractions, even to the point of putting heretical arithmeticians to death."

It would be fantastic to find a reference for this, so that I can add it to my historical notes. In one of my classes (for Science students) I start the year by teaching students how to add "algebraic fractions". For example, what is $1/x + 1/y$.

What I've found is that many students do not understand how to do this, because they cannot add fractions. For example, what is $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3}$? So I have to spend some time reminding students how to add, subtract, multipl[y], and divide fractions. We start by revising fractions so that we can revise algebraic fractions. By the end of session we provide a basic introduction to differentiation and integration. It will not surprise anyone to learn that students who cannot add fractions in week one rarely pass this subject. (Of more concern, how could they pass their science subjects at school?)

((And I thought I was so far from ever understanding calculus. Now, I am far from understanding how these students graduated from high school.))

"... What I would like is to shift the whole idiom of spoken and written English from a fondness for abstractions (and thus making us vulnerable to claptrap) to an idiom that depends on concrete, specific, individual persons and objects: i.e., referring to individuals rather than people, specified groups rather than imaginary gases or fluids such as races or nations, specific events and actions at specific times and places...well, you've been exposed to set theory and statistics, you get the idea."

This would make for a great change in political, and everyday, language. It's easy to demonise what you don't specify. Unfortunately, it's equally easy to demonise what you specify.

P.S.: Having read the last issue I pondered whether your comment about the Canadian spelling of "nerd" was a sly dig at my excitement of looking up the spelling and meaning in the OED of "titbit". Thirty-five years ago I might have been up in arms about that. Today I think, yeah, maybe it is a bit nerdy and I deserve to have my leg pulled. That's what the passage of time does, "My salad days..." Of course, thirty-five years [ago] I would not have been able to access the OED electronically. I assume that the arts and humanities library at my alma mater would have had a hard copy. But

then I would have either had to write out the entries by hand or pay to photocopy the relevant pages. Neither would have happened.

((I just find words funny.))

Dale Speirs, editor of *Opuntia* (opuntia57@hotmail.com), Feb. 11, 2024

Regarding the survival of fan-run conventions, I suspect the general big-tent convention will dwindle away in the onslaught of comic and cosplay conventions. While I wish the best for those trying to revive VCON, I am doubtful that convention will ever return to its glory days. Better luck might be had by narrowing the focus to an unfilled niche, such as a readercon for them that has read a book.

((The dwindling has long since started. An ensmallled event has already begun.))

A good example is what happened in Calgary. For decades the annual convention was Con-Version, a general big-tent event. The Old Guard who ran the show retired and handed over to the next generation of fans. Unfortunately they were media fans, with visions of another Comic Con. They crashed and burned when they brought in three minor *Star Trek* actors and couldn't pay the bills. The Old Guard girded their loins and started a new convention, but not a big-tent show welcoming all comers.

((That gives me a somewhat better idea of what happened to Con-Version, but I had already heard about the painful Star-Trek themed event.))

Instead, the Old Guard created When Words Collide, a readercon. The Guests of Honour were authors, publishers, and editors, not actors. The panels are about writing and publishing, there are one-on-one pitch sessions with editors, and science presentations. The dealer bourse is books only. The focus is on genre fiction, not movies and television superheroes.

WWC has a limit of 1,000 members plus volunteers and guests. This readercon proved to be very successful, to the point where WWC is normally 80% sold a couple of months after the previous event and always 100% sold long before opening day. What is impressive is that a substantial proportion of attendees are in the 30 to 50 years age range. No teenaged Darth Vaders. While grey hairs are abundant, the hotel doesn't look like a nursing home.

The Old Guard retired a second time after the 2023 WWC. They were able to pass the torch to the Alexandra Writers Group, some of whom were already involved. More importantly, there is little fear that they will try to put on a big-tent show. Their website is <https://www.alexandrawriters.org/when-words-collide-2024.html>, or the older www.whenwordscollide.org.

((Unfortunately, it appears they would not support hosting a fan fund delegate, as it would be irrelevant to their interests.))

The Calgary Comic Expo every April has about 100,000 paid admissions, and takes over not just a hotel but the Stampede rodeo grounds. Not members, just cosplayers and collectors. They think it is normal to pay hundreds of dollars for the opportunity to line up for hours to see an actor or browse a dealer bourse filled with over-priced tat. It is nonsense to suppose that they would ever be potential fanzine fans. They blog and tweet, not pub their ish.

My suggestion to Vancouver fandom is to discover what isn't being done at comic cons and build up from there. No masquerades, no guest actors, but something that will find its own place in the Lower Mainland.

((I will have to pass on what you said.))

David Malinski, Feb. 13, 2024

(Re "Death and The Artist" by Den Valdron):

This issue is why you could have all your artistic works in the holdings of a corporation, that can 100% survive your passing and can be willed, broken up and otherwise dealt with just like any other asset.

As an artist YOU are your BRAND, so setting up a simple LLC (Limited Company in Canada) to hold all these 'rights', as you organize your works, will make all of this simpler going forward.

((You're speaking of copyrights, specifically, I take it.))

Richard Lynch, Feb. 13, 2024

I can offer a few additions to your listing of fannish estates and fannish archives. The Hargett Library at the University of Georgia has the Ned Brooks Collection (Google: "Hargett Library" "Ned Brooks Collection"). Ned had an enormous collection of fanzines and other science fiction publications (as he was apt to describe in his fanzines *It Comes in the Mail* and *It Goes on the Shelf*). It's a bit disappointing that the Library does not yet have a catalog of its holdings online, though they do have top-level descriptions of what's in the collection. Also, the University of Maryland - Baltimore County (UMBC) has the Coslet-Sapienza Collection of science fiction fanzines (Google: UMBC Coslet Sapienza), and there is a very detailed catalog which describes its holdings (though it hasn't been updated recently). Besides these two I know of a fanzine collection that resides at the University of New Brunswick and another one at Rutgers University, but I know not how to access information about them. You may have better luck.

This is quite the project you've taken on, compiling information about university fanzine collections, and a very worthwhile one at that. Looking forward to reading any future updates in *TOE*.

Heath Row, Feb. 24, 2024

Luckily, it hasn't been too difficult to maintain the Send One, Receive One letter of comment policy I so boldly announced in my LOC published in *Obdurate Eye* #33. I just don't receive that many letters! That said, the March edition of *The Stf Amateur* shall include at least two such letters, so not only are there two new—if unaware—T&T Letterhack cardholders, I owe letters of comment to William Breiding and a fellow member of the United Fanzine Organization. I'd honestly forgotten I wanted to instill that practice and habit!

Despite that forgetfulness, I was in part inspired to return to a more programmatic approach to writing LsOC while voting for this year's FAAn Awards. The Letterhack category was one I felt surprisingly unprepared to weigh in on, which suggests I'm not spending enough time reading fanzines, or lettercols. Who knows, perhaps I'll be a prolific enough correspondent to warrant... HEATH ROW FOR FAAN LETTERHACK IN 2025!

The art credits and artwork itself in this took me back to halcyon memories of just five days ago. During my day off work for Presidents' Day, I recovered from the Doctor Who convention Gallifrey One (see the forthcoming sixth issue of *The Stf Amateur*, expected to land in all better inboxes within a week or so) and spent several hours sorting through the fanart materials that Marty Cantor left me when he died. It's basically a cardboard box in which Cantor placed materials gathered to use in issues of *Holier Than Thou* and *No Drama*, as well as other fanzine projects. I'm about halfway through organizing the fanart and have been identifying artists, sorting material by artist, and reaching out to them—if still alive—to seek permission to publish the work he had on hand at this late date in my own fanzines. It's been a great way to meet and in some cases reconnect with people, and I think it'll bode well for future issues of *The Stf Amateur* and its component parts.

Your piece "Solitary Poor Mean Nasty" made me reconsider the impact of the mainstreaming of conspiracy theories. There's a growing amount of literature exploring the topic—just search Google Scholar for "mainstreaming of conspiracy theories" or a similar phrase—and two papers might be of particular interest. Curtis Bram's Research & Politics research note—"When a conspiracy theory goes mainstream, people feel more positive toward conspiracy theorists"—suggests that the Overton Window also applies to the transmission of such theories. And the multi-author arXiv e-print "Mainstreaming of conspiracy theories and misinformation" indicates that social media contributes strongly to such developments. No surprise there.

Personally, I was fascinated by conspiracy theories before the advent of QAnon and COVID-19. They were things not everyone was exposed to—or sought out—like dusty, dingy stores that sold pornography. Now we have marital aids and stores such as Lovers, formerly A Touch of Romance. In that latter example, the mainstreaming of sex toys and similar products suggests inclusion and sex positivity, which is welcome. But the mainstreaming of conspiracy theories takes them out of the quaint and curious category and makes them dangerous, because they're more widespread and could affect the world more broadly. They can sway presidential elections. My wife and I used to joke about a conspiracy theory that there was a class of people who would like their fellow citizens to be uneducated, unhealthy, poor, and frightened—and to not vote. That turned out to be true.

((The theory? The conspiracy? Or just that unfortunate development?))

Mark Nelson's update on the price of fish made me grateful that my wife and I recently found some smoked salmon that we'd misplaced. It wasn't in the refrigerator. It wasn't in the freezer. It wasn't in our food or dish cabinets. Our Semi-Autonomous Roving Feline Unit (SARFU) didn't smell particularly fishy. And we'd just seen the smoked salmon this morning. Imagine our relief when we realized she'd put it in the refrigerator's cheese drawer and that it had worked its way out the back of the drawer but was not easily seen. Had we not found it, the price of that fish would have been

high indeed. We'd have been fiercely attuned to the potential scent of Smoked Salmon Going Bad. The nose doth crinkle at the very thought!

Lloyd Penney mentioned the forthcoming relaunch of *Worlds of If* magazine. Jean-Paul Garnier sent me an advanced reading copy of the issue, and I read it earlier this week. It is great. Be sure to secure a copy for yourself when you can. I look forward to reviewing it for *The Stf Amateur*, and I look forward to future issues. The editors are on to something! (You can still read my brief history of the magazine online at <https://worldsofifmagazine.com/featured-content/f/a-brief-history-of-worlds-of-if-magazine> or in WOOF #48—<https://efanzines.com/WOOF/WOOF-48.pdf>—if you're so inclined. Its background in itself is a fascinating story.)

Well, I was just summoned to the main house by my spouse. So I must go. Meanwhile, in Las Vegas, the opening ceremonies for Corflu are about to begin. Pub that ish!



Early Canadian air force

Lloyd Penney, February 25, 2024

The Obdurate Eye 36 is here, and so are a lot of other zines, so I must act fast, and get some zines responded to as soon as I can. Dive right in...

Even though they are the Mounties, I keep hearing of so many women who have been a part of that force, or have dealt with them, and it's not good.

(I take it you're referring to another case of harassment and abuse. Either the RCMP has been a haven for abusive rednecks, or a history of cutbacks at the Academy has had severe knock-on effects on the quality of training. Probably both.)

I am very much for the fannish fandom community, but there are times when I think we were born a little too late, and we read about all the great times they had, and we

have our own great times, but we still seem to feel that we've missed out on something. I think what sustains some of us is the level of involvement we like. You and Murray Moore connected with the CSFFA and the Auroras, David Clink with the Canadian SF Hall of Fame, me with *Amazing Stories*, etc.

((I had the same illusion when I entered fandom. To paraphrase The Enchanted Duplicator, the key to a great fandom is to make your own great times.))

From Lyn McConchie...I have only recently discovered from Yvonne some of her private discussions with my mother years ago, and my mum's disappointment that we weren't going to give her any grandchildren. (I have learned so much of my parents' attitudes recently, and while in some ways, I am surprised, in other ways, I am not.) I turn 65 in a few months, and am I happy with my life? I was able to get an education, I wish my work history had been better, I found someone to share my life with, and Yvonne and I celebrate 41 years this coming May. I am very happy with my life, and if more is destined to come, I will still be very happy.

((It took a long time to realize that I couldn't pretend my way into being a real human, no matter how hard I tried; and that the people around me weren't going to tell me the ordinary things, like "get a degree and start a career and find a girlfriend and take on a mortgage to finance a home and raise 2.5 children". Not even when I would have done anything they told me. So, I only worked this stuff out last year, and now I'm 67. Still I haven't shaken that nebulous sense I have obligations I didn't meet. About time for hypnotherapy!))

We are also from the generation that wanted opportunities to gather and meet with friends, and so we got conventions going to bring them all together. Unfortunately, it is just our generation. Younger fans do not seem to feel obligated to stage another generation of events, merely expecting that others will stage them.

((That neatly captures the divide between congoers that started to appear in the 1980s.))

With yesterday being the last day of adding people onto the possible nomination lists, good luck to all of us who might make it onto the final ballot. This year, I hope fans will win the fan awards.

I would very much like to see the plans and budgets for the WCSFA Fandom Bazaar and your mini-con. I think we could use them here, but such plans laid out in full might help them be staged here, too.

((I refer you to the WCSFA website – wcsfa.org – or their Facebook group, www.facebook.com/WCSFA.canada. Or their Discord group.))

One last thing to write about...zine libraries are great, but I do know of two people who would like to divest themselves of their fanzine collections...Murray Moore, and me. Not that I don't want them any more, but Yvonne and I are at the age where we may have to move, and almost guaranteed that we won't be able to afford the space we might want for ourselves. Time to cut back on possessions, and my collection will empty out one whole locker.

((Change your "but" to an "and"; zine libraries, fanzine repositories, are specifically set up for people in your position, or Murray Moore's.))

I think I have done what I can, and I have filled the page. Take care, send me another issue.

Mark Nelson, March 3, 2024

A good day is one in which one works on each of Maslow's three major headings? That makes most of my days not good days. Or does it? I'd have to draw up a list to be sure. But I know that I don't do everything that I'd like to do, even taking into account that my expectations are unrealistic given that there are, in fact, only twenty-four hours in the day! I know what I'd like to do more of when I retire, but perhaps that will turn out to be equally unrealistic. There's always something else that needs doing, isn't there?

((I figure two out of three ain't bad.))

Den Valdron wrote that "if you have a Will, then basically all your stuff is handled in the way the will instructs." Well, that's what we hope will happen. I read an article in a British newspaper, a few days ago, that said there had been a dramatic increase in recent years in the number of wills that are challenged. There are various reasons for this, but a significant contributing factor is the breakup of the traditional family unit.

Family units are now more complicated. It's not uncommon for the deceased to have been married twice, in which case there can be conflicts between the surviving spouse and the children of the first marriage. Add further complications if the second spouse had a pre-existing family. A second area of challenge is to suggest that the deceased was not in full control of their mental faculties when the will was made. Or someone feels that they are hard done by—under English law, a long list of people can challenge a will "on the basis that reasonable financial provision has not been made".

((Den Valdron is a practicing lawyer, so I guess he is wearisomely familiar with these issues.))

And guess what? Who's the winner in the legal case of "I didn't get my fair share"? Even if the judge decides in your favour, you are not the winner! The winners are the lawyers.

((It was an unfortunate thing, to discover that the justice we can get is largely the justice we can afford; i.e., the quality of legal representation varies directly as your disposable income. But representative republics have long been the captives of legal communities. We used to congratulate ourselves in Canada on not being as))

I found the article. Approximately 10,000 people a year are disputing wills every year. The number of cases that make it into court are comparatively low, 195 disputes in 2021-2022, though that doesn't change the real winner of any legal action.

((Which national or regional jurisdiction[s] does the article reference?))

I wonder if creative types, the type of person that Dan was writing for, are more or less likely to have more complicated family units than the average person? My gut feeling says yes, but that's quite possibly an unjust stereotype. After all, the sexual escapades of a Picasso generate news. Is Picasso a typical creative type?

Regarding the administration of the estates of deceased writers, Dan wrote "A lot of literary agents and business managers actually go on and continue to administer the

literary estates of their deceased clients. Sometimes they actually prefer it that way. There's a lot less nagging and complaining when the client is dead."

That sounds like the basis for a short story. Perhaps the nagging and complaining only starts after the client is dead.

We also heard from: George Phillies, President of the N3F (who received three copies), Hugh Spencer, Perry Middlemiss



"Must...blow...minds...urgh...arrgh..."

One Way to Look at It

This month's provocative guest contribution from Adam-Troy Castro

I would like you to imagine an alternate history which would require significant shuffling of the timeline.

A 1935 Worldcon with Hugos, held in Nazi Germany.

Lots of people do not go because they do not want to support the regime; many separate the event from local politics and go to support fandom. Let us even say that the attendees included many who surely would have abstained out of principle as well as some who might have been sympathetic. The Guest of Honor is H.P. Lovecraft. The Toastmaster is Don A. Stuart (John W. Campbell), Media Guest is Fritz Lang (winning

a special award for Metropolis). The attendees include E.E. Doc Smith, Stanley G. Weinbaum, C.L. Moore, Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, and Edmond Hamilton, and Jack Williamson. There's a smartass, spectrum kid running around, yet to publish, but eager to display the breadth of his knowledge, the teen Isaac Asimov. (No need to point out that a few of these were dead by that time. This is an alternate world.)

Let us say that the people who attend just out of interest in the field include Speer and Goering.

Let us show some charity to the attendees who ignore current events and go to support fandom. (A couple of names aside, I am again not indicting the guests as sympathizers; this is a hypothetical.)

Hell, my ethnicity and my respect for history aside, if I could be guaranteed safety and could use my time machine to eat and sleep at home in the present day, I would be tempted. Just to be there with genre history. (And let us assume that I do not find more productive things to do, like assassinations.)

And let us say that the Hugo committee said, "You know what? Let's pre-emptively remove the Jewish names from the ballot. No reason to cause trouble for our hosts..."

(Adam-Troy Castro, "Society for the Perpetuation of Fannish Fandom"
Facebook group, Feb. 15, 2024)

More Fanzine Archives and Repositories

Barnard College Zine Library, New York, NY: <https://zines.barnard.edu> (emphasis on zines by women of colour)

Ray & Pat Browne Library for Popular Culture Studies at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH: <https://bgsu.edu/library.pcl.html>

Calgary Zine Library - Zine Tree collective, Calgary, AB: calgaryzinelibrary@gmail.com, (403) 261-9660; also email us at thezinetreecollective@riseup.net

Duke University Libraries, Durham, NC: <https://library.duke.edu> (emphasis on zines by women)

Enterprising Women Collection, Temple University: (zines by women including Paskow Science Fiction Fanzine collection)

George A. Smathers Library University of Florida Gainesville (emphasis on Cuban/political zines, the Ernesto Chavez collection)

Minneapolis Community & Technical College Minneapolis MN (includes alt press, self-published zines)

New York Public Library New York NY (esp. DeWit Wallace Periodical Room, Stephen A Schwartzman Building)

U Zine Library Ontario College of Art & Design Toronto ON

Papercut Zine Somerville MA (lending library, all zine genres)
Sheridan College Library Oakville ON
Sherwood Forest Zine Library Austin TX (zines/DIY culture)
Texas A & M University College Station TX (emphasis on zines in SW US – see Cushing Library Fanzine Collection. Susan Frank Klingon/Star Trek Collection)
Toronto Zine Library Toronto ON
University of Alberta Libraries (UAL) (western Canadian zines; the Cuthbert SF & F collection is here – Reichardt, 2023)
University of California Riverside Fanzine Collection
University of Iowa Fanzine Archives Special Collections SF & Popular Culture Collections Zine and Amateur Press Collections
Vancouver Public Library (emphasis on alt zine/DIY culture)
Zine Archive and Publishing Project part of Hugo House Seattle

Zines Received

I confess, I should review and reply to zines throughout the month as I receive them, instead of leaving it to the end of the month and realizing I have not nearly enough time.

In February I received the following incomparable publications:

Space Cowboy's Accretion #4, Dec. 2023

Stf Amateur Jan 2024, Heath Row

MT Void 2302

Instant Message Dec 2023

CyberCozen Dec 2023

The Incompleat Register 2023

Fan Activity Gazette Jan 2024

De Profundis 592 Dec 2023

Alexiad 132

CSFFA Newsletter Jan 2024

Perryscope 39

Captain Flashback 62

Perryscope 40

The National Fantasy Fan Jan 2024

Spartacus 70

The Stf Amateur Feb 2024

Tightbeam 353

This Here 72, Nic Farey ed.

The Visionary Feb 2024

Inca 23

The N3F Review of Books, January 2024

Great Galloping Ghu! #2, Feb. 2024, R. Graeme Cameron ed.



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

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

- Akers, Tim. WRAITHBOUND. [SPIRITBINDER SAGA #1]. Baen, 12.99 pb.
- Appleseed, Walburga. THE PRINCESS AND THE PRICK. HQ, 19.99 tp.
- Ballingrud, Nathan. THE STRANGE. Saga, 24.99 tp.
- Black, Holly. PRISONER'S THRONE. [ELFHAME STOLEN HEIR #2]. Little Brown, 27.99 hc.
- Brust, Steven. TSALMOTH. [VLAD TALTOS #16]. Tor, 23.99 tp.
- Chan, Eliza. FATHOMFOLK. [DROWNED WORLD #1]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.
- Chiles, Patrick. THE LONG RUN. [INTERSTELLAR MEDIC #1]. Baen, 25.00 tp.
- Chokshi, Roshani. THE LAST TALE OF THE FLOWER BRIDE. Morrow, 23.99 tp.
- Clark, P. Djeli. THE DEAD CAT TAIL ASSASSINS. Tor.com, 26.99 hc.
- Crowley, Nate. GHAZGHKULL THRAKA: PROPHET OF THE WAAAGH!. [WARHAMMER 40,000]. Black Library, 11.99 tp.
- Elsbai, Hadeer. THE WEAVERS OF ALAMAXA. [THE ALAMAXA DUOLOGY #2]. Voyager, 39.50 hc.
- Evans, Jaq. WHAT GROWS IN THE DARK. MIRA, 23.99 tp.
- Eve, Laure. BLACKHEART KNIGHTS. Quercus, 19.99 tp.
- Felker-Martin, Gretchen. The CUCKOO. Nightfire, 23.99 tp.
- French, John. CYPHER: LORD OF THE FALLEN. [WARHAMMER 40,000]. Black Library, 11.99 tp.
- Gay, Kelly. HALO: EPITAPH. [XBOX HALO #32]. Gallery, 24.99 tp.
- Goodhand, James. THE DAY TRIPPER. MIRA, 35.99 hc.
- Harris, Joanne. MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE. Gollancz, 36.99 hc.
- Harrison, Kim. THREE KINDS OF LUCKY. [THE SHADOW AGE #1]. Ace, 37.99 hc.
- Huchu, T. L. THE MYSTERY AT DUNVEGAN CASTLE. [EDINBURGH NIGHTS #3]. Tor, 24.99 tp.
- Hunter, Faith. RIFT IN THE SOUL. [SOULWOOD NOVEL #6]. Ace, 13.50 pb.
- Jensen, Danielle L. A FATE INKED IN BLOOD. [SAGA OF THE UNFATED #1]. Del Rey, 39.99 hc.
- Jingfang, Hao. JUMPNAUTS. [FOLDING UNIVERSE]. Saga, 25.99 tp.

Kaner, Hannah. SUNBRINGER. [FALLEN GODS #2]. Voyager, 23.99 tp.

Kerin, Liz. NIGHT'S EDGE. Nightfire, 23.99 tp.

King, Owen. THE CURATOR. Scribner, 25.99 tp.

Kiste, Gwendolyn. THE HAUNTING OF VELKWOOD. Saga, 35.99 hc.

Klune, TJ. IN THE LIVES OF PUPPETS Tor, 26.99 tp.

Knowles, Mark. HADES. [BLADES OF BRONZE]. Aries, 22.99 tp.

Kristoff, Jay. EMPIRE OF THE DAMNED. [EMPIRE OF THE VAMPIRE #2]. St. Martin's, 42.00 hc.

Lemming, Kimberly. THAT TIME I GOT DRUNK AND SAVED A HUMAN. [MEAD MISHAPS #3]. Orbit, 24.99 tp.

Mack, David. FIREWALL. [STAR TREK: PICARD]. Pocket, 35.99 hc.

Mandelo, Lee. THE WOODS ALL BLACK. Tor.com, 26.99 hc.

Marr, Melissa. REMEDIAL MAGIC. Bramble, 23.99 tp.

McGuire, Seanan. AFTERMARKET AFTERLIFE. [INCRYPTID #13]. DAW, 23.00 tp.

Min, Dolki. WALKING PRACTICE. HarperVia, 21.00 tp.

Mohamed, Preme. THE BUTCHER OF THE FOREST. Tor.com, 24.99 tp.

Mohamed, Preme. THE SIEGE OF BURNING GRASS. Solaris, 36.99 hc.

Mooring, Meredith. REDSIGHT. Solaris, 36.99 hc.

Neuvel, Sylvain. FOR THE FIRST TIME, AGAIN. [TAKE THEM TO THE STARS #3]. Tor.com, 25.99 tp.

Priest, Christopher. EXPECT ME TOMORROW. Mobius, 19.99 tp.

Pulley, Natasha. THE MARS HOUSE. Bloomsbury, 39.99 hc.

Riddle, A. G. QUANTUM RADIO. AdAstra, 23.99 tp.

Ringo, John & Gary Poole (eds). UNITED WE STAND. [BLACK TIDE RISING #12]. Baen, 37.00 hc. Stories set in the aftermath of a Zombie apocalypse, from John Birmingham, Jody Lynn Nye, Sarah A. Hoyt, Dave Freer, Mike Massa and many more.

Sagas, L. M. CASCADE FAILURE. [AMBIT'S RUN #1]. Tor, 23.99 tp.

Sbrana, Analeigh. LORE OF THE WILDS. Voyager, 35.00 hc.

Selene, Lyra. A FEATHER SO BLACK. [FAIR FOLK #1]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Shannon, Samantha. A DAY OF FALLEN NIGHT. [ROOTS OF CHAOS]. Bloomsbury, 28.99 tp.

Smith, Tom Rob. COLD PEOPLE. Scribner, 25.00 tp.

Tavares, Nathan. WELCOME TO FOREVER. Titan, 22.95 tp.

Tchaikovsky, Adrian. HOUSE OF OPEN WOUNDS. AdAstra, 36.99 hc.

Utomi, Moses Ose. THE TRUTH OF THE ALEKE. [FOREVER DESERT #2]. Tor.com, 32.99 hc.

Weber, David (ed). WHAT PRICE VICTORY? [WORLDS OF HONOR #7]. Baen, 25.00 tp.

Wells, Martha. THE BOOK OF ILE-RIEN. Tor.com, 28.99 tp. Collecting Martha Wells' THE ELEMENT OF FIRE & THE DEATH OF THE NECROMANCER in a new and revised edition.

Winters, Ben H. BIG TIME. Mulholland, 38.00 hc.

Wooding, Chris. THE SHADOW CASKET. [THE DARKWATER LEGACY #2]. Gollancz, 19.99 tp.

Zahn, Timothy. THE ICARUS JOB. [THE ICARUS SAGA #3]. Baen, 37.00 hc.

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11. Did you understand anything in them? _____
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13. Do you know the way to San Jose? _____
14. But if you don't like crottled greeps, what did you order them for? _____
15. Are you still there? _____
16. Hello? _____
17. Fine! Let's finish this! _____
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