

The Stf Amateur
Or: *Amateur Stf*
June 2023

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A Word of Explanation: After a couple of months of noticing that Bill Burns was not posting my apazines to *eFanzines*, I reached out to him to check in. Unfortunately, I publish too many apazines at too great a frequency for him to manage easily—which is a reasonable reaction. Emailing Burns my monthly output resulted in a backlog for Burns, which led to avoidance, which led to my not being present on the site, which I love and want to be a part of. So I proposed bundling my monthly fannish output into one title, to help ease Burns's burden—and remain present on *eFanzines* for other fen and the historical record. He agreed that that would work, and the result is *The Stf Amateur* (Or: *Amateur Stf*), a monthly bundle of my apazines, which are also available as standalone titles. Everything I do is just One Big Fanzine anyway, so this might be a step in the right direction, perhaps.

The Stf Amateur (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 available via *eFanzines* (<https://efanzines.com>) by the grace of Bill Burns, as well as for the Usual. Letters of comment and cover art are welcome and desired. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #64

May 3, 2023

Telegraphs & Tar Pits is an apazine published by Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to APA-L, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication. (This issue is Lembkian number 306440.)

Rest in Peace, Marty Cantor

It is only appropriate that I was working on *De Profundis* #585 when Marty died Saturday. He had been grumping that the LASFSzine had been longer than 10 pages under my editorship so far—he was not happy with its relaunch to date—but he might have been pleased that the most recent edition of *De Prof* is exactly 10 pages. I didn't email Marty *De Prof* because he did not want to receive it via email. Instead, I mailed a hard copy, like we do with APA-L, so it would have gone out with this week's apa distribution Friday. I'll not mail him again.

That makes me sad, and I didn't know him long. We first met in 2009 when I moved to the Los Angeles area, upon my first visits to the LASFS clubhouse, where I got a tour of the apa room and helped collate distributions of APA-L. I'd previously met John Hertz at a Lunacon in New York, and their sf fanzine friendships brought me back to the club during the pandemic, when I was more easily able to join online meetings—and return to apa participation.

Many of you knew Marty much longer and better. I got to spend most of my quality time with Marty during a previous phase of his illness—his death came way too quickly and I wish I'd been hanging out with him more frequently even now—and while picking up the reins of APA-L. I am grateful for that time, talking about books, learning about the LASFS and Los Angeles fandom, watching Spike Jones DVDs, and listening to classical music. I washed dishes. I carried stuff to the storage room. I took out the trash.

Marty had just discussed transitioning LASFAPA to David Schlosser several days before Marty died. That transition will not be as smooth as the APA-L transition was, but we'll manage. I'll help as required by David.

I will miss Marty. And now I don't even have the opportunity or option to email, talk to, or spend time with him. Now that he's dead, I wish I'd done all of those things more often. So it goes.

Mike Glycer published a memorial piece on *File 770* at <https://file770.com/marty-cantor-1935-2023>.

Marty's *Fancyclopedia* 3 page has already been updated: https://fancyclopedia.org/Marty_Cantor. *Holier Than Thou* back issues are available at https://fanac.org/fanzines/Holier_Than_Thou. *No Award* resides at <https://efanzines.com/No%20Award> and https://www.fanac.org/fanzines/No_Award. (In fact, Bill Burns's hosting of Marty's fanzines was the very impetus for *eFanzines*.) *Here We Go 'Round the DUFFberry Bush* can be found at <https://fanac.org/fanzines/DUFF>.

Following my apazine in this dist'n, I'll include Marty's *Letter of Comment* from APA-L #1799 (Nov. 11, 1999). It offers a good overview of his fanac within these pages. His *Notes from the Tobacco Works* #1 appeared in APA-L #522 (May 15, 1975).

Correction: APA-L #3018 Table of Contents

I misidentified the patron saints last dist'n. They were Nick Smith and Bill Warren.

A Letter of Comment

Why that's *amazing*! An actual *fanzine*! Like in the olden days! I even recognize some real old names, like Bjo Trimble. I traded a zine with other sf and comics zine publishers in the late '60s, early '70s... age 12 to 15 or so. Called *Monstrosities* for two issues then *Asmodeus*. I had my own hand-cranked mimeograph!

That zine culture experience prepared me for my Sacred Scribe job, for sure!

Later on, in the '80s, a friend started the huge Fantasy Fairs in Dallas and I used to go to those every year (and also do devivals, so I got in free). Guests were along the lines of R. Crumb and Ray Harryhausen. They ended, sadly. Then in Cleveland we sometimes went to "Con on the Cob" which was small but fun.

Now I just go to the annual local fossil and paleontology convention, Fossilmania. Different kind of fandom...

Anyway, that was strangely nostalgic, skimming your apa!

—Rev. Ivan Stang

Thank you, Rev. Stang, for your LOC on APA-L #2998, which featured your cover art. Your LOC earns you a T&T Letterhack card, which I shall mail to you forthwith. You are the second human being to receive such a card, and believe you me, you're in fine company. As are they.

Do you still have copies of Monstrosities or Asmodeus? Though juvenalia, I'm sure they're interesting fanzines—and it'd be interesting to see what glimmers of the Subgenius begin to appear even at that early age. I'd also be interested in who you

corresponded and traded with. History, don'tcha know.

Book Notes: The Butcher #6—Kill Time

I didn't expect this volume of the men's adventure series written by Stuart Jason (a house name most likely used by James Dockery in this instance) to be science fictional, but there it is on page 95 just before the Kent cigarette advertising insert card:

Ugo Ugheri had, somehow, obtained a copy of Process 231 (also called Fungus 231), a series of routine experiments conducted by Mark Ugheri, biochemist for the Midwestern Shale Oil Mining Company of Boulder, Colorado. During these experiments, the younger Ugheri, had unexpectedly stumbled upon a self-reproducing fungus which when exposed to sunlight, became so powerful a defoliant that in the wrong hands—hands such as Ugo Ugheri's—it could become extremely dangerous. Allowed to reproduce without restraint, a small quantity of this defoliant could soon destroy virtually all vegetation within the boundaries of the United States.

Otherwise, it's a pretty run-of-the-mill Pinnacle book full of gunsels and gun molls (even disguised!), Mexican intrigue in Quintana Roo, and male posturing. Fun, all the same.

Fantastic Television: Travelers S1E7: "Protocol 5"

Maybe you've experienced this yourself. After staging a play or following an important performance, perhaps after a sizable work project or major accomplishment that required a lot of preparation and dedication, it's not unusual to feel lost and adrift. What now? Now that that is done, what next? Sometimes with new mothers it can even take the form of postpartum depression. Now that I've given birth, who am I? I'm no longer an expectant mother. The workaday reality of day-to-day living kicks in. Sometimes hard.

That sensation hits the team solidly once the laser mission is over. Coupled with hallucinations brought on by the antiserum, it's a challenging time. I wasn't clear just how much time the episode was meant to portray. Was this the day after the laser mission? Did it represent weeks of time? The after effects of the mission's completion make more sense if this episode represents a number of days.

In an unexpected show of empathy and friendship, the sketchy attorney takes Phillip under his wing, encouraging him to get a pet—he needs to care for something. Phillip buys a turtle. He also takes him to what seems to be a Narcotics Anonymous meeting, though hallucinations suggest it could be a Travelers Anonymous meeting... which would actually fit into the premise and world of the show. Recovering

travelers, travelers who are no longer called into service, might very well need a 12-step program to adjust. I think it was just an NA meeting, but it's an interesting thought.

The doctor, Marcy, performs surgery on herself in an attempt to stave off her seizures and gets blood all over David's bathroom, alarming him. He asks her to stop kissing him to distract him. She begins to let him in a little, allowing him to help her so she doesn't have to do everything herself. That seems to include spinal injections of some sort.

FBI agent Grant MacLaren, whom my wife recognized as the actor who played Will on *Will & Grace*—I had no idea!—gets tricked into attending a party thrown in his honor. His wife distrusts him after learning from Forbes that he's been using her as an alibi. And when he gets drunk and makes love to her aggressively, she suspects him of cheating; he's not acting like himself with her. In that scene, he hallucinates her as his lover from the future, who has some kind of tattoo on her neck.

The single mother is stuck home with a crying child, perhaps hallucinating surveillance and interrogative questions on her television set at home. A social worker stops by for a wellness visit, sent by her abusive ex. And the athlete finds himself embroiled in a shoplifting scheme. He pays for the taken items and becomes closer to his girlfriend, sharing his meditation practice with her, too.

All representing Protocol 5, which has something to do with maintaining the host body's life and lifestyle when not on a mission. Turns out that that's more challenging than expected.

S1E8: "Donner"

Receiving a new assignment from the Director at the end of episode 7, the team is quickly back on the horse—and MacLaren is revealed to have much more support than I'd ever have expected to exist high up within the FBI and federal government. Interrupting the arrival of a group of new travelers, a jealous religious extremist bombs the compound used by a group of Webcam girls. MacLaren outs himself to the nutter, who is expected and presumed to be a traveler—but might not be—but might be. Was it a misfire? In the end, the newly arriving traveler was just trying to escape—the future, any responsibilities as a traveler—because he's able to see the sky in the here and now.

That reminded me of S1E6 in which the school bus of gunmen and gun molls—including Becky the sniper, a crackerjack shot—kept remarking on how many trees there were, seeing a dog—and mistaking it for a bear. The future is ecologically bleak, and this is

the first example we have of a traveler trying to opt out of their assignment.

MacLaren's cover is threatened when the religious nutter acts turncoat, seeking a plea bargain to reveal a widespread conspiracy, only to realize that there are more travelers involved than expected, and to learn that travelers can be punished, in this case deemed a traitor and overwritten by another traveler who then goes to jail to serve a term—and perhaps still play a role there, too.

Marcy's cover is threatened when David's boss accuses her of welfare fraud, firing David. Carly is threatened by a child custody hearing at which her ex accuses her of prostitution and she loses her temple, undermining her case to take care of her son. The engineer bonds with a school administrator over books. And the historian starts recognizing small changes in the present he knows about from the future.

They might not have averted the disaster, but the outcomes of horse races and the lottery are starting to subtly shift. That doesn't bode well for the team remaining in control.

This is the week in which I had to keep watching, getting ahead of the round robin's two episodes a week schedule. I've also watched the next two episodes, 9 and 10, but still have two more to complete the first season. It's a good show, and I'm still not entirely certain I understand all that is happening.

On Our Patron Saints

The Table of Contents for APA-L #3017 indicated that that week's patron saints were Stan Burns, and June and Len Moffatt. Burn died roughly eight years ago (d. April 23, 2015) at the age of 68. His first science fiction book was Robert A. Heinlein's *Have Space Suit, Will Travel* at the age of 10. Burns joined the LASFS 10 years later while writing a cultural anthropology paper for a course at the University of Southern California.

An active con participant, he also served as official photographer for multiple cons, including Equicon, Filmcon, LACon I and III, and many Loscons. David Gerrold's 1973 *The World of Star Trek* also included Burns's photos of *Star Trek* cast members.

Notably, Burn also took a picture of LASFSans at the first meeting at our first clubhouse. Attendees included people such as Forrest J and Wendayne Ackerman, Robert Bloch, Ray Bradbury, Ron Cobb, Harlan Ellison, Bill Mills, Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, and A.E. Van Vogt.

Nicknamed Staniel, he contributed the apazine *Conversations with a Pregnant Donut Lady* to APA-L,

and participated in the Fantasy Amateur Press Association and Third Foundation. According to *De Profundis* #413 (June 2007), he circulated a questionnaire in APA-L that generated weeks and weeks of conversation. I'll do my best to locate that distribution.

He also contributed book reviews to multiple fanzines, including *The Alien Critic*, *Science Fiction Review*, *The WSFA Journal*, and Mike Glycer's *Prehensile* and *Scientifrication*, which also featured a satire titled "Ten Million Clichés From Earth." Before Burns's death, he'd returned to reviewing books for Steve Lewis's blog *Mystery*File*, an appropriate venue for a fan of mystery novels, as well.

Burns attended Gary Louie's memorial service in 1999, as well as LASFS parties and cons including Loscon 26 and 32, and L.A.con IV. Glycer's memorial post in *File 770* offers additional detail (<https://file770.com/stan-burns-1947-2015>).

June and Len Moffatt, then, were a fandom power couple if there ever was one, each deserving—nay, requiring—their own *Fancylopedia 3* entry. June (b. April 20, 1926, d. May 31, 2018) joined the LASFS in 1948 after visiting with her birth mother the year prior.

A member of the Southern California Institute for Fan Interests (SCIFI), the Petards, the Dregs of LA Fandom, the Burroughs Bibliophiles, the Blustering Gales from the South-West (a Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars), and the Curious Collectors of Baker Street (the LA Sherlock Holmes Society), she was a bit of an omnifan. In fact, she helped found Bouchercon—a mystery fandom con—and chaired three of them. She also participated in Dapa-Em, a mystery apa (as did Burns, above). An associate member of First Fandom, June also participated in the Carboniferous Amateur Press Alliance. Its print mailings, titled *Five x Five* included participants such as Ray Nelson, our own Barbara Gratz Harmon, fellow Neffer Jon D. Swartz, and First Fandom's John L. Coker III.

She married two LASFS men: Eph Konigsberg, whom she divorced in 1964, and Len Moffatt, whom she married in 1966. She and Len were recognized by the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund in 1973, resulting in their trip report, *The Moffatt House Abroad*.

John Hertz's *File 770* memorial to June is worth reading: <https://tinyurl.com/Hertz-JMoffatt>. So is Mike Glycer's obituary for her: <https://file770.com/june-moffatt-1926-2018>.

Len (b. Nov. 20, 1923, d. Nov. 30, 2010) was also singularly notable. An sf fan since discovering prozines and starting a club at the age of 15, Len joined the LASFS in 1946 after serving in World War II. He belonged to the Western Pennsylvania Science

Fictioneers, the Portland Science Fiction Society, the Outlanders, and the Petards. He was also active in SCIFI, APA-L, the Dregs of LA Fandom, First Fandom, the Burroughs Bibliophiles, the Blustering Gales, and the Curious Collectors.

He was also a member of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, for which he edited the 1950 *Fan Directory*. (Jon D. Swartz contributed a memorial to Len for *The National Fantasy Fan* while I was editor in 2011: <https://tinyurl.com/TheFan-March2011>.) Like June, Len also participated in the Carboniferous Amateur Press Alliance.

Stories of his appeared in *The Fanscient*, *Out of this World Adventures*, and *Weird Tales* between 1948 and 1952. He also wrote poetry, fannish plays, and operas.

Earl Terry Kemp's "Len Moffatt: A portrait of a fan" in *e*I** Vol. 6 # 1 (February 2007) expands on Len's life and involvement in multiple fandoms. (<https://efanzines.com/EK/eI30/index.htm#lm>) And *Califania Tales: The Fannish Autobiography of Len Moffatt, 1923–2010*, published by Marty Cantor shortly after Len's death, is also worth exploring: <https://fanac.org/fanzines/Fanthologies/Fantho36.pdf>.

The Table of Contents for APA-L #3018 should have indicated that last week's patron saints were Nick Smith and Bill Warren. Smith recently chaired Loscon and often participates in weekly LASFS meetings, during which he offers Hatchings and Dispatchings to recognize notable birthdays, deaths, and media anniversaries. He's also active in LASFAPA and Alarums & Excursions and is an active tabletop board gamer as well as recently retired library technician.

The Pasadena Museum of History offers multiple articles by Smith focusing on cooperative board games, the LASFS, the California Institute of Technology, and the history of sf and fandom. (<https://pasadenahistory.org/category/nick-smith>) He attended Caltech, working as a student journalist, while fellow patron saint Gavin Claypool (*T&T* #58) was also there.

A recipient of the Evans-Freehafer Award like the Moffatti above, Smith has served as president of the LASFS and served on the board of directors. He's also active in filk music, writing and singing (including *Battlestar Galactica* songs at Westercon in 2022), chairing filk conventions, and achieving a position in the Filk Hall of Fame in 2015 (<https://filkontario.ca/smithn-2>). He was recognized as fan guest of honor at Loscon 43 in 2016.

In 2018, he curated *Dreaming the Universe: The Intersection of Science, Fiction & Southern California*, an exhibit that ran for six months at the

Pasadena Museum of History. The exhibit focused on the history of southern Californian science fiction from the 1930s to the 1980s, including writers such as Ray Bradbury, Edgar Rice Burroughs, and Octavia E. Butler.

As a writer, Smith has written several novels, including *Milk Treading*, *Undead on Arrival*, and *The Legend of the 10 Elemental Masters*. He also contributed to *The Complete Warlock*, *Warlock's Tower*, and *The Warlock Menagerie*, roleplaying game resources published by Balboa Game Co. A storyteller, Smith shared a couple of stories during Virtual Loscon 2020 (<https://tinyurl.com/Smith-stories>). And he edited the magazine *Fantasy Book* with Dennis Mallonee between 1981-1987.

Bill Warren (b. April 26, 1943, d. Oct. 8, 2016) was a historian and writer, perhaps best known for *Keep Watching the Skies!* Warren also edited posthumous issues of Bill Rotsler's fanzine *Masque*, and wrote a mystery chapbook, *Fandom Is a Way of Death*, with Allan Rothstein. Warren's story, "The Visitors," was published in *Orb* (August-September 1950), "Death Is a Lonely Place" appeared in 1968's *Worlds of Fantasy #1* (prompting a Fanquet), and "Saturday's Child" ran in *Amazing Science Fiction* (May 1970).

He and his wife, Beverly, moved from Oregon to Los Angeles in 1966. Warren had been writing Forrest J Ackerman since 1958—and contributing to *Famous Monsters of Filmland*—so upon arriving, they began frequenting the Ackermansion and fell in with organized fandom. He and Beverly joined the LASFS in late 1966; Warren received the Evans-Freehafer Award in 1973 and served on the board of directors for many years.

Warren also wrote scripts for Warren Publishing's *Creepy*, *Eerie*, and *Vampirella*. He contributed to Leonard Maltin's *Movie Guide* and Walt Lee's expansive *Reference Guide to Fantastic Films*, and reported on movies annually for Nebula anthologies. He even appeared in movies, an extra in *The Howling*, *The Laughing Dead*, *My Lovely Monster*, *The Naked Monster*, and others. And during the 1990s, he and Bill Rotsler collaborated on segments for a French TV series.

Finally, Warren was an online media innovator. In the late 1980s, he launched the ShowBiz Roundtable on GENie to discuss movies and show business. He might have been the first online movie reviewer recognized by the Motion Picture Association. The Roundtable's archives were soon the first large online database of movie reviews.

Comments on APA-L #3017-3018

In *Leeway* for April 20, 2023, Lee Gold remarked on

mail to an occasional *Alarums & Excursions* cover artist being returned. I don't remember where I saw the following conversation play out, but not long ago, via email or social media, others were discussing something similar. Returned mail made them worry someone had died, but it turned out that their care facility had closed—and they'd moved somewhere else but hadn't updated all of their correspondents.

I'm not sure that that's the case here and I'm not sure how you'd confirm that that's the case, but perhaps an obituary will show up for them if they did indeed die. A sad occurrence, to be sure.

My theory on Martin Young's cover to #3016 is that (a) a Starbucks barista misunderstood his name and labeled the cup inaccurately (Martian instead of Martin), (b) said barista was just being cheeky, or (c) Martin is, in fact, a martian. In which case: Martin, go home!

Your memory of the ebbing waves and large pilings rolling about in the ocean reminded me of a beachfront amusement where my family used to vacation in northern Wisconsin: 7-Mile Pinecrest Resort in Eagle River. There was an old log chained to a cinder block that you could swim to, climb on, slide over, stand on, and otherwise enjoy. It was great fun, but sometimes that chained log in water would do what a chained log in water might do—and I'm surprised no one was hurt more badly. I cannot imagine that being accepted by most vacationers today, though it was wonderful then.

It also made me think of the stories we choose not to tell lest someone be injured or worried by them after the fact. Things we decide people don't need to know. Sometimes, that's indeed more simple.

Matthew Mitchell's *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* opened by invoking the tengu, a raven-like humanoid race in *Dungeons & Dragons*. I've never played a tengu character but remember their mimicry serving as the foundation for their language and communication.

Most nights, my wife and I go for a walk at sunset. It helps our bodies attune to the rhythms of the planet, which can aid sleep. It's also become an excuse to look for the ravens in our neighborhood. Ravens begin to form groups at sunset as a defense against predators, and we've been astounded by their migrating clusters. We step out of the house, look and listen to see where they might be gathering tonight—it's not always in the same place—and walk in search of them. We've been enjoying the crows immensely in recent weeks: their glottal chortling, the way they bob on telephone wires, and the way they gather.

In *Toony Loons* #714, **Joe Zeff** mentioned the

LASFS giving him reasons to be out two nights a week. One night was probably the Thursday meeting. What did you do the other night? I look forward to our future clubhouse. I'd like a place I can go to watch movies and TV shows with others, read, work on fanzines, and otherwise hang out.

You should totally respond to the 2020 discussion forum post. I recently downloaded Virtual][, an Apple emulator, so I can play old Eamon text adventure games, *Wizardry*, *The Bard's Tale*, *Zork I*, and other old games again. I usually don't have a lot of time for video games and have been neglecting my Nintendo DS, but I really enjoyed my first time playing Eamon since the 1980s late last week. Hey! It remembered my character name: Laphorr. The emulator actually saves progress to disk. As I said in *The Explosion Containment Umbrella* #8, my wife will miss me.



This even has me interested again in learning to program, which I haven't really done since dabbling in Basic as a youth. I've come across a couple of books that seem to combine both interests—text adventure games and learning to program: Phillip Johnson's *Make Your Own Python Text Adventure: A Guide to Learning Programming* and Huw Collingbourne's *The Little Book Of Adventure Game Programming: Program Retro Text Adventures in C# (and other languages)*.

Python seems more useful these days than C#, but it looks like I could use either on my MacBook Pro, utilizing MacPython or Visual Studio. Which would you recommend? Has anyone ever made their own text adventure games?

Your mention of *Sister Boniface* reminded me of a new Peacock streaming series: *Mrs. Davis*. "Sister Simone partners with her ex-boyfriend on a globe-spanning journey to destroy Mrs. Davis, a powerful artificial intelligence." The nun rides a motorcycle, and the program looks quite fun. Has

anyone seen it?

John Hertz's *Vanamonde* #1541 mentioned John Aubrey's *Brief Lives*. Sounds intriguing—and a parallel read to *Plutarch's Lives*, perhaps, despite the time in between.

And in *Reflections from a Fish Bowl* #38, **Barbara Gratz Harmon** described her grandson in a way that reminded me of my son at one point: “[He] isn’t honest or thorough about having completely finished [his homework.]” When homework is done on the computer, even if it’s not programming, one can spend *all sorts of time* at the computer, treated by one’s parents or grandparent as though one is doing homework, while not doing homework. We reached a point during high school when we realized that all the hours we’d been giving my son to do homework in his room had not been spent doing homework. Kinda came as a surprise at the time.

Charles Lee Jackson II, I did not print the inside cover of #3018, per your request. Frankly, I’m shocked you even drew it. For shame.

In *Leeway* for April 27, **Lee Gold** shared a wonderful anecdote about Ambrose Bierce. I can understand the appeal of that biography! I continue to hope for the lessening pain of and improving vision from your eye injections. We have lemons on our lemon tree, too. I picked one the other night for dinner.

Storm Center sounds horrifying. I might have to seek it out to watch it. Do you think I should list the monthly Los Angeles Filkers Anonymous filk circle in the *De Profundis* events listing? Our gardener has been flaking lately, so the backyard is quite overgrown and weedy. I have a manual push mower but don’t want to use it because I really should weed instead; there’s a reason I pay someone to do that! Update: They showed up Monday after a week away, mowed but did not weed (even though I asked him to), and didn’t take their payment check. Strange.

Matthew Mitchell's *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #9 remarked on keeping a list of BBSs in the 714 area code. That seems historically important to me, and unless such a list is already available on the Web, perhaps you should put it there. Just out of college, I edited for *Online Access* magazine, which went beyond *Boardwatch Magazine's* coverage of BBSs to include online services such as AOL, CompuServe, GENie, and Prodigy—and the early days of the mainstream Web. The folks at *2600* magazine or the Computer History Museum might even be interested.

I’ve got two Mac laptops that are end of life or close. One can’t even be booted up as a slave drive. I recently got a Zilkee hard drive recovery device to see

if I can salvage any of the files from them—but haven’t tinkered with it yet. Who knows what I might find! Feel free to share some of your articles, reviews, and stories with us in APA-L. Coming across stuff like that can be great fun.

Your *Terra Nova-Land of the Lost* quip made me chuckle. Watching *Travelers* makes me want to watch *The Time Tunnel*, to be honest. *Terra Nova* is on a list of time travel TV shows I included in the May 2023 *Menace of the LASFS* as space filler. Yet I didn’t include *Land of the Lost*. Perhaps an oversight!

In *Reflections from a Fish Bowl* #39, **Barbara Gratz Harmon** invoked Fredric Brown, one of my favorite writers of all time. My first exposure to his collection *Nightmares and Geezenstacks* absolutely blew my mind. I shall have to seek out “Answer.”

C.D. Carson's *Always Going Home* #38 is a welcome return to our pages. I hope your travels go well—and that your health is better. Kudos on your role in Pemmi-Con! How did you get involved in NASFiC?

In *Toony Loons* #715, **Joe Zeff** gave us a weather report, complete with photographic proof. You previously mentioned The Bureau of Magical Things in *TL* #679, but I haven’t yet checked it out. Your description is quite compelling.

Nola-Frame Gray made a rare appearance with an apazine—*Kandor*—rather than her customary bacover, and it was a pleasure to include, as well as to read. I don’t actually know where *Travelers* is supposed to be set. It’s shot, though, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, as well as other cities in that country. You can see a directory of shooting locations at <https://moviemaps.org/movies/2y1>. I’m now 10 episodes in and had to watch four episodes last week, not just the customary two. Your mileage might vary—Matthew Mitchell also didn’t like it—but I’m enjoying it immensely. Feel free to email me a future apazine; I’m happy to convert it into a document.

In *Vanamonde* #1542, **John Hertz** opened with a couple of excellent Renaissance Pleasure Faire riddles. Caitlin and I shall participate May 6. I repaired my rabbit head costume cane in preparation for this coming weekend. Though I used the word permission last ish, I think my sentiment was more in line with Daniel C. Dennett’s idea that one can only imagine what one knows—in terms of personal experience. Learning that other people made their own comics (or magazines, storybooks, records, books, etc.) was a formative experience for me. You don’t just have to buy what people choose to sell you. You can make your own media.

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May 11, 2023

Telegraphs & Tar Pits is an apazine published by Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to APA-L, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Renaissance Pleasure Faire Report

Caitlin and I went to the Renaissance Pleasure Faire in Irwindale last Saturday. It might have been the first time we've been able to go since 2018. I think we got our outfit components, or some of them, from Medieval Collectibles (<https://www.medievalcollectibles.com>) after going in 2015—including an now-too-small outfit for our son, then 11.

Caitlin's outfit consisted of an Irish dress, gathered skirt, classic chemise, and floral crown she bought at a previous Ren faire. I bought my medieval hosen from Medieval Collectibles and the shirt, hat, and ox bone pins at previous faires.



Our plan was to go for as much of the day as we wanted to—the faire is more my pleasure than

Caitlin's—and we took reading materials and water bottles, intending to eat at least lunch on site. The drive to Irwindale took about an hour, and we arrived shortly after opening, easily finding parking; there wasn't a line queued up to enter.

We did our usual walk through of the faire, looking for vendors we've patronized previously, scouting for soaps from the House of Wormwood (<https://houseofwormwood.com>). The faire was relatively crowded, involving more people than we're used to post-pandemic, and there were numerous people dressed as woodland fae; apparently, it was cottagecore weekend.

Now, cottagecore is an actual thing, a home decoration aesthetic that celebrates country living and traditional skills: baking, gardening, and needlecraft. I hadn't previously associated it with woodland fae, and we were initially confused by the many people wearing silicone elf ears and mushroom costumes. "What does that have to do with the Renaissance?" my wife asked, prompting a discussion of the faire's adjacency to fandom.

We ran into my friend Aaron at the Guild of St. Michael (<https://www.facebook.com/GuildofStMichaels>) encampment and caught up a little bit. I hadn't seen him or his wife in person since before the pandemic. We met through Scouting but also connected through the Ren faire and *Dungeons & Dragons*. I didn't see my friend Michael, who's also active in St. Michael's as an armorer; he makes wonderful chainmail.

It had struck me that there seemed to be less of a guild presence at the faire this year. The encampments were less noticeable, and there seemed to be less guild activity visible, despite a Tea with the Queen and King of the Fools Coronation. Aaron said that the guilds are about 50-75 percent the size they've been in past years. Even the St. Michael encampment was smaller and less elaborate. Now that they can no longer camp overnight on site, there's less incentive to set up the full encampment, even for a guild focused on historical re-enactment. The people who invested in the heavy canvas tents are a little frustrated by the change—though they still offered an impressive camp.

Caitlin and I ate lunch amongst the midday crowds, with her obtaining a quarter chicken and crepe with berries and whipped cream, and me getting a falafel pita, which was pretty good. We sat and read in the shade by the Tiny Girl Big Show (<https://tinygirlbigshow.com>), which was fun to watch from a distance as I read Joyce and Jim Lavene's *Wicked Weaves*, the first novel in their Renaissance Faire Mystery series (see below).

Rejuvenated, we picked up the soap we purchased

from Wormwood and Blythe Spirits (<https://blythespirits.com>), a new favorite vendor, before heading home for the rest of our Saturday.

It was an excellent day complete with beautiful weather and pleasant temperatures, and we developed more ideas about how to get the most out of the faire when next we return—focusing on the historic component of the event. After all, the Renaissance Pleasure Faire has re-enacted a 16th century English market faire since 1962. We'll look for more workshops, demonstrations, and music next year.

From the Reading Pile: A Book Review

Wicked Weaves by Joyce and Jim Lavene (Berkley Prime Crime, 2008)

The first book in the Renaissance Faire Mystery series isn't at all science fictional or fantastic, but it is a fun mystery associated with—and set at—a commercial Ren village in South Carolina. While not a Ren faire per se, the fictional Disney-like attraction located in an abandoned airfield outside Charleston features many of the characteristics and components of a Ren faire, including food vendors, shops and craftspeople, performances, and re-enactment cast.

The novel centers on a character who—when she's not studying as a historian—interns with various craftspeople at the village. This book focuses on her time with her second mentor, a weaver continuing the Gullah tradition.

There's a murder, the return of an abandoned child, sibling disagreements, shadowy figures, and a healthy dose of romance and sexual activity among the cast and staff of the village. I would've enjoyed just a hair less romance and more mystery and intrigue, but the book's a good read, regardless.

Especially enjoyable are the Robin Hood-like clan, the insular group of baking monks, and the role that weaving and Gullah basketry plays in the story. The paperback also includes "Little-Known Facts of the Renaissance" and a recipe for Banbury cakes—first mentioned in text in 1586. The recipe looks delicious enough that I plan to make them at some point!

There are at least five books in the series, published through 2012, also touching on glass, daggers, hats, and toys. Readers wanting more of the fantastic in their Ren faire mysteries might appreciate the Magical Renaissance Faire Mysteries series of paranormal cozies by Erin Johnson, Nova Nelson, and Trixie Silvertale. I haven't read any of those yet but am well into the Lavene's subsequent *Ghastly Glass*.

Fantastic Television: *Travelers*

S1E9: "Bishop"

Episode 8 was where the dam broke and I could no

longer restrain myself and watch only two episodes a week. After that episode, I had to keep watching.

For the first time, MacLaren—anyone on the team, really—gets a solo mission. There's a great scene in which a wife kills her husband while jogging with him. And it's unclear whether MacLaren is going to assassinate a congressman (His name is the title of this ep.) associated with that man—until he saves his life.

Meanwhile, the team members' lives continue to fall apart. Marcy is dying and tells David. Carly gains the aid of a social worker, only to have her ex's lies undermine her job prospects. The athlete is being sent to military school by his father. And Carly's ex, a police officer and the chaos agent of the series, also threatens MacLaren's marriage—which ties in to the assassination assignment nicely.

To paraphrase Marcy, the future doesn't like it when we improvise.

S1E10: "Kathryn"

For the first time, perhaps, a team member's life is seriously threatened, and we're faced with the prospect of losing one of the characters. Following the plane crash in which MacLaren saved the lives of Bishop and his wife, Grant undergoes surgery at the hands of a traveler with a different code number designation indicating he's a doctor sent around the world to take care of critical figures.

Science fictional technology is utilized: nanites and organ growth and harvesting. And MacLaren accesses his host body's memories while he lingers close to death. Meanwhile, Forbes and MacLaren's wife, Kathryn, try to track him down.

The emphasis this episode is on how travelers overwrite their hosts, whose memories aren't accessible to them generally. MacLaren's emerging memories amplify and clarify his love for Kathryn, who's been made to forget his saving her life using traveler technology.

She and Forbes search for his SUV after its removal from a parking lot, identifying Phillip from camera footage—and locating their warehouse headquarters. The episode ends surprisingly quickly, but in a fun way that staves off FBI agent Forbes just a little longer.

There are only two episodes left in the season. Rather than wait to stay on schedule, I need to forge on. I asked fellow round robin participants whether they preferred I hold on to my reviews to keep our weekly schedule, or if it was OK to push on. The show's reached an inflection point, and I'm tempted to lean in.



Snow Poster Township #10

May 12, 2023

Snow Poster Township is an apazine published by Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. Banner artwork by Henry Chamberlain. *Snow Poster Township* is prepared for contributors to N'APA, members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, and select others. (Previously, it was prepared for FAPA. My previous N'APA apazine was titled *Snow Poster City*, and this effectively combines both.) A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

N3F Tape and Video Bureaus Report

Since our last distribution, there have been several events held by the N3F Tape and Video bureaus, as well as a dust-up of sorts with Facebook that initially challenged our promotions.

What happened was this: Facebook deleted all of the event listings I'd created to promote the events within the N3F and the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and blocked links to the online location of the screenings and listening sessions. Facebook might have also blocked links to the issue of *The National Fantasy Fan* containing the bureaus' schedule.

The Facebook notice indicated that the event listings went against its community standards, and I asked them to reconsider—so I at least knew what standards had been broken. The screenings are all works in the public domain, or readily available on YouTube, which already actively polices for copyright infringement—so I wanted to ascertain what the problem was. Was it the material presented? The shared online screening? Something else? Dunno.

Regardless, we continue to hold events without

online event listings, promoting via a schedule flier, nefzine reports like this, and periodic reminder posts before each event. While participation is low—currently one to three people per event—they're worth holding just for me. As long as I enjoy participating in the screenings and listening sessions, I'll keep scheduling them. The program in early May was especially wonderful.

At the end of March, we held a Tape Bureau event featuring two old-time radio episodes. We aired *Dimension X*, "First Contact" (Sept. 8, 1951) and *Dimension X*, "Nightfall" (Sept. 29, 1951). The episodes were both based on short stories, including one by Murray Leinster that appeared in the May 1945 *Astounding* and another by Isaac Asimov from the September 1941 *Astounding*. You can listen to them yourself at https://youtu.be/YVAqeK_2Eb0 and https://youtu.be/iRkd6_kM00.

We also held another such event April 20. That time, we listened to *X Minus One*, "Cold Equations" (Aug. 25, 1955) and *X Minus One*, "Requiem" (Oct. 27, 1955). Those two episodes were based on stories by Tom Godwin (*Astounding*, August 1954) and Robert A. Heinlein (*Astounding*, January 1940). They are available at <https://youtu.be/RmlaE9coj-4> and https://youtu.be/YweU3TgL_9s.

April 7 was when the brouhaha with Facebook occurred. We didn't realize what had happened until the day before or day of. Even with the communication missteps, the Video Bureau still held an online screening of several fan films, including *Faans* (https://youtu.be/YI_6LT8cn9E), *The Genie* (<https://youtu.be/JjnG2YYsmNY>), *Ghostbastards* (<https://youtu.be/yzgt4kiBqak>), and *Batman at Washburn* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWDxwvHSaCc>). The works deserve comment.

Faans was made in 1983 by Larry Tucker and Randy Bathurst, filming at multiple conventions in the Midwest. Other fen appearing in the movie include Bill Bowers, Howard DeVore, Mike Glicksohn, Sandy Reynolds, Jon Stopa, Bob Tucker, and Ben Zuhl. It premiered at ConFusion 101 in 1983.

The Genie is an eight-minute film made by Al Lewis in 1959. It stars Forrest J Ackerman, Fritz Leiber, and Bjo Wells—and was screened at Westercon 12 and Detention. *Ghostbastards* is more recent, a 1980s fan film shot on video by fen in Melbourne, Australia. There's some unfortunate blackface, but it's an amusing sendup.

Batman at Washburn might have been the highlight. The makers lost track of the 16mm high school student fan production until a collector bought it from Goodwill and tracked them down. (<https://tinyurl.com/Batman-Washburn>) It's a lot of fun.

Given the excitement April 7, I totally forgot the Second Saturday screening the next day, so we rescheduled it to the following Saturday. The Video Bureau screened several short films, including Edison Studios' 1910 *Frankenstein* (<https://youtu.be/67ENQibFW9w>), a 1914 adaptation of L. Frank Baum's *The Magic Cloak of Oz* (<https://youtu.be/WhH5EheGOSY>)—written by Baum—and a 1915 short, *The Portrait* (<https://youtu.be/xZaxq-POoOU>), based on a short story by Nikolai Gogol.

And in early May, the Video Bureau offered a program of 8mm reels produced by American, Castle, Heritage, and Ken films: *The Blob* (<https://youtu.be/OHz06vMfaHI>), *Destination Moon* (<https://youtu.be/mH0aJArv8OQ>), *First Spaceship on Venus* (<https://youtu.be/jIOl6KmG-oM>), *War of the Colossal Beast* (<https://youtu.be/6W230KUrKAQ>); as well as *Birth of Frankenstein* (<https://youtu.be/Siin5RHUX7w>), *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman* (<https://youtu.be/Hg7z-XRVxls>), *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (<https://youtu.be/hUfc3y2Plws>), *Frankenstein's New Brain* (<https://youtu.be/pWL1Jt4cGyE>), and *Son of Frankenstein* (<https://youtu.be/khnmwY90hxcM>). *War of the Colossal Beast* was particularly good, and I really enjoyed *Son of Frankenstein*. I reviewed the former movie in 2020 and sent the resulting text to George Phillis, but it doesn't look like it ever ran in a Nefzine. I've included that review below.

The next event will be a Video Bureau screening of the 1936 movie *Things to Come* at 7 p.m., Saturday, May 13. (I went to a wedding that afternoon, so it was rescheduled to Sunday.) Tape and Video bureau events generally occur every first Friday at 4 p.m. PT, second Saturdays at 7 p.m. PT, and third Thursdays at 4 p.m. PT, all at <https://tinyurl.com/N3F-Theatre>. Tune in if you're able to!

Screened at the Globe: Movie Reviews

War of the Colossal Beast (1958)

This brief American International film directed by Bert I. Gordon is a sequel to his 1957 *The Amazing Colossal Man*, but you can watch either, or both, in any order, and not miss out on or be perplexed by any continuity issues. They both stand alone rather well, in fact, especially given the sequel's ample reuse of footage from its precursor in one particular string of flashbacks. Interestingly, the sequel was not marketed as such, and features an entirely different cast than the original. That makes the flashback scenes pretty cool; the new guy cast as the monster, Dean Parkin, flashes back to the original guy, Glen Langan. (I actually didn't notice at all, and I've seen both movies!)

The colossal one—whether man or beast—is an iconic image in the annals of late-'50s sf cinema. You should see this movie just for the makeup, done by Bob Schiffer in the original and Jack H. Young in the sequel. The half skull, half face is haunting—and isn't overly dissimilar to the visage in Gordon's 1957 *The Cyclops* (also starring Parkin, makeup also by Young!). The special effects, while simple, are also pleasing. And both almost make up for the extremely linear vector of the movie's plot, and the colossal one's incoherent growling and frustrated yowling.

Another fun aspect of the movie was the role that Los Angeles played in it. Scenes were filmed at Iverson Ranch in Chatsworth, home of the Lone Ranger Rock just 45 minutes from where I live (day trip!), as well as in Griffith Park at the Griffith Observatory. There are several fun scenes featuring the law enforcement officers down below and the Colossal Beast looming over the observatory up at the top of the hill. At one point, he even picks up a school bus—that sequence is wonderful.

The ending of the second one is much like the ending of the first one. Only this time, he's electrocuted—enabling an innovative use of color film to accentuate that. At 69 minutes, it's not a sizable time commitment, and it has enough going for it—AIP, Bert I. Gordon, the colossal one, doll house-like furniture, and Griffith Observatory—that it's worth the time. A fun flick I'd watch again.

Availability: Streaming on Amazon Prime, Pluto TV, Shout TV, and Tubi. The 1991 *Mystery Science Theater 3000* episode is also streaming on Apple TV and Tubi. (That might have changed since 2020, when this was originally written. See above.)

Poison for the Fairies (1986)

This movie is included in a wonderful new Blu-ray set from Vinegar Syndrome, *Mexican Gothic: The Films of Carlos Enrique Taboada*. Ostensibly a horror movie, it might not actually be supernatural, but it could be—and that depends on your interpretation as a viewer. The movie is fantastic, regardless.

The story focuses on a new student at a school who befriends another girl who seems to live with an older relative and a housekeeper rather than her parents. The relative, perhaps a grandmother, is somewhat ill and a foreboding presence in the home. The housekeeper is quite open and honest when telling the young girl about the supernatural, occult, and witchcraft, encouraging an interest that could become unhealthy.

For the most part, the movie focuses on their growing friendship, the new girl falling prey to her new friend's manipulation, and little experiments with the occult. Those experiments and experiences

culminate while at a lakeside vacation home with the new girl's parents, who've picked up on the friend's potentially bad influence.

While the general pace of the movie is extremely slow and languorous, relaxed to the point of boring at times, the ending makes it all worthwhile. The fact that the movie might not even be supernatural makes it even more horrific. If the girl is indeed a witch, it's a fitting end that's been set up well. Has the housekeeper been training her all this time? And if she isn't a witch, if their shared experiences have all been manipulative make believe, the ending is even more horrible. An excellent movie, despite its slow pace.

***Darker Than the Night* (1975)**

Another movie from *Mexican Gothic: The Films of Carlos Enrique Taboada*, this film is more traditional in its structure, pacing, and themes. A young woman living with three friends, one a recent divorcee, comes into the inheritance of a large manor after a distant relative dies.

The four move into the house, critiquing its old-fashioned caretaker, a woman loyal to the home's previous owner; its decor; and other aspects—though moving into it regardless. The young woman doesn't plan to just sell it, but the inheritance comes with a requirement: She continue to take care of her relative's black cat. Her friends hate cats.

Much of the movie is spent exploring the Old Dark House, the dead's presence remaining, the housekeeper foreboding, and the cat lending an air of mystery, as well. The young woman's boyfriend comes and goes. The divorcee's ex-husband tries to reconcile with her.

Unfortunately, something happens to the cat, and one by one, the inheritor's friends find ill ends themselves. And the presence in the home becomes stronger, even having influence beyond its walls in a nearby library. There is no escape.

The filmmaker employs color in interesting ways throughout the movie, and it's a great Old Dark House movie, complete with a ghost. Taboada is an excellent filmmaker, and I look forward to seeing more of his work. Definitely not the Mexican horror movies I'm used to.

From the Reading Pile: Book Reviews

Excession by Iain M. Banks (Bantam Spectra, 1998)
This was my first novel by Banks, and my first in his Culture series—though not the first book in the series. I'll read another, for sure. This was an excellent read.

It's been a while since I've read the book, an acquisition from the library's new shelf, though it's

not a new book. But I remember being impressed by several aspects of the novel. The most intriguing element of the book and perhaps the series is the ships, extremely large generation ships able to contain entire ecosystems, with independent intelligence and a social structure of their own. Their names alone are poetic: *Peace Makes Plenty*, *Wingclipper*, *Attitude Adjuster*, *Sober Counsel*, *Fate Amenable to Change*, and others even more wonderful. Lyrical, even.

Some of the novel is told in almost epistolary form, capturing a mix of email-like communication and computer programming code. Initially somewhat challenging to read, it gets easier over time, perhaps because Banks simplifies it somewhat, and those sections serve to break up the text nicely in terms of pacing and structure.

I also enjoyed the alien race of the Affronters. Their physiology is well described and fascinating, and their martial society based on stature and authority is intriguing, especially when it butts up against the norms and mores of the Culture.

But the crux of the book is in its very title. All of the above is window dressing for the actual plotline, which focuses on the disappearance of a star 50 times older than the universe itself and the appearance of an excession—something *extra* that merits investigation. Regardless, the plot is almost an afterthought, and I would have read the book even if it didn't go anywhere. The window dressing is so beautiful and wondrous, I almost didn't want the book to end.

Are all the Culture novels like this? I think I need to read more Banks.

Run for the Stars by Harlan Ellison / ***Echoes of Thunder*** by Jack Dann and Jack C. Haldeman II (Tor, 1991)

I didn't even know that Tor published doubles, too. I bought this at the Last Word Bookshop in Philadelphia (see below) on a recent business trip and read it in two sittings, one of them in Pennsylvania. The Ellison half is a 1957 story that's a little more straightforward sf than I tend to expect from Ellison. After an alien invasion that's expected to destroy all life on Earth, the remaining rebel forces plant a bomb to stave off the incursion before departing in spacecraft to escape. The location of the bomb proves challenging to the alien invaders, as well as to the sole human survivor remaining behind. A fun little piece.

While the book doesn't flip over like an Ace double, the Dann and Haldeman piece, new for this publication, fleshes out the rest of the paperback. It's an even more intriguing and inventive story, focusing on Native American construction workers who build

space stations—much like the Mohawk Skywalkers of New York City.

A future spiritual leader for a tribe whose members are often conscripted for such work leaves his people to seek his fortune in construction, too, working for a megacorporation. He does his best to maintain a spiritual practice despite the temptations of station life, his fellow tribesmen weakened by drink and life away from their people.

Dann and Haldeman's descriptions of the Native American culture, the use of the sweat lodge, and the protagonist's visions are well presented, and the role he plays in the story is important. The characters face two challenges, a space station—an orbiting pleasuredome—becoming unstable when its spin goes off kilter, and trying to reclaim a drifting or abandoned satellite still protected by remaining defensive technology.

The relationship between the protagonist, John Stranger, and fellow Native American Anna is also interesting, though largely underutilized as a focal point. I really enjoyed the science-fictional approach to the historic Skywalkers and would read more along this line without hesitation.

Tor published almost 40 double novels between 1988 and 1991, including work by an impressive group of authors. I know people seek out Ace doubles; I have myself. How did I not know about Tor doubles?

Wizardry: The League of the Crimson Crescent by James E. Reagen (Prima Proteus, 1995)

At first I thought 1995 was awfully late for a *Wizardry* tie-in novel but *Nemesis: The Wizardry Adventure* came out in 1996, so this might have been intended to help promote that computer game. It's not a very good book, but I was delighted to find it at the Last Word in Philadelphia, and I enjoyed reading it. I'd even read another *Wizardry* tie-in novel, though the book seemed to have little to do with my memory of the game.

Similar to Edgar Rice Burroughs's Barsoom novels or Andre Norton's *Quag Keep*, the protagonist, Bill Evans—not the jazz pianist—is sent to a fantastic realm after an injury while spelunking in the Adirondacks. The realm is populated with the kinds of creatures familiar to *Dungeons & Dragons* players—as well as creatures such as felpurs, dracons, rawulfs, and others. But nothing in the book reminded me of *Wizardry*.

Regardless, it's a basic found hero storyline. The new arrival acquires a magical sword, defeats a dracon slaveowner, and liberates the subjugated remnants of the human population shades of *Planet of the Apes*. While not very memorable, the book details the chaos

following the death of Good King Liam and the rise to power of the Unnamed One.

The League of the Crimson Crescent of the title is a secret society working against the Unnamed One, led by a wizard soon joined by Evans, who's dubbed Bill the Just. The result is a relatively traditional fantasy novel, with the protagonist joining the cause of the League in an effort to find his way home again.

Comments on N'APA #263

I previously reviewed Ahrvid Engholm's *Intermission* #129 in *The Explosion Containment Umbrella* #7, so I shall reprint those remarks here.

“In *Intermission* #129, Ahrvid Engholm shared some news of his involvement in a secret writing project and a college course on world building. I look forward to hearing more about both! Your letter of complaint to the staff of Chicon 8 made me grin. My perspective is that of someone who's not a descendant of a survivor or victim of the Spanish Inquisition, but I, too, took Chicon's apology to be a bit much. It's a pun, it's a tradition, and it stems from *Monty Python's Flying Circus*. I don't know who the original complainant is or what their connection to the actual Inquisition is, but it's curious to me that the concern wasn't expressed publicly, while the response was. I am sure that someone took offense, but it all seems rather humorless and myopic to me. Next thing you know, the word 'crusade' will fall out of favor because, well, you know. Part of me thinks there might actually be value in continuing to use the phrase 'The Fannish Inquisition.' As we get further and further away from the Spanish Inquisition (1478-1834) and *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969-1974), its use might very well prove edifying. Just what are they going on about? They did what? That's horrible!

“Did the Swedish edition of *Mad* publish material that didn't appear in the American magazine? I recently learned—thanks to an old issue of *Fantasy Empire* magazine—that the UK edition of *Mad* did, including a *Doctor Who* parody (“Doctor Ooh”) in its 161st issue. Reportedly, editor Dez Skinn moved the UK edition toward movie and British television parodies, as well as offering content tie-in covers. Wherefore art thou, *Mad* parody of *Red Dwarf* or *The Young Ones*? I'd even settle for a spoof of *Fireball XL5* or any other Gerry and Sylvia Anderson creation.

“The History Corner is wonderful, as always. I had no idea that Hugo Gernsback also published *Sexology*. For the curious, Internet Archive offers a number of back issue covers dated between 1937-1967 at

<https://tinyurl.com/Sexology-magazine>. The November 1964 edition includes an interesting piece on sex-related technology of the time: “The Obscene Telephone Call.” I also appreciate learning about Olof Möller and his space opera paperbacks. His work doesn’t appear to be available in English, alas. The cover to *Planeten Drabos* seems to have been inspired by a popular sf movie of the 1970s. The materials you shared about the Archive for the Unexplained were also appreciated.”

In *Archive Midwinter* dated Feb. 19, 2023, **Jefferson P. Swycaffer** mentioned Dominic Flandry. I recently picked up Poul Anderson’s *Ensign Flandry* while in Philadelphia for work (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #63). Walking around one evening, I spent some time at The Last Word Bookshop browsing their sf section. I thought it looked well stocked, but the fellow working there—who’d been to Los Angeles, but only during a stopover at the airport—said that it was running a little low. Regardless, I picked up a number of titles and have already read two, which I’ll try to review in this.

Your story about several hundred pages of “g”s made me chuckle. I appreciate your interest in learning more about solo roleplaying gaming. I might take you up on your request to “[t]ell [you] more about solo rpg” in my apazine for *Alarums & Excursions* because those folks might appreciate it, too. I’ll be sure to send you a copy of the result. I’ve been wanting to organize my thoughts on how I’ve been approaching it. At the most basic level, it’s playing *D&D*—or whatever game you want to play—but by yourself, taking on all character roles, as well as the role of the dungeon or game master. The biggest challenge, then, is how you handle what would be known to the DM but not the players or characters. I’ll give it more thought.

Can it be that **Garth Spencer** has also joined N’APA? What a delight to see his *Brownian Motion* #1 in this emailing. He and I are both active in eAPA, and I’ve been an appreciative reader of *The Obdurate Eye*, the current issue of which is entirely letters of comment! He and I have also talked on the phone, so I’m glad he’s here. Welcome, good sir.

But, whoof! “By the time I left off editing *BCSFAzine*, I had printed some virulent nasty editorials, basically claiming the BCSFA members were not active fans and what was their excuse?” I’ve been a member of the N3F for some time now, and every single time I’ve been tempted to lay into our membership on the topic of actifen vs. passifen to the extent I’d really like to, I have luckily been able to restrain myself. Instead, I turn my fanac and attention

to other quarters, seeking more actifen, while still remaining active in some way or another.

These days, I’m focusing my energies on activities and events to bring Neffers together so they can better become friends and fellow fen in a more meaningful way. (And don’t get me started on dues-paying members vs. ~~freeloaders~~ public members. I also try to restrain myself on that topic.) I need to come up with the fannish equivalent of “ass, gas, or cash (no one rides for free).” (<https://tinyurl.com/AGorC-1>) My game NEFFO was one step in that direction. I’ll include that here.

Your remarks “Do we recognize, and do we really deal with the fact that there are different fandoms now, out of touch with each other? That some people simply don’t read or write, not with dead-tree products; some people don’t volunteer, their experience teaches them to expect something in return for any participation. . . . It may be fandom, but not as we knew it,” struck a chord, as well.

My experience in reaching out to college fan clubs, which are still a part of organized fandom—which is what I think you’re talking about (fanzines, cons, and clubs)—is that (a) they don’t always want anything to do with older organized fandom; they joined their club to meet other college students, not as an on ramp to fandom outside of university and (b) they don’t always correspond using the same media we do—they meet face to face still, to share books and movies, but perhaps for different books and movies; they are more likely to communicate via Instagram than older fandom is; and they’re more likely to gather on Discord. At the same time, we’re not always welcome in their spaces given the age difference and potential for creep factor.

So fandom might not be in danger, but our style of organized fandom definitely is, and younger generations might not see value in maintaining older instances of fanac—our clubs, cons, and apae or fanzines—as they create their own. That might be a natural occurrence, but it definitely challenges our collective sense of the importance of timebinding.

Elliott Weinstein’s *The Fillostrated Fan Dictionary Part 2* defines timebinding as “a characteristic of humans, the ability to establish a continuity beyond the lifespan of an individual through permanent communications and multiple records.” (See how I just cited a 1975 fanzine? That means I’m old, and I’m merely 50.) His definition draws on the work of Alfred Korzybski, which considers generational continuity. But as we might have seen, sometimes people choose to start from scratch or neglect or ignore that which came before. Personally, I find that fascinating—and occasionally frustrating.

Mundane apae definitely predate fannish apae. The National Amateur Press Association (<https://amateurpress.org>), for example, in which I was once active, dates back to 1876. The American Amateur Press Association, in which I was also active, is more recent, active since 1936. I recently got back in touch with Bill Boys, secretary-treasurer of NAPA and am glad mundane apae continue.

As far as I know, no Neffers are making their own films or videos together, but we should ask. I just posted to that effect in the Facebook group, and we can figure out how to best inquire via the nefzines. Alas, *Alien from L.A.* doesn't seem to be streaming online currently. Neither is the 1988 *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. If you sort out your television, I'd be happy to lend you the DVDs.

Ahrvid Engholm's *Intermission* #130 threw down the gauntlet: "95% of you will skip this." Not! I prefer cross-country skiing to downhill skiing (which I've never done, so how the heck do I know?). I own a pair of cross-country skis but haven't been able to find my boots since I moved to California. And I prefer it to snowshoeing, too. Both are like hiking in the snow.

All that said, I would prefer it if competitive cross-country skiing actually occurred in the woods. I might actually watch that. Well, it turns out that just like you can find YouTube videos of people walking around in cities (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxMP69fW_RM) or riding trains (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXCB1zGGFiY>), you can also find point-of-view videos of people... skiing. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s91EH2ggC3c> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzuyIZjSZ4E> are just two such examples.

I found the writing practice of Mircea Cartarescu fascinating. Two hours a day is a wonderful amount of time. And no editing? Yet it ends up excellent? So cool. *Nostalgia* and *Solenoid* are available in English. Which do you recommend? I will have to spend more time with your fan videos online at <https://vimeo.com/moxieoxid>. Thank you for sharing them with us. So: *Crime Scene: Space* is what the plans for *Starlife* resulted in?

In *Synergy* #44, John Thiel commented, "I read in the newspapers that the apocalypse is at hand, but when I look around me, I don't see any sign of it." That reminded me of something I heard on the radio (KPFK-FM) this week: "If you don't pay attention to politics, politics pays attention to you." I agree with your praise of the artwork of Jose Sanchez. He should be submitting work to convention art shows if he isn't already. He lives in Miami, so that'd be Florida Supercon (<https://www.floridasupercon.com>) or

Necronomicon (<http://www.necronomicontampa.org>) four hours away in Tampa.

Oh, those early issues of *Pablo Lennis*! The cover art of *La Joilette* reminds me of somebody whose artwork I like very much and have used for APA-L covers. Thank you for sharing those with me. Inspired by you and Burnett Toskey—and perhaps Cartarescu page and a half a day—I've written the first chapter of a serialized story to send your way. It'd be a worthwhile habit to develop. Thank you for explaining more about Ninth Fandom. I look forward to learning more in the Facebook group.

George Phillis's *Ye Murthered Master Mage* #263+ included mentions of *The Deadly Mantis*, *The Deadly Claw*—perhaps *The Giant Claw*?—and *The Lost Missile*, all of which I must now see. As I recently said to John Purcell online, "Must you add to the list of things I need to watch?" I shall enjoy those mightily.

In *Samizdat* #18, Samuel Lubell (aka Sam!) commented on the Baltimore Science Fiction Society's 60th birthday. I recently exchanged emails with corresponding secretary Patti Kinlock agreeing to exchange the LASFS' *De Profundis* for the BSFS' *The Mark of the Beast*. It was a joy to see your name pop up in the minutes so often. Kudos on the book discussion group!

Remember: Generative AI might lie to you. Or write fiction that feels like fact. It hallucinates. AI-driven writing will require a new form of media literacy we don't seem to have developed already. I appreciated your writeup of L.E. Modesitt.

And Kevin Trainor Jr.'s *Esmeralda County Line* #3 included some excellent natter about various con adventures. You were quite busy early in the year! I hope things have slowed and calmed down somewhat. I enjoyed your comments to Sam about various military sf examples. I haven't read too much military sf as such.

Your Son of Silvercon progress report reminded me to join as a supporting member. You might reach out to C.D. Carson about participating. He lives in Texas but is involved in pro-nuclear circles, as well as the North American Science Fiction Convention. Check out <http://publius.ntfn.org>, <http://www.man-and-atom.info>, and <http://anonradio.net/a-step-farther-out>, to see if his ideas and interests resonate with you.

Your review of *Consider Phlebas* also intrigued me. I recently read my first novel in Iain M. Banks's Culture series—*Excession*—and review it above. I enjoyed it thoroughly and would read more Banks without hesitation or complaint.

NEFFO

Regardless of whether Neffo is a game, a way of life, or just a gosh-darn hobby, play Neffo every single day, once a week, or monthly. It's up to you as a Neffer. Next thing you know, you'll catapult from the humblest of neofen to BNF in less than one hot minute. FTL, by Herbie! Neffo is played similarly to Bingo. We encourage going for the hallowed Neffo Blackout.—HR

Read a new fanzine available for download on eFanzines.com	Encourage a friend or fellow fan to consider joining the N3F	Catch up on posts in the N3F's group on Facebook or on your favorite fandom blog	Create a piece of artwork	Join or attend the local science fiction club or book discussion group in your area
Join an N3F round robin, the Correspondence Bureau, or Writers' Exchange	Write a letter of comment in response to a recent Nefzine	Submit a book, comic, movie, TV, or fanzine review to one of the Nefzines	Read a recent issue of one of the Nefzines	Watch an episode or two of an sf, fantasy, or horror television program
Read an sf, fantasy, or horror novel, collection, or anthology	Write a letter, email, or text another member of the N3F or fellow fan	Free Space , or: Become a dues-paying member of the N3F	Watch an episode or two of a cartoon or anime series	Write a letter of comment to a fanzine or prozine you recently read
Work on your entry for the annual short story contest	Watch an sf, fantasy, or horror movie	Play a game, roleplaying game, or video game with a fellow fan	Read an old fanzine or other document available for download on Fanac.org	Obtain a book at the local library or bookstore (Check out The N3F Review of Books for ideas!)
Read a comic book or graphic novel (Check out Mangaverse for ideas!)	Post something to the N3F's group on Facebook or your favorite fandom blog	Read the current issue of one of the prozines: <i>Analog</i> , <i>Asimov's</i> , <i>F&SF</i> , <i>Interzone</i> , etc.	Listen to a relevant podcast or an episode of an old-time radio show (or SCIFI.radio!)	Attend a local sf or fandom-related convention or event

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #66

May 18, 2023

Telegraphs & Tar Pits is an apazine published by Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave., Culver City, CA 90230; kalel@well.com; 718-755-9840 mobile; 323-916-0367 fax. It is prepared for contributors to APA-L, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Administrivia

I finally finished scanning *The Best of APA-L #3*, which collects material from APA-L in the years 1966-1968. The scans have been made searchable, and I've sent copies to Barry and Lee Gold, who gave me the original to unstaple and scan.

If you'd like a copy, let me know, and I'll send you the link to download the PDF. Ideally, we'll also make it available to eFanzines and Fanac. I've already shared it with Eaton for archiving.

From the Reading Pile: Short Stories

The May/June 2023 issue of *Asimov's Science Fiction* features a novella by Allen M. Steele, but following my usual form, I started with the short stories. Sandra McDonald's "Sex Apocalypse Robot" is provocatively titled—who doesn't like robots? As the biographical sketch preceding the story indicates, the story is part of a series of Sexy Robot stories, which also include "Sexy Robot Mom," "Seven Sexy Cowboy Robots," and "Sexy Robot Heroes." The eventual collection is sure to be amazing.

This story is set in a post-apocalyptic Manhattan, and the streets are dangerous, the only safety many stories high. Joseph, who communicates with his distant sister via instant messaging, meets a new neighbor, who's very handsome. They become close, in part aided by a woman who braves the city streets to make deliveries, and Joseph learns his neighbor is an art-restoring android. The story develops nicely, and a few intriguing particulars are revealed, making the story even more meaningful. Worth reading!

Zack Be's "The Visions Are Free After Exit 73" is a piece about terraforming, ecological disaster, an alien race, and hallucinogenic soil. The scientist responsible for the disaster seeks closure with his dead wife before he leaves the planet. The near-religious acolytes are interesting, and the protagonist ends up finding more, or less, than he was looking for.

The third story I've read so far is "Zoo Station" by Lavie Tidhar (*T&T* #57). Tidhar might be my current favorite current author, and this story helps shore that

up. High above a ruined Earth, space detritus clogs and cramps Earth's orbits. The protagonist ventures to an orbiting zoo facility before its orbit decays, sending it into danger. What he encounters changes how he thinks about life among the stars. Tidhar's approach to maintaining a historical record of animal life is wonderful, as is his portrayal of the resulting accuracy—and inaccuracy of such a record.

Ray Nayler's guest editorial, "Not Prediction, But Predication: The True Power of Science Fiction" touches on a theme we address occasionally, that sf's job is not to predict the future. "What sf authors are involved in is not divination, but a more productive type of thought experiment—asking detailed 'what-if' questions and then predicating their stories on the idea that those creative 'what-ifs?' are, in fact, true," he writes. That single letter can make all the difference.

Fantastic Television: *Travelers*

S1E11: "Marcy"

This was a doozy of an episode. We're introduced to two new characters, the Director's favorite programmers, both with relatively low numbers, who arrive in dramatic fashion. The first one's arrival opens the episode: an older farmer working on a fence line. I think he was lucky to arrive safely and got out of quite a tight spot just in the nick of time. Thank you, wire cutters! Seeing his facial expression as he saw all the greenery around him was delightful, and there were several moments throughout the episode in which he expressed delight at the animals of his farm (Pigs!), and that he even had a shotgun for defense. There was also a tender moment in which he described realizing what the freezer full of bacon meant.

The other new arrival also arrives in a dramatic fashion. Trevor abducts the educator to whom he loaned the book of poetry, taking her into the woods so she doesn't die as expected, while on the way to a dentist appointment. He explains his situation and mission to her, and she seems largely sympathetic, though understandably frightened. That's all a ruse to lower his attentiveness, however, and she escapes, only to become host to the other new arrival, a much harder-edged person who's developed a method by which Marcy might be able to stave off her seizures.

Carly tries to entrap her ex into hitting her while on camera as a way to address the potential loss of custody of her son, having dropped him off with her ex "for a couple hours" before disappearing for several days. A conversation with the sympathetic social worker accentuates the importance of the situation. If you trust someone enough to take care of your child, you can't claim that you don't trust them to do so while trying to maintain sole custody.

Marcy's health condition worsens. David takes her to the hospital, where a CAT scan suggests that her brain is such that she shouldn't even be able to communicate with her doctor. The group convenes at the farm house, and David helps Marcy abscond from the hospital to join them so the new hard-edged arrival can try to address her health concerns.

The basic idea is that Marcy would be overwritten, a new imprint of her future self downloaded to her current host, but in such a way that they're utilizing just the available, healthy brain cells rather than trying to overwrite a fully functional brain. That leads to the philosophical consideration of the episode.

What composes ourselves? If we lose several months of memories and experiences, are we the same self we were beforehand? Am I the same person now that I was a week ago, even? The rest of the team seem unaware that Marcy has fallen in love with David, or that they're now a couple, and she is reluctant to lose that aspect of herself. She doesn't want to go back to who she was before arriving.

Marcy goes home to think about it, the rest of the team joining her, and perhaps intentionally, she ends up not having a choice. The ending of the episode is a fitting bookend for the dramatic opener with the farmer's struggles in the field. When David finally arrives, she doesn't recognize him. That's exactly what she didn't want to happen. It's heartbreaking.

Over the course of the episode, we also learn a little bit more about the state of the future. The two new arrivals came to the 21st century so the farmer-programmer's code couldn't be obtained by a faction seeking to depose the Director. There's a growing difference of opinion in the future as different groups vie for power, and he's gone into hiding.

On Our Patron Saints

The Table of Contents for APA-L #3019 indicated that that week's patron saint was Larry Niven. It's challenging to write a general profile given his career and fanac, but he's definitely noteworthy. I've found only Forrest J Ackerman similarly challenging, and I think I took a bye that week.

Kristen Renee Gorlitz interviewed Niven four years ago for The Panel Continues. The video (<https://tinyurl.com/Gorlitz-Niven>) is worth watching. *Luna* #66 (Winter 1976-1977) offers a slightly less contemporary interview that is worth exploring. And Marv Wolfman also shares some thoughts about Niven (<https://tinyurl.com/Wolfman-Niven>), describing how they first met at a LASFS aftermeeting—and offering a solid biographical sketch penned by Niven himself. His Web site offers an even longer biography at <https://larryniven.net/biography.shtml>.

Niven's involvement in the Citizens Advisory Council for a National Space Policy with Jerry Pournelle is particularly interesting. In addition to his fiction writing credits, of which there are many (<https://tinyurl.com/ISFDB-Niven>), he's also contributed to multiple video games, including *Motie*, *Ringworld: Revenge of the Patriarch*, and *Return to Ringworld*. He also has some TV credits (<https://tinyurl.com/IMDB-Niven>).

His later writing attracted some early 2000s criticism from readers in rec.arts.sf.written, but much of that discussion feels like sour grapes. People have the right to occasionally be prickly. And pros owe fen something, but not all fen, and not always. (*T&T* #26 offers a fine example.)

A long-time member of the LASFS—his fanquet was held in 1965—Niven's somewhat frequent participation in meetings to this day is a gift to area fen. His wife Fuzzy Pink became active in APA-L in at least the late 1960s, contributing apazines titled *Fuzzily* and otherwise. I was able to find a *Fuzzily* #3 in the Table of Contents for APA-L #200, but it seems not to have been scanned. I'll keep looking for earlier instances.

The Table of Contents for APA-L #3020 indicated that that week's patron saint was Bob Null. Fully named Merlin R. Null, he died in 2010 at the age of 72. Null went by Bob as a fan and by Merlin in his mundane and professional life working in aerospace technology. He joined the LASFS in 1979 and served 20 terms as vice president, as well as on the board of directors. He often volunteered for Loscon and Gallifrey One, of which he was a founding member.

As only one of four people who received the Evans-Freehafer Award more than once, Null was recognized for his service to the LASFS in 1981, 1992, and 2003. He was a guest of honor at Loscon XXIII in 1996 and co-chaired the con in 1984.

Null helped set up the LASFS computer room, managed the club archives, held keys to the clubhouse, and was deemed Minister of Silly Gavels. LASFSans unanimously voted to name the outside gathering and socializing space of the LASFS clubhouse the Null Space in his honor.

Responsible for restocking the club's soda machine, he was known as the soda ferry and, later, the soda fairy. At a recent LASFS meeting, member also remembered him as a collector of DVDs, stamps, and coins. The LASFS held a memorial service for Null at the clubhouse in June 2010, and he is reportedly buried in Valhalla Memorial Park.

Comments on APA-L #3019-3020

In *Leeway* dated for May 4, 2023, **Lee Gold** remarked on Alan Frisbie's (*T&T* #23) laundry routine. Why didn't he do laundry or eat pizza where he lived? I downloaded the HTML of Wyman Guin's "Volpla" from Project Gutenberg and look forward to reading it.

Barry Gold's *The Bear Growls* #11 remarked on how he used to keep track of the running number of every fanzine or apazine as a Shirepress or Bag End publication. Marty Cantor did that with his fanzines and apazines, too, under Hoo Hah Publications. For example, *The Lime Jell-O Gazette* #465 in LASFAPA #555 (his last mailing before he died) was Hoo Hah Publication #2466. I tried to do the same thing once listing all my different zines under the Karma Lapel umbrella, which was at time itself a zine, but not only have I lost that list—like Barry has—I am loath to recreate it working backwards given how many apazines I've now published. I still love the idea and applaud those who keep such track.

I hereby volunteer to maintain <https://conchord.org> in terms of hosting and domain name registration when the time comes. If someone more involved in the filk community steps up, I won't be offended if you go with a filker, but consider me your backstop.

In *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #10, **Matthew Mitchell** described his home Internet situation. May your connection improve, Hijinks or otherwise. Do you think those reaction videos are honest responses, or hammed up for viewers? Regardless, I don't really have time to watch those, or interest. Reaction videos to entire movies or television episodes might be different because you're reliving the material in longer form, too—not just a scene. Almost like *Mystery Science Theater 3000*. It's also almost like watching with a friend, in a way.

I've started watching roleplaying game-related videos on YouTube sometimes when I just want a short video but not a full episode or movie, usually when folding laundry. They're not unboxing videos, which I also *really* don't have time for (especially because some of them are autonomous sensory meridian response [ASMR] videos, which we've had creepy experiences with), but discussions of solo gaming, tools people use, and demonstrations.

When my wife picks up on that, she asks if I'm watching Yu-Gi-Oh videos because Jonah often watched collectible trading card games online, something neither of us understood. I never watch the entire video, fast forwarding to see what books they're referring to, but when "caught," I usually stop, embarrassed and thinking there are better ways to spend my time. Funny what makes one feel sheepish.

Marty Cantor's Nov. 4, 1999, *Letter of Comment*, reprinted in APA-L #3019, was Hoo Hah Publication #446. I won't reprint his work regularly, but in honor of his recent death, it seemed an appropriate encapsulation of his fanac and apahacking within these pages and others.

In *Late Breaking Gnus* Vol. 2 #16, **Joe Zeff** commented on Elst Weinstein's Hogu Awards. It amused me that the McDonalds pricing eventually outpaced the cost of the Hugo banquet. We should still gather at a nearby fast food restaurant at least once during every con.

Barbara Gratz Harmon's *Reflections from a Fish Bowl* #40 shared some memories of and appreciation for Marty Cantor. I am glad that he handed off LASFAPA to David Schlosser just before he died, and emails among those apahacks include Nick Smith, who's working with John Hertz to sort out Marty's home. I am hoping that Nick communicates all of the LASFAPA ideas and needs to John but plan to document them from the emails myself so that transition can be eased as much as possible. Regardless, even a hard transition can be managed.

While I haven't heard Marty perform music, recorded, or read his poetry, I hope that I'm able to some day, even with him gone. I didn't know him long or as well as others in the LASFS, but I will miss him, and I miss him a little bit every day. I think of him every time I work on an apazine or other fanac. He was indeed a loveable grump.

One of the scariest stories I've ever read was a piece of fiction in one of my mother's women's magazines, perhaps *Good Housekeeping*, *Redbook*, or something like that. It was an excerpt of a book about the abuse of a young girl who now would probably be diagnosed autistic, and the frankness of the descriptions were harrowing—and oddly compelling. I kept returning to it, horrified and not at all delighted, knowing I was reading something that shouldn't have happened, perhaps shouldn't have been written. I remember hot oven burners and cookie sheets, hot sauce. I occasionally try to identify the piece but usually decide I don't want to revisit it.

How disappointing that book discussion group must have been! I recently read *Echoes of Thunder* by Jack Dann and Jack C. Haldeman II (*Snow Poster Township* #10) and would read more Dann. Perhaps we ought to read *Wandering Stars* for discussion in these pages. I'd support group reading.

The Writers Guild of America strike won't affect what's on television now, certainly, but could affect future programs and episodes. *Variety* reported on all the shows affected by the strike so far (<https://tinyurl.com/Variety-WGA>). Fannish highlights include *Andor*

ceasing work, preproduction of the *Blade* reboot stopping, Neil Gaiman pausing work on Season 2 of *Good Omens* to join the strike, *House of the Dragon* going into production because writing was already done, *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power* continuing production without striking executive producers, and *Stranger Things* halting production. From my understanding, *The Rings of Power* is the dodgiest of the lot and might not have stopped writing work. View accordingly.

In *Toony Loons* #716, **Joe Zeff** updated us on *The Bureau of Magical Things* and his growing leg strength. Damon Knight's "The Handler" sounds worth reading!

This is the first bacover **Nola Frame-Gray** emailed me instead of mailing. Thank you for sharing your appreciation of Marty—and your artwork. If you'd like me to mail *De Profundis*, I can do so!

Lee Gold's *Leeway* dated for May 11, 2023, described her adventures in dentistry. My mother-in-law recently had some teeth removed in preparation for dentures, and the scheduling of the various appointments took long enough that she's going toothless longer than any of us imagined or appreciate. She can eat well after a fashion and seems to be able to talk OK, but it seems unfortunate that things couldn't have been better coordinated.

Having lived in Los Angeles County since 2009, I'm more familiar with June gloom than May gray. It's too late for me to include the May 20 Los Angeles Filkers Anonymous housefilk in *De Profundis*, but June's issue will be sent by the first of June, ideally. Feel free to send me the details or let me know when <https://conchord.org/lafaad.html> is updated and I can grab it from there. I plan to list fannish activities in the LA area, not just LASFS activities.

In *Vanamonde* #1543, **John Hertz** also shared information about and appreciation for Marty. I'll have to listen to more Dave Van Ronk, Jim Kweskin, David Lindley, and the New Lost City Ramblers in honor of him—and for sheer enjoyment. I shall also visit Wise Sons. It's in downtown Culver City!

Matthew Mitchell's *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #11 also remarked on Marty's death and contributions to fandom. It's OK to "get political" in APA-L. In the past, discussion has gotten quite political, with some participants sparring energetically. We can always rein each other in if things get too personal or contentious. The sitcom planning reminded me of my days as a student journalist at Northwestern University. We'd often draft revised mastheads, assigning staff members and positions to celebrities or other people they reminded us of—

usually themed in some way. At the time, it was quite funny. Hilarious, even. Your breakdown of the cast of characters also reminded me of the team members present in each group of travelers in the TV show *Travelers* (*T&T* #61-65, *Brass Hat Mind* #3, and above). Iconic types, for sure.

I enjoyed your details about *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* and East Wing Publications. Did you do continuous numbering? Your comments on mini-cons makes me wonder what it'd take to put together a small con that programmed itself. One could even use Open Space Technology, with which participants set the agenda and schedule. How long did you edit *The Intergalactic Enquirer*? Any back issues on hand? I'll have to look for *Circle of Fear*.

In *Reflections from a Fish Bowl* #41, **Barbara Gratz Harmon** described setting up her new lawn mower. Sounds complicated! How long did you work for Ralston—is that Ralston Radio? Google Docs seems to do weird autocorrect lately. For example, when I type numbers, characters and words will sometimes also show up. I have no idea when or how that started, but it's irritating.

The full text of Fredric Brown's "Answer" is available online at <https://tinyurl.com/Brown-Answer>. I have now read it. It's indeed worth the time taken. Now, if the Internet hasn't provided such an answer, perhaps the speculative outernet or interplanetary Internet will. Radio and TV sure haven't.

Joe Zeff's *Toony Loons* #717 informed us that he has a colonoscopy this week. I remember having a simple foods—aka low residue—diet leading up to the clear liquid day. Good luck with the procedure, and may the outcome be favorable! (I can't imagine doing the final preparation in a motel room; you have my sympathy.)

Neither my wife nor I watched any of the coronation, though I did see some generative AI-drawn pictures of the royal family dancing at the afterparty on social media while scrolling. That was the extent of my exposure.

I wonder if Hare Hobbs still has Marty's hair. If so: Ew. I just looked up gungel. It does indeed mean "a criminal carrying a gun," but while the characters were armed, perhaps they weren't criminals. Even Merriam-Webster says it's slang for gunman.

Friday Night Gaming! Another tradition lost with the clubhouse. I guess it just moved to the parking area near Marty's home and then the local game shop.

In *Vanamonde* #1544, **John Hertz** commented on the accuracy or lack thereof in annotations before commenting on other apazines. And here I thought "This space intentionally left" was clever! Just kidding. Your friend is funny, too.

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #67

May 24, 2023

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On Our Patron Saints

I've been profiling the patron saints of the LASFS since *T&T* #17 roughly this time last year, and we've now gone once around the horn. Except for Forrest J Ackerman, I've written a biographical sketch of all of our patron saints and will cease such activity within my apac. At some point, I'll return to Ackerman so the entire LASFS fannish communion of saints has been profiled. And I'll probably compile a saintly index so their profiles can be found and referred to easily.

From the Reading Pile: Book Reviews

Ghastly Glass by Joyce and Jim Lavene (Berkley Prime Crime, 2009)

Having recently read the first novel in the Renaissance Faire Mystery series (*T&T* #65), I've now also finished reading its sequel, *Ghastly Glass*. Similar to its predecessor, the mystery is neither science fictional nor fantastic, and there's not even a whiff of the supernatural—but while we're still in Renaissance faire season, it's fandom adjacent. (The Original Renaissance Pleasure Faire closed last weekend, and the Koroneburg Renaissance Festival (<https://renfestcorona.com>) runs in Eastvale through June 25. Besides, because the novel is set around Halloween, there's plenty of shivers, skullduggery, and spooks to scratch the near-supernatural fantastic itch.

Jessie Morton, our protagonist, continues her research of Renaissance crafts, interning with a crotchety glassblower whose nephew has set his unwelcome sights on her and his uncle's business. A Renaissance Village employee cast as the Grim Reaper—Death—for the Halloween season dies, and threatening graffiti—"Death shall find thee"—begins to appear throughout the village. Additionally, another employee goes missing, prompting his sister to begin a manhunt of sorts.

The relationship between the glassblower and the first novel's basket maker is on the rocks. The influence of the amorous nephew proves disconcerting. Morton has a run in with the king of the pirates. The queen of the pirates returns unexpectedly.

And the cast and staff of the village combine efforts to uncover any and all culprits in order to restore relative peace and calm to the village—which is threatened with closure because of the ill doings. Throughout, Morton and village bailiff Chase Manhattan's relationship waxes and wanes due to the threat to the village and other general flirtations.

It's a fun read, though not as good or compelling as the first novel. I'll read the subsequent books in the series—I have three more—before sending them to my mom and sister to read—they both love mysteries and read actively, and it might help them visualize my participation in the local Ren faire. The paperback ends with another edition of "Ye Village Crier," a village newsletter of sorts, as well as another recipe: cinnamon couscous.

Before I read the next book in the series—or dip into the Magical Renaissance Faire Mysteries series—I'm likely to explore the anthology *Renaissance Faire* edited by Andre Norton and Jean Rabe.

Fantastic Television: *Travelers*

S1E12: "Grace"

According to *IMDb Pro*, this episode first aired and streamed in Canada and the United States on Jan. 2, 2017, streaming in Germany about a week earlier, Dec. 23, 2016. Given that the first episode of Season 2 aired in Canada on Oct 16, 2017, and streamed in Germany, Spain, and the United States on Dec 26, 2017, as the last episode of a season, it had to end with enough promise and potential that viewers would return about a year later to continue the storyline. I think that the episode accomplishes that.

As the final episode of the season, it continues—and complicates—a few existing storylines: Marcy doesn't remember anything from her previous life with David but picks up on their closeness and intimacy, making him self-conscious and responsible. Carly is threatened by a new wrinkle I'll touch on below, and Jeff comes to her rescue—perhaps in a way that will remove him as a threat more generally. And Grant tries to reconcile with Kat, admitting that there is someone else but expressing that he wants to stay.

All of that is well and good—relatively par for the course in terms of previous episodes and the season to date. But it's the new elements and developments that propel viewers and the plotline toward Season 2 that really shake things up.

First of all, an assassin, OK, *assassins* have been sent back to kill Grace the senior programmer. She is attacked at school by a student, who Trevor says is the girl who misfired when the rest of her family became hosts. That seemed unnecessary. It could have been

anyone. After Grace and Trevor fight her off, she later tries to kill Carly—which is how Jeff is embroiled in a manner that might serve Carly in the future. And members of the team begin to get mysterious text messages from an unknown source giving them various missions, including to kill each other.

We also learn that the Director, rather than being a person or leader of a faction in the future, is an artificial intelligence humans developed to manage its society, facilities, and remaining resources. That came as a bit of a surprise to me, because the plot hadn't really telegraphed the idea at all—and as we've seen in recent months, AI, particularly generative AI, is fallible. For AI to be a television theme in 2016-2017 given the state of technological development at that point in time (pre-mainstream generative AI) shows particular foresight.

In addition, the idea of warring factions struggling for power in the future is built upon, revealing a disagreement over whether the AI, the Director, should be in charge of making decisions—or people. Similarly, it turns out that one of the major factions grew out of a disaster that occurred in the future of travelers who'd previously arrived in the 21st century—but not the two more recently arriving programmers. In the future of later arrivals, not everyone had died, and the survivors became rebels.

To top it all off, the farmer-programmer built a device that can house the Director should it choose to escape the future to the past itself. Grace begins to doubt the farmer's loyalties, Trevor is given a mission to destroy the device, Carly is ordered to kill Grant...

And Forbes and the FBI arrive.

This is another doozy of an episode, a doozy upon doozies, suggesting that some plotlines might be tied off soon, or early next season, introducing a few more, and continuing a compelling view of a dystopian future—and the heroic efforts undertaken to avoid it.

File under club drama, but I had hoped that the National Fantasy Fan round robin engaged in this group viewing of *Travelers* would compile our email correspondence in a fanzine that could serve as an episode guide and perhaps promote other round robins and group viewing within the N3F.

One of the participants took offense at how I parallel pathed discussions with the participants and outreach to the N3F president to pave the way to approach the directorate once we all agreed—which has currently put a stop to such efforts. I've learned to approach such things differently for sure and remain hopeful that such an episode guide will still result.

Comments on APA-L #3021

In *Leeway* dated for May 18, **Lee Gold** reminded us of the postal rate changes expected in early July. Thank you for the story recommendations focusing on logic. I still have Robert A. Heinlein's "All You Zombies" and Wyman Guin's "Volplas" set aside for reading. I can't imagine that the chicken curry in the garage refrigerator was still good for eating.

Matthew Mitchell's *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #12 commented on Ulrika O'Brien's cover. I'll be sure to share the distribution with her. My sister works as a dietary aide in a retirement and progressive care facility; there's a memory unit next door. Her work mostly involves meal preparation, distribution, and clean up. She's worked there longer than many of the people on her team and enjoys interacting with the residents. During the pandemic, she continued working on site, and my parents—then in their late 70s—continued driving her to and from work. (She doesn't drive.) While my father contracted COVID-19 while on a train tour with my mother, my sister never got COVID-19 despite the concerns of it running through such living situations. I was so worried for much of the pandemic that she'd contract COVID-19, take it to my parents, and voila: entire family at risk. Luckily, that didn't happen. Even when my dad had COVID, my mom didn't get sick, perhaps because of not sleeping with him for the duration.

I've never watched *Blake's 7*, though I've been aware of it over the years. Some day, I'll get to devouring it. I've seen corflu used for Wite-Out but don't know if that's an appropriate usage. If it is semantically correct, even if not fannishly correct, I've definitely used corflu in recent weeks.

In *Toony Loons* #718, **Joe Zeff** updated us on his colonoscopy travels. Sounds like they were uneventful, other than the rooting around back there. Otherwise, RAEBNC.

And **John Hertz's** *Vanamonde* #1545 heralded the blooming of the local jacarandas. I shall have to venture forth to the stands I frequent and assess their progress. In Andrew Porter's April 30 email to the trufen mailing list in which that cover photograph of Marty Cantor originally appeared, he noted that it was taken "a few decades ago," so placing it in the 1990s seems about right.

Adding Fredric Brown's "Etaoin Shrdlu" to my short story reading list, I see it's available freely online as part of *The Best of Fredric Brown* edited by Robert Bloch: <https://tinyurl.com/Best-of-Brown>. Damon Night's "The Handler" is also freely available for them what look. Another one for my reading list!

The Explosion Containment Umbrella #9

May 30, 2023

The Explosion Containment Umbrella is an apa commentzine 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 contributors to eAPA and select others. A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

Comments on eAPA #229

Our cover was graced by an illo by **Felicity Walker** again, portraying a “cool early-eighties sci-fan fan.” I’d bet dollars to doughnuts that that fellow, perhaps Blank Reg himself, with a tamer haircut, read cyberpunk and listened to industrial music. While preparing *De Profundis* #586 in late May, I listened to O’Death live at Big Orange Studios (Austin, Texas), May 30, 2007; Jimi Hendrix Experience live at the Berkeley Community Theatre (Berkeley, Calif.), May 30, 1970 (late show)—fun serendipity with the content of *Wild Ideas* below—and Lightnin’ Hopkins live at the Ash Grove (Los Angeles), May 30, 1965 (late show). While preparing this, I’ll listen to 1988’s *I See Good Spirits and I See Bad Spirits* and 1990’s *Confessions of a Knife* by My Life with the Thrill Kill Kult. That industrial band plays the Teragram Ballroom in Los Angeles on Friday, June 2. It’s not early-’80s, but it’s still an enjoyable soundtrack.

Should our **Official Editor** start listing members’ names and locations and email addresses again? Some apae do so in each mailing or distribution. Others do it periodically. I’d be open to our doing so, either monthly or less frequently, perhaps quarterly—seems more useful more often were our roster changing more frequently. Even twice a year might be sufficient.

I don’t know that we’re taking advantage of “newer digital publishing formats,” but I’m also not personally interested in experimenting much as an individual participant. Were I not participating in so many apae, and were this not a commentzine, I’d be intrigued in playing around with the size and shape of my PDF pages—oversized, off the screen seems particularly intriguing were I more artistically inclined. But I don’t have a ton of time to play around with that. As you can see, my apazines are primarily *words*. Earlier today, I was thinking about perhaps creating a word search puzzle using terms we refer to in a given dist’n, so I might do so in the future.

I’ve had no difficulties creating my apazines as PDF files, but I have had occasional trouble unzipping them. When that occurs, they’re generally .z files

rather than .zip, and I merely email our OE to request a .zip or PDF attachment. I can’t stomach .z files.

Other than bumping up against deadline or occasionally missing deadline, the monthly frequency seems manageable. So far, even missing deadline, I’ve been able to maintain the bimonthly minac. Given that our roster is so small and we’re not maintaining a wait list, I think we can be relatively relaxed about monitoring minac requirements—in order to retain the participants we have. So: Don’t keep score!

Soliciting original artwork for the cover can be somewhat challenging to manage, and I’ve been enjoying your found art covers immensely. That said, one of the bright spots of APA-L is when one of our participants submits a comic strip for the bacover. It doesn’t have to be a bacover, but were we to identify a fanartist who dabbles in cartoonery, or a collage artist, who wanted a monthly home for their work, I think it’d add a nice touch to the apa.

Even if you decide not to keep score, maintaining an annual record of apac might be worth considering. We do so in LASFAPA, and I started doing so for APA-L. It’s just a spreadsheet of apac broken down by dist’n by participant, accompanied by a page of commentary on the year that was. You can see the 2022 round up in APA-L #3006.

You have my permission to include my mailing and email address in a participant roster should you choose to include one.

Perhaps we consider including the membership form in the open issue we distribute annually without the password. I enjoyed seeing it arrive in my inbox.

The <http://naramcheez.netfirms.com> link might be outdated—it’s not loading for me right now—but the others still seem extant. I’d also recommend printing an apazine to Save as PDF (which I do via Google Docs) and Adobe Acrobat as additional alternatives.

Do you want to update your email to the hrothgarweems account? I forget where you landed in terms of forking your email addresses for fanac.

In *Intermission* #131, **Ahrvid Engholm** expressed his frustration having to recreate the issue from scratch after a technical error of some sort. ##### # #####’# ##### # #####, # ### ##### # #####, as it were. (“While I haven’t experienced that myself, I can totally empathize,” lest I forget what those jokey hash marks represent.) And, ouch! What a pain in the arse.

Thank you for your report on Sweden’s Short Film Festival. It’s been a while since I’ve gone to a film festival—my wife’s work is occasionally screened at such—but I agree: The short films programs can be fascinating. In the upcoming *De Profundis* #586, the Condensed Cream of Menace of the Los Angeles

Science Fantasy Society includes remarks from Damon Brown, who reported on the outcome of the Filmapalooza 2023 International Film Festival in Los Angeles this past march. The winner of the fest's 48 Hour Film Project this year was *The Death Rattle*. Its trailer is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ1NJGak-R8>.

At the end of last year, I started following the annual Saturn Awards (<https://www.saturnawards.org>) sponsored by the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films. It's not a festival per se, but can still indicate movies and television shows you might not want to miss.

The shorts you detail all sound fantastic. I recently saw a 1993 Norwegian short titled *Snorr* that was written and directed by Roar Uthaug, who went on to direct the 2022 *Troll*. It's a relatively silly 30-minute film exploring what might occur if mucus is irradiated.

I read and enjoyed History Corner, particularly the segment focusing on Sam J. Lundwall and radical sf, perhaps a piece to return to! Your comment to Garth Spencer made me chuckle. When he goes to the North American Science Fiction Convention in July, he should wear a pair of handcuffs on one wrist! He might make some... interesting friends.

Henry Grynsten's *Wild Ideas* #35 offered something new, which Grynsten described in the Editorial. Is it semi-autobiographical fiction? Creative journalism? Alternate history? Metafiction? Perhaps it's something else entirely. I, for one, applaud you for shaking things up and experimenting. (After reading it, I think it's still an essay, but I appreciate your use of generative AI.)

In your comments to Garth Spencer, you say, "AI will completely annihilate our thinking abilities..." I share concern that generative AI could further erode people's critical thinking abilities and media literacy. That generative AI followed so quickly on the heels of widespread disinformation and misinformation is particularly problematic. "Younger generations seem to become less and less able to do those less mechanical tasks, as they become, and in the future thanks to AI, less able to learn even basic skills," you continue. I think we're already seeing generational decay in people's ability to communicate in person, negotiate, persuade, and so forth. Those aren't mechanical skills, but the thought resonated with me. Given that generative AI has a propensity to hallucinate and present fiction as nonfiction, I'm not sure I'd trust it to do anything important.

Your centerpiece builds on such concerns. Generative AI can create writing that seems like it *might* be true—that is sometimes adjacent to the truth. The imagined collaborations between Jimi Hendrix

and Miles Davis—or John Cage—reminded me of Haruki Murakami's short story "Charlie Parker Plays Bossa Nova," which appeared in *Granta*. (<https://granta.com/charlie-parker-plays-bossa-nova>)

Your connecting such historical meanderings with the cyclic universe theory or eternal return doctrine—both of which might not exist, given their mention by generative AI, but do—is intriguing. When generative AI hallucinates, what is it drawing on? What is it tapping into? What large language models is it learning from? What is it conflating?

In *Intermission* #132, **Ahrvid Engholm** made a joke about the phrase, "take a leak," which made me grin. While I find the Eurovision Song Contest interesting, I admit not following it again this year. (I also didn't watch the coronation in England.)

History Corner's mention of Hugo Gernsback's annual *Forecast* intrigued me. I see that Internet Archive offers 1954-1957. The Hugo Gernsback Papers at Syracuse University include 15 years of *Forecast* in their special collections. I also read and enjoyed the material on Luncon, not to be confused with Lunacon in New York. I'll have to look for *A Bunch of Amateurs*.

As a side note, a friend of mine, Molly Wright Steenson, was recently named president of the American Swedish Institute (<https://asimn.org>) in Minnesota. I'll see what she thinks of your documentation of Swedish fandom history! There might be a future collaboration waiting to happen there.

And **Garth Spencer's** *I Never Got the Hang of Thursdays* #209 maundered consequentially on the nature of how we approach the tasks before us. Your approach seems sound, especially if you're prioritizing them before scheduling or knocking them off. I'm a big fan of to-do lists, and the important thing is to take care of the Big Rocks first. Even at my somewhat advanced age, I am always surprised that most of the time, when I procrastinate on something that seems daunting, once I get started, it's much easier than I'd ever imagined. The trick is to get started. Or to break Big Rocks up into Smaller Rocks that seem more manageable.

Kudos and congratulations to all of the award winners recognized at Corflu Craic. William McCabe might respond himself, but *International Times* was an underground newspaper based in London that published between 1966 and 1973. *Oz*, then, was another underground published in Australia between 1963 and 1969, as well as in London from 1967-1973.

Faculae & Filigree #20

May 31, 2023

Faculae & Filigree is an apazine 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 contributors to LASFAPA, members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and select others. (Previously, it was prepared for Slanapa.) A recent copy can be requested for the Usual. A member of the Fan Writers of America. This is a Karma Lapel publication.

On the LASFAPA Iconography

In “Revelations,” our apa’s Iconography newly lists **Saint** Marty Cantor, who’s also a patron saint of the LASFS more generally. Additionally, the LASFS Web site indicates that Marty is the only Heavenly Body of LASFS so far: the Heavenly Curmudgeon. He’s also a Sacred Object of the LASFS: the Sacred Curmudgeon. I wrote about his death in *Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #64:

“It is only appropriate that I was working on *De Profundis* #585 when Marty died [April 29]. He had been grumping that the LASFSzine had been longer than 10 pages under my editorship so far—he was not happy with its relaunch to date—but he might have been pleased that the [May] edition of *De Prof* is exactly 10 pages. I didn’t email Marty *De Prof* because he did not want to receive it via email. Instead, I mailed a hard copy, like we do with APA-L, so it would have gone out with [that] week’s apa distribution Friday. I’ll not mail him again.

“That makes me sad, and I didn’t know him long. We first met in 2009 when I moved to the Los Angeles area, upon my first visits to the LASFS clubhouse, where I got a tour of the apa room and helped collate distributions of APA-L. I’d previously met John Hertz at a Lunacon in New York, and their sf fanzine friendships brought me back to the club during the pandemic, when I was more easily able to join online meetings—and return to apa participation.

“Many of you knew Marty much longer and better. I got to spend most of my quality time with Marty during a previous phase of his illness—his death came way too quickly and I wish I’d been hanging out with him more frequently even now—and while picking up the reins of APA-L. I am grateful for that time, talking about books, learning about the LASFS and Los Angeles fandom, watching Spike Jones DVDs, and listening to classical music. I washed dishes. I carried stuff to the storage room. I took out the trash.

“Marty had just discussed transitioning LASFAPA to David Schlosser several days before Marty died. That transition will not be as smooth as the APA-L

transition was, but we’ll manage. I’ll help as required by David.

“I will miss Marty. And now I don’t even have the opportunity or option to email, talk to, or spend time with him. Now that he’s dead, I wish I’d done all of those things more often. So it goes.

“Mike Glycer published a memorial piece on File 770 at <https://file770.com/marty-cantor-1935-2023>. Marty’s *Fancylopedia* 3 page has already been updated: https://fancylopedia.org/Marty_Cantor. *Holier Than Thou* back issues are available at https://fanac.org/fanzines/Holier_Than_Thou. *No Award* resides at <https://efanzines.com/No%20Award> and https://www.fanac.org/fanzines/No_Award. (In fact, Bill Burns’s hosting of Marty’s fanzines was the very impetus for *eFanzines*.) *Here We Go ’Round the DUFFberry Bush* can be found at <https://fanac.org/fanzines/DUFF>.

“Following my apazine in this dist’n, I’ll include Marty’s *Letter of Comment* from APA-L #1799 (Nov. 11, 1999). It offers a good overview of his fanac within [the] pages [of APA-L]. His *Notes from the Tobacco Works* #1 appeared in APA-L #522 (May 15, 1975).”

In *T&T* #48, I wrote: “Our own Marty Cantor first became involved in fandom in 1975. At one time an avid reader of the pulps, he progressed to reading paperbacks—once visiting a nearby newsstand weekly to check for new titles—and remains an active fanzine fan. His home library is impressive and inspiring.

“While married to fellow fan Robbie Bourget..., they published 27 issues of *Holier Than Thou* in the 1980s, earning a nomination for the Best Fanzine Hugo in 1984-86. Marty also published *Who Knows What Ether Lurks in the Minds of Fen?*, the “fannish autobiography” of Phil Castora. Long serving as the Little Tin God of the Stannous Church of LASFAPA and official collator of APA-L (until I took on the role), he’s published the apazine *The Lime Jell-O Gazette* as well as the fanzine *No Award*. After participating in Aussiecon Two under the auspices of DUFF with Bourget in 1985, he published the trip report *Duffbury Tales*. Reportedly, he co-edited the sixth edition of *The Neofan’s Guide to Science Fiction Fandom* with Mike Glycer.

“No longer participating in cons, Cantor organized Lasfapacon, helped run Corflu 9, and chaired Corflu 34. He was also an agent for the Britain in ’87 Worldcon bid.

“He served as LASFS’ president and secretary of the board of directors, edited *Shangri L’Affaires* (co-editing for a time with Mark R. Sharpe), and published *De Profundis*, which [resumed] publication early this year. He served as scribe for almost as long

as Karl Lembke was chair. And Marty received the Evans-Frehafer Award in 2016.

“On the side, he operated a tobacco shop and managed a storage facility. You can see an interview with Marty on YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/cantor-LASFS>.” Though that was challenging to write even when Cantor was alive, he sent no corrections.

I will miss him. We will miss him. He was a good fan, and a good man.

From the Reading Pile: Book Reviews

This Alien Shore by C.S. Friedman (DAW, 1998)

This is the first book I’ve read by the author, and advice to not judge a book by its cover aside, the cover artwork by Michael Whelan is glorious—and ably communicates one of the novel’s themes.

By turns a story about escape and safety, self-discovery, and the value of diversity, *This Alien Shore* focuses on the adventures of a young woman protagonist named Jamisia as she flees from corporate raiders invading Shido Habitat. Jamisia makes her way to the Up-and-Out, another space station or habitat of sorts and has to figure out who she is, who her friends are, and why the raiders are after her.

While most of what struck me about the novel centered on its handling and portrayal of the broad diversity of alien races—and what life might be like when they all convene—aspects of the book also reminded me of the cyberpunk writing of William Gibson, specifically the short story “Johnny Mnemonic.”

There’s a lot going on in Jamisia’s head, much more than she realizes or is always able to handle. Friedman’s representation of the Outspace Guild resonated with Frank Herbert’s portrayal of Guild Navigators, which I appreciated and enjoyed. Those concepts collide as Jamisia unravels the mystery of her personality and mental capacity, and why a corporate interest would be interested in acquiring her—perhaps to squirrel her away unwillingly.

Not ostensibly offered as the first in a series, the novel was followed by another Outworlds book in 2020, *This Virtual Night*. The more recent edition of *This Alien Shore* mirrors the cover design of the newer title, losing the wonderful Whelan artwork, which is a shame. See if you can find the mass market paperback edition!

Fantastic Television: *Travelers*

S2E1: “Ave Machina”

It was challenging for me to imagine about a year between S1E12 and S2E1 now that we’re able to just stream the series in sequence without a production

break. I was slightly surprised that there wasn’t a “Previously On…” introduction to this episode even streaming, because a lot happened in Season 1. There are a lot of characters and relationships to keep track of. And even with where Season 2 begins, a rest of sorts might have been welcomed by viewers the first time around.

The episode opens with what initially seems to be a newly arriving traveler, only to be revealed that not only is the traveler the first traveler ever—the program’s proof of concept—but that he abandoned his mission and absconded with a sizable amount of money and stock certificates on Sept. 11, 2001. Seeing the twin towers again, as well as the depiction of the second plane hitting brought back memories of that time—during which I was living and working in Boston and my wife was in New York City.

Most of the episode focuses on that escapee, who parlays his knowledge of future financial market activity into a successful career—entirely duping his partner—and hides out from the subsequent travelers he’s sure are hunting him down. He loses his wife. He loses his partner. And viewers are able to sit in on his talk therapy appointments, held in the privacy of his well-protected home with a therapist who considers his “memories” delusions. I wasn’t sure she’d make it out of his home alive, and the revelation that he was the CRT interrogator surprised me.

(I quite liked the therapy angle. It reminded me of round robin speculation about a 12-step recovery program for stranded travelers. It’s clear that once you’re off mission and no longer have the protocols to guide you, that it can be a challenging life. The proof of concept traveler didn’t even have the protocols to go by. Just fear.)

If you’re worried about being hunted down, why would you hunt down travelers? If you were the first traveler and are unaware of the current situation involving the warring factions, why would you ask what side a traveler was on? Were there factions even then, when he first left the future?

The rest of the episode mostly deals with the FBI’s capture and interrogation of the team. Most of them handle questioning well, and Grant MacLaren is even comfortable enough to joke about them all committing suicide rather than be locked up. Carly precipitates an escape, which goes surprisingly well, only to lead to the large-scale device from the farm. It was all a trick to see whether they’d actually try to destroy it.

That leads to the entire body of FBI agents keeping the travelers prisoner becoming hosts themselves. The first time they “open up” the machine, viewers are told, they die—making them candidates.

A thread focusing on Trevor's recovery—and Grace's rescue of him—and David's imprisonment, aided by Philip's shady lawyer flesh out the episode, which is a solid return and propulsion for the show. How does the CRT interrogator fit into things? How much of the FBI's staff now hosts travelers? Will David ever get the bloodstain out of his hardwood floor, or drink another cup of tea? Will Carly's ex be able to get off the hook?

Complication upon complication. Welcome to Season 2.

Comments on LASFAPA #556

Thank you, Little Sin Ghod and Lord High Counter of Legumes **David Schlosser** for stepping up as Official Editor before Marty died. I sent you my dues May 5. I am impressed by how quickly you turned a mailing around. You, as they say, hit the ground running.

In *Fool's Mate* #557, **David Schlosser** made his usual remark about an error in the Table of Contents—now you get to fix it! Reading your comments to Marty is slightly surreal, remembering what it felt like to read and hack LASFAPA while he was still alive, and realizing how it feels now. So many questions and japes left unanswered!

While I'm glad you took the reins of LASFAPA—some weeks, APA-L and my other apahacking feels like it might be enough!—do consider me as a potential successor in the future if no one else steps up enthusiastically. I haven't moved to Portugal *yet*.

Next issue, I'll publish in a single-column, 12-point format and see how many pages I eke out. What do you get if you receive a Stevie? A well-earned sense of accomplishment?

I'm glad you're still keeping tabs on—and taking care of—your friend with the domineering husband. It doesn't sound like a healthy situation. I just checked the LASFS address list, and you are not on it, so you wouldn't receive LASFS-related email or other mail. I can begin mailing you *De Profundis* and *Menace of the LASFS* monthly if you'd like. I wasn't able to procure Marty's *De Prof* mailing list before he died.

Rather than work my way backwards compiling annual fanac levels, I will soon start trying to convert the entire run of APA-L into searchable PDFs. Karl Lembke scanned them all, which was an amazing service for the apa, but they're not searchable images. Eventually, I'd like to apply optical character recognition to them all so I can find how many mentions of *Little Fuzzy* or Bruce Sterling there have been over the years, for example. So far I've been using the scanned archives to find participants' first and last contributions, apazine title changes, and the

like. That's how I found the Marty Cantor reprint that follows thish.

Thank you for letting me know about FEAST! I'll let Eylat Poliner, who's been leading the GAGS charge, know about that, as well. She might have even been around then. I'm looking forward to your New Orleans trip report.

David Schlosser's *Fool's Mate* #558 opened with just that. What fun to think of you changing planes in Los Angeles! I am jealous of you going to Cafe du Monde. It's one of my favorite places in New Orleans. We have a can of their coffee in our pantry. What bookstore did you go to there? Or was the wallet-less book exchange back home?

My friends and I made the Hertz Donut joke in the Midwest when I was growing up in the '80s, too. It's fun that you got to see Laurraine and Mike—is his last name also Tutihasi? That package deal of Disney+ and the Playboy Channel is indeed absurd. Disneyland does have adult attractions, but perhaps not that adult. What a neat balance of shopping, eating, golf, and baseball your trip included!

In *Planet Outlaws* #26, **John DeChancellorville** indicated that he's recently gotten a cane. Hope it does the trick! My wife and I recently got some peach crisp ice cream at the grocery store. I think the idea is that it tastes like peach cobbler. Another version could replicate apple crisp. The idea is fine, but in its execution, it's creamy vanilla-peach ice cream with bits of oatmeal in it. More apple crisp than peach cobbler. It tasted more like peach the second serving—with several days in between lest you think I eat multiple bowls of ice cream in a given day.

Thank you for identifying the Brinke Stevens movie: *Droid Gunner* or *Cyberzone*. I'll look for it. In Los Angeles, there's still a community of improvisational and sketch comedy. Hollywood Improv (<https://improv.com/hollywood>) hosts relevant events, and the Groundlings (<https://groundlings.com>) are still active. A 2016 *Time Out* article, "Comedy shows in LA: The best improv comedy teams in Los Angeles" (<https://tinyurl.com/improv-LA-1>) recommends 10 comedy teams that might still be active in LA. I don't know how much of that is sketch comedy.

In addition to improv and sketch comedy, but related to it, there's also improvised theater. Viola Spolin (<https://www.violaspolin.org>) developed an approach to theater games, which was further adjusted by her son, Paul Sills, who founded the Second City. His daughter, Aretha Sills, continues Spolin's original work—and still holds workshops. My wife is friends with Aretha and will participate in a weekend workshop in LA in mid-May; they've been held in Wisconsin since Aretha moved from LA. Before she

relocated, workshops and performances were held at Subud Los Angeles. Caitlin has enjoyed them thoroughly.

David Schlosser wades into the breach a third time with *Fool's Mate* #559. I'm glad you enjoyed—and didn't forget—the Kingston Trio performance. I also watched *Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves* recently, streaming on Paramount+. While a friend of mine is angry at the movie, not even having seen it, I enjoyed it. I think it's the best *D&D* movie to date, but not among the best sword and sorcery movies. And I hope it's successful enough that there's a sequel or inspires other S&S flicks. I liked that the special effects (magic, creatures) wasn't gimmicky, and they trotted out some classic monsters, which was fun. I also appreciated that the magic system wasn't portrayed functionally (i.e., shouting "Fireball!" while casting it). There were material components, vocal components, and they were utilized quite subtly.

I think my friend's primary concern is that the movie is funny. His social media remarks suggest that he'd prefer straightforward fantasy a la Lord of the Rings rather than *Guardians of the Galaxy*. Personally, I think there's room for humor in fantasy movies. Case in point, the Marvel Cinematic Universe. There's room for so much in *Dungeons & Dragons*. I can imagine a straight-ahead adventure, horror, romance, and psychological drama as well as humor.

In *Dust and Ashes*, **Alan Winston** shared his Facebook post about Marty's death, one of the most personal and loving I've read. The email to your friend was even more expansive and detailed. What wonderful memories of your Summerhill-style reading, your introduction to fandom, and meeting Marty.

I'm sorry to hear about the awkwardly handled incident at the dance event. I can only imagine what it must have been like to go through that—for all involved. People face similar situations sometimes in Scouting—usually not as fraught—but involving emotional parents or misbehaving youth. It sounds like the group is addressing it appropriately, even if belatedly and awkwardly. We'll never be able to handle stuff like that perfectly, but it's important to address such situations early.

In roleplaying gaming, there's a new movement toward safety tools, including cards players can play to represent various levels of discomfort. Some older players are vehemently opposed to such things, wondering why folks can't just talk about the topics when they arise, but safety tools might be needed in part because the topics are challenging to talk about. It's really only an issue in organized, public gaming where the others might not already be friends and

acquaintances, but even in those situations, things can get weird.

And **Janice Morningstar's** *The Title Goes Here* dated May 13, 2023, also shared appreciative memories of Marty. She also suggested we invite John Hertz to join us. He's active in the weekly APA-L with *Vanamonde*, but it's worth asking. He might be more interested if we relaxed the minac requirement for material original to LASFAPA. When I became official collator for APA-L, I reached out to former participants, and a couple returned. It's worth considering.

Personally, I find older women more interesting and attractive. Young people, in many cases, just aren't as involved or interesting as they might be. I guess that's why I'm hanging out with you lot. More confidence, generally, more wide-ranging experiences, and otherwise fun to be around. As a researcher for a large technology company, I'm occasionally mystified by the primacy placed on the young and very young. It seems lopsided.

While we're still not planning to move to Portugal quite yet—still thinking three to five-plus years out once my son is out of college—my wife and I are considering another trip there soon to visit a few more communities and perhaps check out a few homes we've been researching. I'm willing to entertain the adventure. My wife moved to California with me to be closer to my son when he was younger, and the Los Angeles area has been good to us: he moved in with us; I got involved in local Scouting, roleplaying gaming, and fandom more than I had in New York City; and we've both done well professionally.

My wife and I recently realized that the idea is somewhat similar to what my parents did when my dad retired: They moved to northern Wisconsin for about a decade. So we're not necessarily considering this a rest-of-life move, but perhaps a next-decade move. We're also considering maintaining a footprint in the Midwest, perhaps Chicago. We shall see what happens! I can understand your healthcare concerns, however.

"The China Science Fiction Convention 2023 kicked off with a grand opening ceremony in Beijing's Shougang Park on [May 29], serving as a significant part of this year's Zhongguancun Forum, the national-level international science and technology summit. ... According to an industrial report..., the country's revenue in the sci-fi sector reached 87.7 billion yuan (\$12.3 billion) in 2022. The sci-fi literature sector generated 3.04 billion yuan, up 12.6 percent year-on-year, while the sci-fi film and television industry raked in 8.35 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 16.1 percent."—"Convention promotes nation's sci-fi progress, *China Daily*, May 31, 2023

Telegraphs & Tar Pits #68

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From the Reading Pile: Short Stories

Apans' short story recommendations have been so interesting lately that I've been keeping a list of what to read. Since last ish, I've read several of our recent suggestions. Robert A. Heinlein's "All You Zombies..." might have first appeared in the 1959 Gnome Press *The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag*. It was also reprinted under the title "All You Zombies—" in the March 1959 issue of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*.

Serving as the basis for the 2014 Australian sf movie *Predestination*, it's a time travel tale that touches 1970, 1963, 1964, 1945, 1985, and 1993. An agent of the Temporal Bureau is recruiting a former member of W.E.N.C.H.E.S. (or A.N.G.E.L.S., or W.H.O.R.E.S.), a more risqué version of the Women's Army Corps enlisted to meet the needs of astronauts (or spacemen). Having lost her child in an abduction, the recruit, now a man, makes a living writing stories for confession magazines.

Without giving too much away, the story refers to 1947 novelty song "I'm My Own Grandpa" recorded by Lonzo and Oscar (later recorded by other performers) and the worm Ouroboros, the world snake. The end of the story includes "The By-Laws of Time," a more humorous set of rules for time travelers than those offered as the protocols in the television show *Travelers*. (T&T #61-67, *Brass Hat Mind* #3, and *Faculae & Filigree* #20) While slightly confusing to me—is *everyone* now a version of the narrator?—it's a fun read, and an interesting approach to time travel. Definitely worth rereading.

I also read "Volpla" by Wyman Guin, which was first published in the May 1956 issue of *Galaxy Science Fiction*. The story was later adapted as the Aug. 29, 1957, episode of *X Minus One*. There's a lot going on in this story—the creation of mutant animals that can glide, reason, and speak multiple languages; the development of a social mythology explaining their origin, offering a rudimentary religion of sorts; and a convenient rocket to Venus.

The portrayal of the society formed by the volplas,

learning to glide, and the relationships with their creator's children was enjoyable, but I found the interactions between the scientist and his wife a little irritating. He was so cocksure and self-satisfied by the "joke" he was playing on the world, which struck me as somewhat irresponsible, both to the world at large and to the mutant race he'd created. That they asserted their independence was a worthy development.

After finishing Joyce and Jim Lavene's *Ghastly Glass*, I started reading the 2005 DAW anthology *Renaissance Faire*, edited by Andre Norton and Jean Rabe. Comprising 15 short stories considering Renaissance faires through a fantasy lens, the book opens with an introduction that details the wonders found at such faires, naming several, and mentioning the Society for Creative Anachronism.

Elizabeth Ann Scarborough's "Jewels Beyond Price" features a genie discovered by a Ren faire jeweler who enlists him as an assistant. Scarborough, who also collaborated with Anne McCaffrey on the Acorna series, portrays the faire's royalty and courtiers in a relatively humorous light.

"Diminished Chord" by Joe Haldeman, who's related to Jack C. Haldeman II (*Snow Poster Township* #10), concentrates on the acquisition of a magical chitarrone—and a lost love.

Kevin J. Anderson and Rebecca Moesta contribute "Splinter," which details the misadventures of a pickpocket drawn to the faire. He tries to steal from a storyteller, which drastically affects his success as a pickpocket. The authors' portrayal of families at the faire—and references to the disposal of turkey bones—might strike a chord with other readers, too.

And "Girolamo and Mistress Willendorf" by John Maddox Roberts takes place at the Renaissance Pleasure Faire. A hermit returns to civilization, encountering a Ren faire at which he meets a fertility specialist. Like the storyteller in "Splinter" above, the two are much older than initially imagined, and in conflict with each other.

The stories are interesting so far. They're more appealing because of the Ren faire settings and trappings than their individual narratives so far, but that might change as the book progresses. I found the musical nature of "Diminished Chord" and the early Christian history aspects of "Splinter" particularly intriguing.

Screened at the Globe: Movie Reviews

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1973)

Lee Gold's memories of the 1973 musical television movie adaptation *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* were quite sound and accurate! (See APA-L #3015 for her

remarks in *Leeway*.) I procured the film on DVD-R (recorded off of Spanish-language TV, apparently, given the crawl text) and watched it with a friend—practically unable to imagine a musical version of Robert Louis Stevenson’s novel, particularly one starring Kirk Douglas! A British production, it’s not included in my edition of Alvin H. Marill’s *Movies Made for Television*, but the movie aired on NBC on March 7, 1973—I’m not sure why it didn’t qualify for inclusion.

In addition to Kirk Douglas performing in the title role(s), the film also stars Donald Pleasence as Fred Smudge. While the movie is largely a straightforward adaptation of Stevenson’s tale—the second half is not overly divergent from Spencer Tracy’s turn in the 1941 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, for example—its very existence as a musical is what makes this stand out, and worth seeking out.

The music was written by Lionel Bart, who composed *Oliver!* *IMDb Pro* lists six uncredited songs in the TV movie’s soundtrack: “This Is the Way It Always Be,” “Smudge’s Song,” “Bicycle Song,” “Rules,” “Danvers’s Blessing,” and “Two Fine Ladies.” “Bicycle Song” and “Two Fine Ladies” offer two fun, relatively manic bits of silliness, but it is the first song or song segment, perhaps not listed above, that stands out the most, perhaps because of its uninformed optimism or ironically quiet critique.

A: (spoken) “Has anyone seen Henry Jekyll lately?”

B: “Not since the Danvers’s dinner party!”

C: “I came upon his man Poole the other day.”

A: “Oh! What did he say?”

C: “Oh, that Jekyll has been very, very busy. (spoken in rhythm) Locked in his laboratory, he’s working day and night. Were it not for purchasing his chemicals, he’d never get a breath of air. I never ask, of course...”

B: “Of course!”

A: “Of course!”

C: “But what’s he *doing* in there?”

A: “Tuesday night, you may recall, the moon was rather bright. As I passed, I chanced to see the printing on the package there beside his door. I’d never ask, of course...”

C: “Of course!”

B: “Of course!”

A: “But what’s the *arsenic* for?”

A, B, and C: (singing) “Though on the surface, it might be misunderstood, totally misunderstood. Whatever it is, whatever Jekyll’s doing, I’m sure it’s something very, very good. Yes, whatever it is, whatever Jekyll’s doing, I’m sure it’s something very, very good.”

As we might all know, what Jekyll was doing was definitely not good. On the whole, the musical portions of the movie add occasionally odd levity to an otherwise traditional retelling of the story. The hybrid is sometimes awkward but proves enjoyable

overall. If any fellow apans would like to see this themselves, it’s not widely available; I’d be happy to lend you the DVD-R.

***Kiss Meets the Phantom of the Park* (1978)**

Another TV movie, this rock ‘n’ roll, science fiction oddity produced by Hanna-Barbera Productions originally aired on NBC on Oct. 28, 1978, just in time for Halloween. Also not broadly available, I obtained a copy from an online retailer specializing in rare movies. Intended as a mainstream, mass-market showcase for the theatrical hard rock band, the TV movie was aired the same year the band members released their solo albums.

To this day, the movie is hard to find. A European edit of the movie was released as part of *Kissology Volume Two: 1978-1991* but has otherwise only been briefly available on VHS twice during the 1980s and on laserdisc in 1991. The band didn’t like the movie even during test screenings; attitudes toward it haven’t improved over time.

In a recent *Life Kiss: 50 Years—Gods of Rock and Roll* mook (or bookazine) published by Dotdash Meredith Premium Publishing, Jed Gottlieb writes, “Kiss couldn’t act. Critics noticed.” Contemporary *Los Angeles Times* coverage rated the movie “a four-star abomination ... a five-minute idea for a cartoon, disguised as a two-hour movie.” *Times* staff writer James Brown wrote on the day of its airing, “[W]hat transpires is witless, bloated and, given the stars’ reputations, exasperatingly tame—even by television standards.” Regardless, Gottlieb indicates the movie is “deliciously campy and fun... ” I agree.

The basic gist of the flick is that a mad scientist working at a down-on-its-luck amusement park has figured out how to convert human beings into robots, utilizing an on-site laboratory. That park was set at Magic Mountain, now Six Flags Magic Mountain, in Valencia. Once he learns that the park is for sale, endangering his work, the scientist intends to use a Kiss concert held at the park as a promotion to unleash his dastardly plan upon the world at large. The members of the band have some kind of otherworldly amulets or icons that they use to gain power—giving them the gift of rock ‘n’ roll, as well as superheroic abilities.

The members of Kiss are kidnapped, a robotic copy of Gene Simmons leads security guards on quite a chase, and the band confronts robotic simians controlled by the scientist—resulting in one of the better scenes as the band fights animatronic white monkeys (men in gorilla suits) while they clamber threateningly on the scaffolding of a roller coaster. Of course, there’s also the Kiss concert at the park, as

well. Its occurrence is a celebration.

LASFSan Susan Fox was at that concert, as a teenager. I interviewed her briefly to see what she remembered about the experience.

“There’s not very much to say because it was more than 40 years ago. An uncle of mine was one of the [uncredited] producers, Louis M. Heyward, who was Uncle Deke to us. My boyfriend and I got to hang out by a lighting stand in the back, and watch the concert at a great distance. I was not particularly a Kiss fan, but I was a teenager and a free concert was always a bonus. It was fun! And loud. Which is, of course, part of the fun. Magic Mountain opened in 1971, and there were concerts at the time. I saw Sonny and Cher there very early on. But the Kiss concert and shoot was not in the amphitheater, but out in the vast parking lot.”

Indeed, it was. Throughout the movie, almost 20 Kiss songs are performed, including “Radioactive,” “Almost Human,” “Mr. Make Believe,” and “Man of 1000 Faces”—perhaps the most in line with the themes and tropes of the movie.

All in all, the movie might have been an easily forgotten example of sf TV movies of the 1970s, were it not for the involvement of Kiss. While it’s not very good, it did contribute to the sf and superhero mythology of the band. In 1977, Kiss appeared in *Howard the Duck* #12-13 and two issues of *Marvel Comics Super Special*. The first super special incorporated band members’ blood in the red ink used for printing. A *Kiss Colorforms Set* featuring a backdrop showcasing a guitar-shaped laser beam and bank of computers was produced in 1979.

***Lemon Grove Kids Meet the Monsters* (1968)**

This G-rated feature directed in part by and starring Ray Dennis Steckler also has a LASFS and APA-L connection. Comprising three short films—*The Lemon Grove Kids*, *The Lemon Grove Kids Meet the Green Grasshopper and the Vampire Lady From Outer Space*, and *The Lemon Grove Kids Go Hollywood*—the movie is Steckler’s homage to the Bowery Boys, or the East Side Kids.

Steckler, credited as Cash Flagg, is cast as Gopher, the Huntz Hall character, and Mike Kannon portrays Slug, the Leo Gorcey lookalike. And the LASFS connection? The first short film was co-written by Jim Harmon.

While notable as a Bowery Boys pastiche, extremely accessible to children and families, the movie is also somewhat science fictional or fantastic. The first segment, Harmon’s, ends with Steckler running from a number of mummy- or zombie-like creatures, shot with artfully dramatic lighting. And the second short film does indeed feature a Green

Grasshopper from outer space—complete with a playground UFO salvaged from the trash—and a Vampire Lady who seems to be channeling Vampira or Morticia Addams.

It’s difficult to stop watching Steckler in his role as Gopher. He commits to the role and its physical comedy fully, which is a delight to see. But the most notable aspect of the movie is Steckler’s involvement with his children. Daughters Linda and Laura Steckler appear as Linda and Tickle, and they seem to be having a lot of fun making a movie with their father.

Bob Burns appears as Kogar the Gorilla and the Mad Mummy, and Don Snyder features as a musician in the last segment. Snyder also performed music in *The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed-Up Zombies!!?* and *Rat Fink*. The song “We’re the Lemon Grove Kids,” performed by Snyder, Steckler’s daughters, and Tony Flynn (as Pee Wee) is an excellent little ditty.

Fantastic Television: *Travelers*

S2E2: “Protocol 4”

This episode focuses loosely on the challenges posed by Protocol 4: Do Not Reproduce. We’ve already seen the challenges posed by that protocol in Trevor’s relationship with his girlfriend, but it rises as an issue for other members of the team this week—including Trevor again, in a way.

While he’s recovering in the hospital, Trevor’s girlfriend visits, her hand straying under his sheets to test whether he’s truly lost all sensation below the waist. His doctor later visits, evoking a sensation in Trevor’s feet, so perhaps he’s regaining some feeling in his nether regions and will walk again.

Grant and his wife have also run the risk of reproduction the night of his anniversary party (when he envisioned Carly’s future self), and that culminates somewhat as he learns that Kat is pregnant. Uncomfortably, that occurs on the night she serves him separation papers, seeking his signature.

Carly and her ex, who already have a child, join forces to regain custody of their son, who’s now in the care of the state. (I think details in this episode place the show in Washington state; Bellingham is mentioned.) Jeff moves back in, disappointed to be relegated to the couch—as she makes it clear this is performance to look better in the eyes of the court, more stable as parents, not a return to their previous relationship.

David tells Marcy that they were indeed intimate, just before she moves out. After attempting various treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder, she decides that her presence alone is unsettling (though perhaps for other reasons), and moves out.

And Philip gets a girlfriend. (He also finds his turtle.) They meet at a Narcotics Anonymous meeting, and she indicates that she's a traveler sent back to help him. She offers him eye drops to treat his heroin addiction, though the eye drops seem to be somewhat addictive as a drug, as well. She's a welcome new chaos agent in the program, a fun addition, though she seems to be aligned with a group of travelers who are less hesitant to affect the past and the future, much less kill people—or cause the death of others.

They attend a lecture by a noted racist and bigot, and she “hacks” (well, edits) his presentation to show some BDSM imagery. That leads to harassment by his followers and his death, as well as that of his wife and son. Given Philip's previous proclivity to want to save people's lives, this is somewhat problematic, though he silently agrees that the bigot's death isn't a bad thing.

Philip's new girlfriend, or at least lover, seems to fluster Marcy when she arrives at the headquarters after leaving David. Once the newcomer leaves, their conversation indicates that they might have feelings for each other, as well—perhaps because of her caregiving as a doctor—which he hadn't acted on because she “had someone.” Well, she no longer does.

But the true centerpiece of the episode is the introduction of timeshare sales events. A group yet to be identified seems to be gathering hosts for newly arriving travelers en masse through large-scale real estate sales events held at hotels. Grant and his partner Forbes—now a traveler, as well—investigate one such occurrence and have a run in with the salesman. Forbes offers welcome comedic relief as a new traveler. He doesn't drive well. He has trouble using his computer. And he is delighted by the wonders of doughnuts. All of that exasperates Grant, who doesn't yet seem to realize that perhaps Forbes is exhibiting some of the behaviors that he himself did upon arriving.

In the previous episode, we reestablished the CRT interrogator as a force. This episode introduces a chaos agent not afraid to lead to people's deaths, and a group recruiting hosts pretty aggressively. I think the balance of power is shifting this season.

Comments on APA-L #3022

In *Leeway* dated for May 25, **Lee Gold** waxed exploratory about some recent research on lunar lava tubes. What an awesome example of how planning for a roleplaying game can lead to some serious learning about science! I remember *The Abyss* as being a fun movie, though I haven't seen it for a while. Released in 1989, it focuses on an alien species deep under the sea. Thank you for letting me know that the Los

Angeles Filkers Anonymous Web page has been updated. Reading your apazine just now reminded me that I should have worked on *De Profundis* and *Menace of the LASFS* some this long holiday weekend. Now I've just got a couple of days! Perhaps I shouldn't have watched so many movies.

I also appreciate your etymological exploration of the term “gungsel.” While I understand the point, I think its more modern meaning is in line with Dashiell Hammett's assertion and use. Regardless, I love the history of language and find the historic usage fascinating.

Matthew Mitchell's *The Form Letter of Things Unknown* #13 shared some dramatic legal narratives. I hope it's not bad form for you to tell such stories. They're awfully fun to read, even if they shed light on some rather challenging experiences and situations. I hope that your day improved substantially given all the unwelcome surprises. Having gone through a child custody evaluation myself, as well as a change in custody (he moved in with us), I am relatively relieved that my son is now an adult and the terms of the judgment are behind us. It was not an easy time.

Thank you for sharing the mastheads for *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* and *Intergalactic Enquirer*. Ooh! There was a *Red Dwarf* fanfiction zine? What fun that must have been. I find Google Docs sufficient for just words and the light design I apply to my apazines, but for anything more design-y, it's not tenable.

In *Vanamonde* #1546, **John Hertz** opened with some quotes. I particularly resonated with the first one: “A project begins with the naming of committees...” In organized fandom, especially the National Fantasy Fan Federation, if only that weren't so! I much prefer people readily collaborating on something that's fun, rather than formalized. Still, work must be done, I suppose, and that requires clear roles and some accountability.

I shall share your feedback and comments with cover artist Ulrika O'Brien. Next time I go to the Renaissance Pleasure Faire, I'll reach out to you to see when you'll be acting. I'd enjoy seeing you there. I don't remember what vendor I bought my Turkish hat from in terms of the seller's name, but they're generally set up near the entrance to the faire, on the left as you're walking down the thoroughfare before the first corner. It might very well have been Greenman Florals! They also sell floral chaplets.

And **Nola Frame-Gray** graces our bacover with a wonderful comic strip. What are your favorite radio shows? What scenes from Isaac Asimov's *Pebble in the Sky* would you reenact?