

INTERMISSION #137

E-zine by **Ahrvid Engholm**, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA and all artificial intelligences. I'll try to make this # shorter! Follow my @SFJournalen newstweets before Musk makes Twitter unsustainable. Long live His Majesty the King! Typos Dié! Late Sep '23

Editorially: Ukraine, HM 50 years, Ukraine, Gang Shootings, Etc

Domestic news have lately been dominated by one good thing - His Majesty the King's golden jubilee! - and one very bad thing: there have been virtually daily gang shootings in Sweden. I'll cover Carl XVI Gustaf's 50 years on the throne separately.

I'll start with the gang wars. Normally, Sweden is very peaceful. The murder rate hovers at just over 100/year, compared to the US: 20 000+/year. (England & Wales have a modest: 600/year - the county of Midsummer not included...) This figure is now rising, because we see headlines of shootings and bombings *daily*. See the headlines to the right, Sep 27: *Two arrested after explosion tonight - young woman killed. - Three dead in twelve hours.*

It's criminal gangs targeting each other, but they sometimes hit innocent bystanders. Right now there is a gangster civil war with a character called the "Kurdish Fox" who has fallen out with others. Gangs send kids with guns and bombs to get at each other. They use under-15s since those won't go to real prisons due to age. We also have the Stockholm northwest suburban gangs Shottaz and Death Squad who have been at each other's throats for a long time. The usually very quiet northern city of Sundsvall has seen an outbreak of violence. So has Uppsala north of Stockholm, and Södertälje to the south has had similar problems for a long time. This and much more give the papers a lot to write about. Every freaking day. The latest attacks in which at least two innocent bystanders were killed caused PM Ulf Kristersson speak to the nation: new stiffer laws on the way (bugging, witness protection, data exchange, no-go zone for crooks, etc) and the military will be asked if they can assist the police

Kids using guns come from that sentences are reduced up to age 18 and if you are under 15 you just go to "to the care of social services". The gangs thus recruit kids as hitmen. The gang wars are course drug related, gangs fighting over turfs and money from drug deals. It's also very much around personal attitudes: if someone feels offended he must show force to "get respect". It turns into a self-sustaining spinning wheel: perceived "disrespects" or attacks must be revenged, preferably with added VAT. The gangs now attack relatives (parents, siblings) of their enemies and gangster rap stars associated with groupings. They place bombs at homes, work places, in cars. No signs of easing up this far.

For the time being the gangs target each other - but several collateral casualties have happen. The victims are ca 40 this year, this far - the incidents are more, maybe thrice that. While it may be comparable to just one very bad week in Chicago it's unusual for us. It's topping the agenda of the political debate, and I'm afraid it helps the nationalist so called Sweden Democrats (which I'm not a fan of). Speaking of the US, we - fingers crossed - don't have the non-gang mass shootings here when someone suddenly opens fire in a school, mall or office on unknown people who just happen to be there.

And to comment the US gun control debate: the guns used here are usually smuggled, illegal guns - as I understand leftovers from the war in former Yugoslavia. It's very difficult to control illegal guns. The Swedes have up to a million *hunting rifles* at home (for the popular autumn moose hunting) licensed after rather strict tests, but hunting rifles aren't the problem. They are rarely involved in criminal activities as they are to clumsy for that. Explosives for bombings are often stolen from construction sites. Bomb construction details are on the Internet, as you know.

The criminal gangs are dominated by second generation immigrants, but it's worth remembering that if the gangs number 1000 (the number should be thereabout) 99.9% of the immigrant population



JUST NU: Två gripna efter explosion i natt - ung kvinna dödad

Över en timme tidigare - riksdagen har öppnats, enligt riksdagen

"Barnen skrek - trodde det var en jordbävning"

Öppnandet efter explosionen: "Det är det som händer!"

Tre döda på tolv timmar

Typical headlines from gang wars.

is innocent of wrong-doings.

So what should be done? Of course those guilty of and connected to it all go to the slammer, so they won't misbehave for at least a while. There are some law reforms discussed it may not be the best idea to put a 15-year old away for 20 years. You create a bitter, guaranteed re-offender with an exam from the College of Crime. The leaders of criminal gangs should of course be behind bars. *Go to the top*. I'm generally not a fan of stiffer laws. The US has the world's second highest prison population after Russia. Honestly, has that helped?

The police should definitely be reformed. My impression is that they are focused on the wrong things and often lazy, just picking low hanging fruits for their statistics. I've seen numerous stories of crimes written off for "having no leads", even in cases of video recordings and the offender even being *identified!* Theft, burglary and such are not taken seriously. The police should shift focus from traffic offences, testing for minimal drug traces in party goers, hunting poachers, all kinds of small stuff not against persons or private property. Instead patrol troubled areas, use more CCTV, improve customs to stop smuggled guns, put tails on the usual suspects, improve relations with the neighbourhoods to get civilian help, etc. Today the police officers are more into harassing the "hoods". Youngsters frisked on the street daily are apt to see the police as enemies and become candidates to join criminal gangs. And harassment builds up a pressure until it boils over, resulting in riots and burning cars, which we sometimes see.

The schools could also do better, giving useful and better education, going for knowledge instead of populist trends, keeping an eye on pupils that fall by the wayside, and offer meaningful after hours activities. Personally I also see bad influences from the disastrous "brutalist" 1960's suburban architecture and city planning, being a perverted version of the 1920s Bauhaus – which I'm rather fond of otherwise (Bauhaus is our version called "funktionalism").

But gangs shooting at each others is a fart in a hurricane compared to what happens in Ukraine!

Some random notes, but based on things seen in media or on the net. I spend lots of time daily trying to follow the news on Putin's insane war.

The latest new is that the Ukrainian army has made an important breakthrough in the south in the Zaporizhia region, cracking two of three Russian lines. They'll soon assault line three manned by Russian conscripts of low fighting spirits. British Challengers are engaging as well has precision artillery (I hope the Swedish Archer mobile artillery does its part) to knock out Russian guns with counter battery fire. Ukrainian artillery with the help of drones and artillery radar is said to be able to target a Russian gun within a minute after it has fired, while the Russians complain their counter battery fire is too slow or non-existent.

There are a few weeks left until rain and mud comes, but there is the realistic prospects that if the Ukrainians could advance just a little further they'll get main Russian supply lines under "fire control", ie their guns come close enough to close of Russian supply roads and routes or make them very difficult to use. They could then isolate the Russians on Crimea by snipping the Crimea bridge, which they have drones and missiles for (it's part capacity now, to inspire Russians to leave Crimea). That will isolate Crimea. The Ukrainians have lately stepped up the bombardment of Russian targets and installations on the peninsula, using British and French long-range missiles as well as drones. They recently destroyed the Russian Black Sea Fleet HQ, taking out their lead admiral and lots of top brass. US ATACMS are on their way too! Sea drones attack Russian ships. Ukraine is slowly gaining naval superiority without really having a navy... (They have small patrol boats, many from the Americans who are accustomed to river war. These boats give the Ukrainians superiority on the Dnieper and land and supply troops the left bank opposite Kherson.) To get Crimea isolated is a realistic situation before winter.

Of some 150 Leopard 2s most haven't yet been committed (two have been lost). There's one lost Challenger. Losses are usually from mines: the tank gets the tracks damaged from a mine, has to be temporarily abandoned but before it can be salvaged it's and targeted by Russians. 31 US Abrams



PM Ulf Kristersson speaks to the nation about the gang wars.

Wild West Stockholm: Gangland violence grips Swedish capital as rapper, 18, is executed on a sports field, a second man is shot dead and bomb blast kills innocent woman, 25, in her home within 12 hours

• Streets of Swedish capital have descended into chaos amid spate of attacks

are arriving and haven't seen use yet. Some 100+ Leopard 1s are on their way, an earlier generation but still probably better than what the Russians have left.

But using the tanks are difficult with the huge minefields. Mine corridors must be cleared. The Russians have planted more mines than anyone in history. 50 to 100 million mines of all types are figures mentioned. That and the lack of air power and not enough long range missiles limit the Ukrainians. The west has been dragging the feet in supplying what is needed! The F16s won't arrive

until next year, over a year after the issue was raised. (And it looks increasingly possible that a wing of Swedish Gripens will join them. The Social Democrat opposition wants it and the government has directed the Air Force to evaluate a transfer. Ukrainian pilots are already on "evaluation training" on the Gripens. But we first be in NATO.)

Ukrainia's general staff's published figures claim 280 000 Russian soldiers have been Killed In Action. Those figures are most likely too high. I've always estimated that the real figures should be about 60% of UA general staff figures, or around 170 000. But from a leak we learn the Russian army has issued *230 000 death certificates!* <https://www.newsweek.com/russia-orders-certificates-families-dead-soldiers-ukraine-war-1828178> 230K KIA is a *huge number*, and seems possible just in between mine and the general staff's estimates.

Despite being on the offensive the Ukrainian losses are lower (they try to be more careful with their soldiers), but still high at - one estimate says - 70 000 KIA. That the Ukrainians are more careful makes the offensive slower. Sappers crawl during the nights to clear mines. The Russians are hit heavily behind their lines with precision artillery. No gung-ho charges, though there are many videos about Ukrainians going into Russian trenches to cleanse the - but that is "relatively safe" since most Russians are already knocked out or have fled.

Putin can ill afford losing so much material and men. The Russians are now getting rusting 1950's tanks from Siberian outdoor storage. And human losses will erode any "support" for the war as tens of thousands of mothers get bad news. The Ukrainians deliberately *target the Russians will to fight*, as numerous intercepted mobile calls reveals. It's assumed Russia coming winter will once again target Ukraine's energy system, but they now have fewer missiles and the Ukrainians have more air defence. (And I suspect their energy companies have taken measures to make the system sturdier.)

I think there's a decent chance that the war ends in 2024 as Russia simply can't afford it (their economy shrinks, and the economy of the EU and US is 50 times that of Russia). And peace may be triggered by the Putin regime's downfall – from an internal palace coup in that case - which should lead to a retreat. A new regime would have their hands full stabilising the country. A regime change would be better end than to fight it out to the last inch of occupied ground. That would be very bloody.

There are some signs that certain populist politicians in the west want to limit the support for Ukraine - such idiots! A dollar sent to Ukraine is an investment in future security and a very *cheap* way to grind down the military capacity of a US/EU main adversary, without any boots on the ground! And it's way more meaningful than eg the Afghan war (which went on for decades and lead to nothing). And it tells communist China to keep their hands off Taiwan. To US Republicans, listen! Ronald Reagan would spin in his grave if he knew what some of you say!

Intermission will continue reporting from the war and tighten our *fanzine blockade!* Slava Ukraini!

--Ahrvid Engholm

Ps. I learn Mr Trump is found guilty of fraud - another Mr Humbug ! - ordered to pay \$250m in restitution. Was earlier convicted of sexual harassment is investigated for mishandling top secret documents (considered as espionage!), is under fire for the Congress assault Jan 6th and charged with trying to fake ballot. This *multiple serial-criminal* is a danger to the US. He makes one Mr Nixon seem like a sweet, innocent altar boy in comparison.

HM Carl XVI Gustaf Celebrated 50 Years on the Throne

I actually say our *old* king once, on an excursion with the school in Stockholm's old town. When we passed the Royal Palace a big black limousine stopped by the southern entrance and out stepped the popular, old Gustaf VI Adolf. I still remember how Swedish TV was on live around the clock on his deathbed, with bleeding ulcers. It happened at the same time - mid September 1973 - as the Norrmalm's Square bank hostages drama that interested much of the world. (And gave rise to the "Stockholm Syndrome" when the hostages seemed to side more with the bank robbers than the police, which used aggressive tactics, including gas.)

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy, ie the king has a ceremonial role only. He opens the parliament, chairs a foreign committee of parliamentarians and informational cabinet meetings, receives ambassadors and goes on state visits. He holds a Christmas speech and one if there's a special crisis (there was a King's speech during the pandemic). The Swedish king used to have a lot of power, but it eroded from the mid 19th century and on. When the king's at that time promised to help the Danes in the Preussian-Danish war in 1864 it was stopped by the government. The last king attempting to project personal power was Gustaf V who forced a government to resign by holding a courtyard speech in 1914, advocating an expanded military.



The actual throne of Sweden. Made for Queen Kristina in 1650 and used for opening the parliament until 1974.



The King opened the parliament once under the old constitution. In background Charles XI's Drabant Corps.

(Eventually the king proved justified as WWI began shortly thereafter.)

Present king Carl XVI Gustaf (he should really be Carl IX Gustaf or something, the higher number comes from fictitious medieval history) is the grandson of Gustaf VI Adolf. As his father who was supposed to take over died in an air crash in 1947, he was just 27 when he took to the silver throne.

Yes, there is an actual physical throne he could sit on. But only once! A new constitution came into effect 1975 to remove the king's remaining formal power (not used and irrelevant), but before that that king could at least once open the parliament the old way: sitting on the silver throne in the Hall of the Realm in the Royal Palace, reading the government's declaration after the Charles XI storm troopers had marched in. The British king still does that, but our monarch now opens the parliament from the ordinary tribune of the Riksdag and the prime minister reads the government declaration.

I've seen our king a few times, first in 1975 when he opened the blue lines of the Stockholm underground (I was only 10-15 metres away.), later on a technical fair he opened and also from the street when he and Queen Silvia have passed in a horse-drawn carriage during special celebrations.

King Carl XVI Gustaf's 50 years on the throne was September 15, as fellow Nordic royalties and presidents gathered in Stockholm. (The UK was represented on a lower level. It was explained that we traditionally invite our direct neighbours.) The night before they had a big dinner with 400 guests in the Palace with speeches by the king, the Riksdag speaker and the prime minister. It is said the party lasted well into the night. The 15th the king and queen were once more in a horse-drawn carriage through Stockholm, ending with taking the royal sloop The Order of Vasa over Stockholm's waters landing



Royal couple in carriage through town, using lots of horse powers.



Historic formation by the Air Force, L to R: JAS 39 Griffin, J35 Dragon, A32 Lance, J37 Thunderbolt, J29 Flying Barrel. Unique to see all main SAAB jets from 1950s to now together!

by the palace. The entire royal family with kings, presidents and spouses of Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland (all Nordic countries) then appeared on a palace balcony and heard music from three military bands.

Later there was an outdoor concert attended by the Royals with many of our most popular artists, including eg Loreen which recently won the Eurovision Song Contest and Björn Skifs who in 1974 had our first Billboard No 1 in the US. All was shown live on TV.

Let me tell you why I'm in favour of the ceremonial monarchy here, at least for us. I have several arguments.

1. I think politicians take up too much space in society already. It's thus fine that the position of chief of state isn't *also* occupied by some grey politician. The king does no harm where he sits. Politicians grabbing even more space may do harm. I've always advocated that politics should take up less room, leaving more for the individual citizen.

2. The king is cost-efficient. The court gets ca \$10m/year. That's just coffee money in the finance minister's kitchenette. And it includes upkeep of the handful of palaces the court runs through the country, buildings that must be upheld anyway since they are national treasures. A president wouldn't cost much less - with security, periodical president election campaigns, etc.

3. And we get more than that back! A king is today a rare species, while presidents are a dime a dozen. On a state visit - and Carl XVI Gustaf has made ca 150 such - the king is accompanied by government ministers that engage in political contacts and sign treaties and such, and by business executives who promote business deals. A king grabs attention and his "support troops" on the visit find it easier to make deals. It's been estimated that the "royal factor" gives us business worth an \$100-200 million/year extra.



All Nordic chiefs of state, spouses and some princes/princesses on the courtyard balcony. Four cheers!

4. The king also connects us with our

history. Sweden has been a monarchy *always*. The first king to rule the two main historical tribes of the country, and thus in a way representing all of Sweden, was Olof Skötkonung ("Olaf the Swede" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olof_Sk%C3%B6tkonung) crowned in 995. This is a history of more than a thousand years, at a time when the Vikings still roamed the seas. (The Swedish Vikings roamed the eastern rivers, to Ukraine and Constantinople, contributing to founding Kyivrus, giving the name "Rus" to Russia). The monarchy is in important connection to history.

5. The monarchy has stable public support, 70-75% in polls. The system has stable majority in the parliament. The social democrats say they "in principle" want a republic, but don't *dare* to push for that as they'd lose votes in general elections. A king who according to the constitution is prohibited to engage in political questions can represent *all* Swedes, while...look at the US. Does Biden represent all Americans? Or Trump? Many would say no.

6. A good rule of thumb is: *If it ain't broke, don't fix it!* I.e., we know what we have, it seems to work well, but who knows what we get if we'd change that.

7. The royal family seems to behave themselves. (I won't go into any minor scandals that may have surfaced. It's noting compared to the civil war that it looks like in the House of Windsor.) Here's an interesting detail: the King himself as well as his three children have all married "commoners". Carl Gustaf found the German Olympic hostess Silvia in 1972, multilingual and a pro in nurturing contacts.

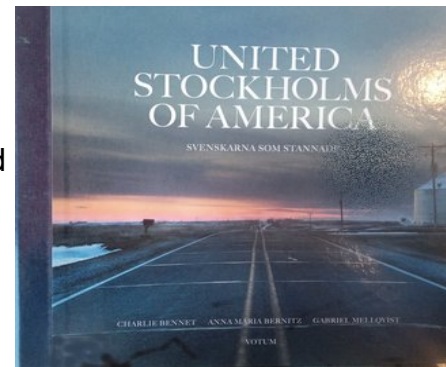
Crown princess Victoria married a gym owner and sportsman. Prince Carl Philip found a beautiful model. Princess Madeleine found a rich American business man. (Chris O'Neill, the only one of the spouses who said no to a Royal title, since he'd have to give up his business life then. But he takes part in royal celebrations.)

That's good enough for me.

The Royal family is of the House of Bernadotte, originally from France. Briefly: Sweden lost Finland in the 1808-09 war with Russia - attacking neighbours is a Russian habit. The then king Gustaf IV Adolf was dethroned in a palace coup, and the parliament began looking for a competent new king. A Danish prince standing in line died of a stroke. But how about a competent field marshal from the most powerful country in Europe? Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte was the man, and was promptly elected crown prince. (Karl XIV Johan as his royal name was shocked his former boss Napoleon, by joining the coalition against him! And he didn't as expected take on the Russians to retake Finland, but took on Denmark to eventually gain Norway.) All in all the Bernadottes have been good for us.

Stockholm, USA

I found an interesting book, *United Stockholms of America*, by Charlie Bennet, Anna Maria Bernitz and Gabriel Mellqvist. They have visited towns and places in the US with the name...Stockholm. There are a few named after the Swedish capital there, from Maine to Texas! You also find Stockholm in upstate New York, New Jersey, Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. A million or so Swedes emigrated to North America, built their log cabins and thought: "Hm, what shall we call this place? Why not...Stockholm!"



Most are small, one is just a gas station from a now virtually deserted



Post Office building in Stockholm, Maine. Note the wheelchair ramp. One must assume most Maine Stockholmers are old.

place. Some give me a melancholic feeling. The biggest North American Stockholms are in New York and in also one in New Jersey, both with ca 3.5K red-white-and-blue Stockholmers. Original Stockholm has about 1 million in the administrative area, 2.4 million in "region Stockholm" and was founded around 1252 by Birger Jarl, the "strongman" of Sweden at the time. But there were almost certainly settlements



A church in Stockholm, Maine.

there since before, as the location between the Baltic Sea and Lake Mälaren was quite strategic.

Stockholm, Minnesota, brags about their famous Stockholm Pies.

Stockholm Wisconsin looks odd: *"With a population of just 66 people, Stockholm is certainly a tiny little town, but it's packed with cool things to do and see."*

<https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/wisconsin/wi-unique-town/> They talk about

the nature but also *"There are tons of quaint shops and restaurants as well as places to learn about the Swedish history of the town."* Tons of establishments among 66 inhabitants? They every summer



Stockholm Wisconsin - a real metropolis with 66 inhabitants!



The Fire of Stockholm festival, Wisconsin. Looks wild!



Aerial view of Stockholm, South Dakota.

also arrange something called the Fire of Stockholm festival with huge bonfires. Looks like a whole island is on fire!

To make EPA's Garth happy I also looked for Canadian Stockholms. There's at least one, in Saskatchewan (population 329). I looked for Stockholms

in the UK too, but there are none. Britain wasn't settled by 19th Century Swedes. However, it did take quite a lot of 10th Century Vikings, and all British towns ending in -by and -thorpe were named by the Vikings. And the Vikings called the town of York *Jorvik*. If it had kept that name, it's possible that we across the pond would find *New Jorvik*. Or if the Vikings had settled North America *Nya Jorvik*.

If we cross the Atlantic east with *M/S Stockholm* (who in 1956 collided with the Italian liner *Andrea Doria*, so it sank) and go further east we come to *New York, Ukraine!* This town with a pre-war population of 9 735 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York,_Ukraine) is now near the front line and shelled daily, unfortunately.



Most US Stockholms are small. Here trains won't even stop.

The town name goes back to the mid 19th century but the origin of "the name of the town remains a mystery that is the subject of many local legends." It could come from an old US business contact, a distortion of the

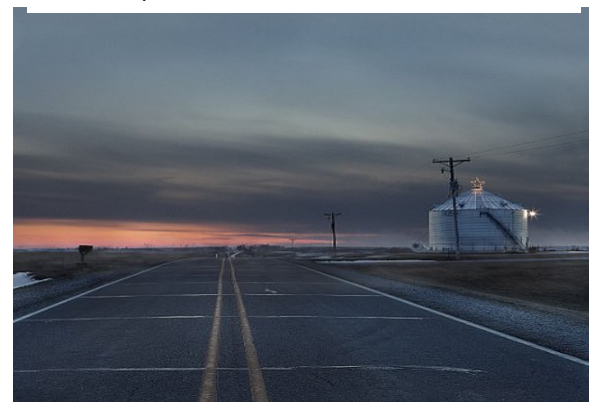
German town name "Jork", be a translation error from Latin to Cyrillic, or something else. I wonder what Frank Sinatra would have sung about this place?

These vagabond shoes, are longing to stray...

And with this we finish this geographical excursion.



Stockholm, Minnesota, famous for their Stockholm Pies! <https://www.stockholmpie.com/famous-pie/> This is the pie HQ, I believe.



This is called the Stockholm Road, Iowa. Looks like farmland. The building right must be for grain storage.



Downtown Stockholm, Saskatchewan (locals just say "Sask").



A street view from New York, Ukraine.

The Short Story Masters Strike again!

As a writer, apart from funny little articles (science, tech, sf, history, space etc) I'm much into short stories. I estimate over 125 published in different forms, lately a lot in the Short Story Masters' anthologies, from which many storied for obscure reasons have also been made into downloadable small books by publisher Saga Edmont. So for me the activities of the small (but intellectually giant!) Short Story Masters Society is rather meaningful.

We have two meetings per year, and the latest was September 2nd at the home of Ulf Broberg in Storvreta, north of Uppsala. We were seven incl associates Gullan and Peter (and me, Ulf B, Kjell, Cecilia, Helena). Cecilia had arranged train tickets, so no car driver had to worry about wine and beer served. Which was almost fatal since we became 20+ minutes late for the train switch in Uppsala. (Some idiots thought it'd be a good idea to walk on the tracks, which took the police forever to sort out, we were told.) The conductor luckily made the connecting train wait a few minutes, otherwise we'd have to wait for an extra hour.

Ulf has a wonderful bungalow with a glass covered patio, were we sat down. The loveable cat Sture joined us for a while. Before eating commenced the society's coming activities were discussed, among them a coming anthology next years, the best of our "cardinal points" series. We've made four anthologies with names referring to North, West, South and East. We also discussed our homepage <https://www.novellmastarna.se/> and possibilities for taking part in an event in Uppsala and do something around "Easter Crime" (this originally Norwegian concept of promoting crime fiction during Easter). I also mentioned that I lately have appeared in the anthology coming from the world building course I took this spring.

Then we were served a giant sandwich cake! I understand that this is originally a Swedish concept, a cake with mayonnaise instead of cream, salmon, smoked meat and dill, instead of berries, jam and chocolate - simply a dessert turned into a main dish. See <https://www.curiouscuisiniere.com/smorgastarta-swedish-sandwich-cake/>

It tasted very well, and I believe even if I took two extra servings there was still a bit left at the end, so no one went hungry. The cat looked praying at our plates. I think Gullan gave the cat a little of the cake, so he was satisfied. (BTW, we learned that Ulf and Gullan had just finally married. Congrats!) After that it was ice cream with whipped cream. That's nothing for a cat, as cats have no taste buds for sugar and sweet things. (No need. Cats are sweet things by themselves!)

EN FANTASTISK ANTOLOGI III

Texter från kursen *Världskrivande - distans*
Vår 2023



My latest anthology appearance.



My Greta Thunberg parody, from Saga Egmont.



Kjell, Helena, Cecilia and Ulf at the business part of the day.



Selfie with in the background Peter, Helena, Cecilia and Ulf.



Cecilia (cutting the sandwich cake), Ulf and wife Gullan.

We walked to the local train station in the early evening through this affluent Storvreta, a sort of lagon Swedish Beverly Hills: the house owners have money, but aren't show-offs.

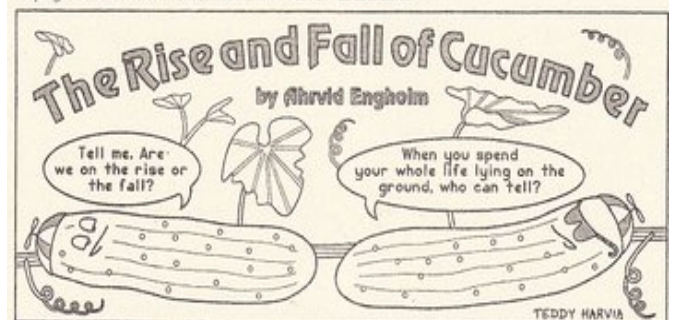
I've written a couple of crime stories from this kind of neighbourhood. With a cat in it.

History Corner

The history of fandom is its fanzines. Your favourite department will go east to get a different angle on amateur publications: *samizdat*. That's Russian, meaning "self published", the illegal, underground publications in the USSR, done by simple means – usually only a typewriter and carbons. Putin's Russia sees a return to oppression and censorship. Maybe it's time for a samizdat comeback?

We have touched upon Samizats before. Your trusty editor has even himself published in Samizdat style, in the small carbon-copied APA Gurka ("Cucumber"), of which you'll find the history in the Lynches *Mimosa* #15 <https://fanac.org/fanzines/Mimosa/Mimosa15.pdf>, "The Rise and Fall of Cucumber". It wasn't because of censorship we turned to carbon, but because we were only half a dozen members and sandwiching thin airmail paper with carbons was faster and easier than using a mimeo - and it gave you a feeling of being special and "underground"! (I did a series of fan history articles for *Mimosa*. Fanac.org has them all.) Samizdat was a bit like Soviet fanzines, if you stretch it science fiction since they lived in a *dystopia state believing it was an utopia*... Wikipedia will give you a ground course,

⇒ We remain in Europe for another visit to Swedish fandom. Last issue, The writer of the following article described some of the hoaxes perpetrated on Swedish fandom over the years. This time, he tells us about some of the Amateur Press Associations that have been active in Sweden, in particular, (and in keeping with our 'food' theme) a secret APA called Cucumber...



Anyone interested in Swedish fandom will soon hear of secret fanzine publishing. The fans in this northern country, so close to the Galactic Circle...sorry: Arctic Circle, have often engaged in secret Amateur Press Associations or APAs. In Swedish the word APA also means 'monkey' or 'ape'. Maybe APA-members feel a need to be monkey-like. Judge for yourself as we unfold the untold story of the secret Cucumber.

The first Swedish APA was not secret. SAPA was active a few years during the mid-60s, with Official Editors like John-Henri Holmberg and Leif Andersson. (Leif was known from TV as a teenage astronomy wiz, when he won the 10 000 Crowns Quiz in the early '60s. He later became a professional astronomer, died in the US in 1979 and got a crater on the Moon named in his memory. The way for a fan to pass away, I'd say.) It was followed by UPPSAPA and SWAPA, that didn't last. In 1976 the most successful Swedish APA was founded: SFF. The letters are short for Sveriges Fanzine Forening – Sweden's Fanzine Association. It was the existence of SFF that inspired a group of fans to start a new APA in 1979:

Gurka. 'Gurka' means 'cucumber'. It's unclear why this name was chosen. Maybe because it can be mentioned with others present, without giving any hints of what it is. It also sounds a bit funny. I will from now on write 'Cucumber', instead of 'Gurka', so that you will think it is funny too.

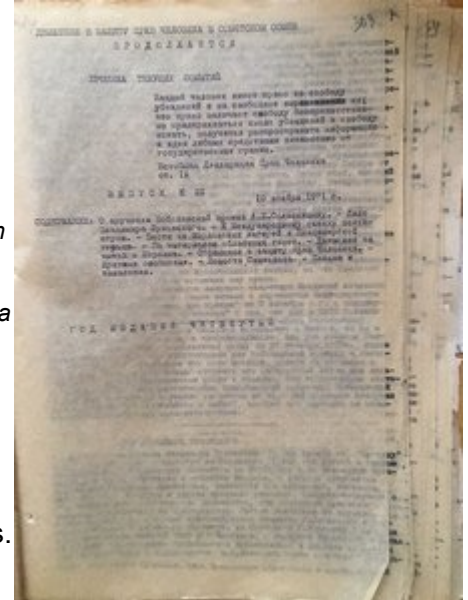
Cucumber was different. It was secret. The original members were: Anders Bellis, Roger Sjölander and me of Stockholm, Ingemar Carlsson of Scania, Mika Tenhovaara of Hallsta, and Lars Larsson and Jonas Söderblad of Nybro. The famous Nybro-fandom later launched the national Star Wars club. They once published a story with Star Wars characters engaged in something hinted upon as sex. Lucasfilms went mad on the other side of the globe and engaged their lawyers to 'protect their trademarks'. (No, 'sex' is not a trademark of Lucasfilms.)

Why a secret APA? I and Bellis already did a weekly newszine, *The Wheel's Adventures* (WA), but had also tried small print-run carbon zines. It felt nice to write to a closed circle. My secret hobby is to write constitutions so I wrote one for Cucumber. Members

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samizdat>:



a form of dissident activity across the Eastern Bloc in which individuals reproduced censored and underground makeshift publications, often by hand, and passed the documents from reader to reader. The practice of manual reproduction was widespread, because most typewriters and printing devices required official registration and permission to access. This was a grassroots practice used to evade official Soviet censorship...in decades prior to the early 1960s, offices and stores had to submit papers with examples of their typewriters' fonts to local KGB branches so that any printed text could be traced back to the source ... Samizdat is unique to the post-Stalin USSR and other countries with similar systems. Faced with the state's powers of censorship, society turned to underground literature for self-analysis and self-expression...Not everything published in samizdat had political overtones. In 1963, Joseph Brodsky was charged with "social parasitism" and convicted for being nothing but a poet. His poems circulated in samizdat, with only four judged as suitable for official Soviet anthologies...The longest-running and best-known samizdat periodical was A Chronicle of Current Events. It was dedicated to defending human rights by providing accurate information about events in the USSR...The Chronicle editors maintained that, according to the 1936 Soviet Constitution, then in force, their publication was not illegal. The authorities did not accept the argument. Many people were harassed, arrested, imprisoned, or forced to leave the country for their involvement in the Chronicle's production and distribution...Samizdat covered a large range of topics, mainly including literature and works focused on religion, nationality, and politics. The state censored a variety of materials such as detective novels, adventure stories, and science fiction in addition to dissident texts, resulting in the



An issue of Chronicle of Current events

Collection of samizdat material.

underground publication of samizdat covering a wide range of topics. Though most samizdat authors directed their works towards the intelligentsia, samizdat included lowbrow genres in addition to scholarly works.

The samizdat books and journals would be painstakingly typed and multiplied by using carbons and very thin paper, called onion paper, getting ca 10 copies. (Our Cucumber zines used what was called air mail paper, 30 grams/m², standard paper is ca 80 g/m². Sold in every office supplies store and of better quality than Soviet paper - I saw some as I corresponded eastward.)

The samizdats were distributed through personal connections, transported manually and hidden. Someone getting hold of an interesting publication would often - if there was a typewriter available – make more copies of it. As successful samizdat could this way be a bit of a growing chain letter.

If you're interested, George Saunders edited a collection of samizdat material translated to English, in *Samizdat - Voices of the Soviet Opposition*, available here: <https://annas-archive.org/md5/3eff748ae012d75ae1fe8afc880c40d4>

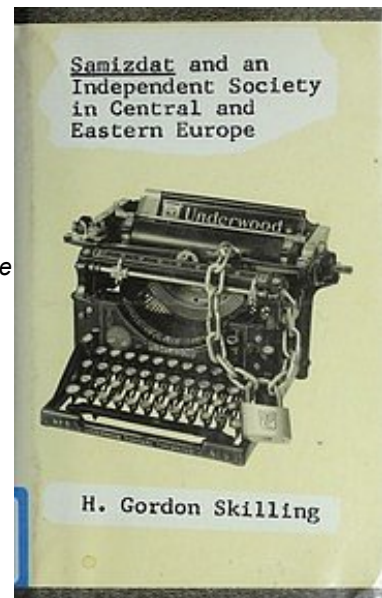
And one Gordon Johnston has covered *What is the history of Samizdat?*

Here: <https://annas-archive.org/md5/42b8a5133704aeb733ba72072423549d>

He tells us:

samizdat was prosecuted under Articles 70 and 190-1 of the Criminal Code... Article 70 requires evidence of anti-Soviet purpose or intent while Article 190-1 requires evidence of 'defamation', 'discreditation', and 'false fabrication'...Article 190-1 covers dissemination in oral, written or printed form

But samizdat wasn't unique for the USSR, but existed in all former Soviet bloc countries and republics. That is covered in H Gordon Skilling's *Samizdat and an independent society in Central and Eastern Europe* from <https://annas-archive.org/md5/1ed65f3dcf94e7ab11523b9daeffa3cb> Here's a short lecture of samizdat: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfPehnTLoOU> and a short film with samizdat production re-enactment: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD_2ehs3gF0, in this case doing banned religious texts. Today's Russia has instead allied with the corrupt Russian-Orthodox church, lead by former KGB agent patriarch Kirill who enthusiastically proclaimed that Ukrainian president Zelensky is anti-christ. Indeed!



On samizdat from other parts of the Soviet bloc.

So we can add delusional madness to transparent lies.

I guess you have to a bit interested in the history and culture of the Soviet sphere to dig deeper into samizdats. But there is every reason to nurture such an interest, because putinist Russia seems is

bouncing back to the ways of the USSR. You need to understand the Soviet Union to understand the former KGB officer Putin, and thus get clues to why we have to suffer the biggest and bloodiest war in Europe since World War II.

Today Russians get arrested and threatened with several years in prison for waving a *blank piece of paper*. The kangaroo courts will slam you with “defamation of the glorious, victorious Russian army” (a phrase meaning the same as “anti-Soviet activities” back in the bad old days). Now, you may ask, a blank paper says nothing, so what the heck... The point is that the message is in your head, the paper is supposed to create anti-Putin thoughts in the heads of the onlooker as they fill in the blanks - so the mere *thoughts* of people are banned. And there's no difference in thinking bad about the army or about Putin-Russia. The army *is* the state. To paraphrase Rudolf Hess. *The army is Putin, Putin is Russia, and Russia is Putin. Зуд хайль* (=“Sieg Heil!”)

It's very risky to deny any of these “truths” in today's Russia. *“Ukraine is Nazi.” “All is going according to plan.” “We only target military objects.” “The Ukrainians staged the Bucha massacre with actors and Hollywood props.” “The Moskva sank because one in the crew smoked carelessly.” “We just rescue children, who become so glad that they don't want to speak Ukrainian.”* But if I remember it correctly the Soviets at least tried to make their lies *sound* plausible. Putin-Russia don't care. Putin's own “Ministry of Truth” is the TV channels he controls where 75% of Russians get all their “information”. George Orwell's ghost nods in recognition.

There were different kinds of samizdat. *Radidaz* or *magnizdat* were illegal recordings, often taken from foreign stations like the BBC, Radio Liberty or Radio Free Europe. *Intermission* earlier covered “bone music”, ie western pop music which was engraved on used X-ray plates! *Tamizdat* (“over-there” published) was material printed abroad and then smuggled in. Not all was typewritten. Some were xeroxed, though access to copying machines were very restricted, and illegal mimeographs or even printing presses were used, also very restricted, and those replicating methods were much rarer. I'm a bit stupefied that *hektographs* was almost unheard of! The material mentioned make no references to such, and yet they would have been very easy to make and good for reproducing 50-100 copies instead of 10. A hektograph just needs jelly+glycerin, to boil and cool and a good dye for the master, material that must have been available in the USSR too.

Today the Internet has the same role as Samizdat, though KGB/FSB monitor all traffic, blocks thousands of sites but they yet haven't cracked all VPNs (they control some). It is estimated that perhaps 10-20% of Russians have the ability to reach correct non-Putin information, but that's way more than painstakingly typed samizdat reached earlier.

Personally I see a little bit of connection between their samizdat and our Cucumber carbzines: while we weren't illegal there was a certain feeling of being misunderstood and persecuted... Sf was after all just flying saucer delusions and the books were the lowest form of

literature (at least up to the 1970s when Cucumber was active, pariah status later began to erode). It's a proud and lonely thing to be a fan.

You don't find interesting stuff only in old newspapers. As I write this I saw the following in the Name & News dpt of DN newspaper, Sep 26:



An application for 30m dollar (ca 120m crowns) for building five “seadromes”, meant for air traffic over the Atlantic, has been handed to the administration for public works in Washington. The application is already under committee scrutiny. Official information says “The Seadrome Ocean Dock Corporation” will work all details of the project, which is designed and approved by leading engineers and aviators. work all details of the project, which is designed and approved by leading engineers and aviators. The administration has asked aeronautics experts from both army and navy to investigate the feasibility of the proposal and practical things around constructing artificial islands. /Name & News, DN, Sep 26 1933/



The public works admin was one of Roosevelt's ideas to fight the depression, and it's interesting they considered a plan seen in the pop science mags. As Lindbergh barely made it over the pond, heavier passenger planes would need airfields in the sea to refuel. However, already the great DC3 arriving in 1936 had enough range to jump the ocean... See LSO <https://gizmodo.com/the-artificial-islands-that-would-have-let-us-leapfrog-1440394911>

We jump back in time to Svenska Dagbladet June 8 1960 when Kingsley Amis gets a sour review, for his radio play headline "Lost in space":

Lots of hairy, sticky arms embraces and suffocates poor spacemen in Kingsley Amis' "Enemy Planet", an sf fantasy that the Radio Theatre presented Tuesday /June/. A front guard of scientists have landed on a very comfortable planet. The five men are varmed by an atomic burner while talented and strong robots build a landing strip. Put in space an invasion force impatiently orbits waiting for the job to finish. But the calmness ends on the planet. In the darkness flourish hostile, brownish lumps of jelly, huge but still able to go through a ventilation shaft. One of the scientists die giving off agonising screams. The other scientists try to convince themselves it is just imaginations of the mind. What did Amis want and mean? Why doesn't he stay on Earth? Why doesn't he describe a hangover or something less abstract? He has shown he can handle beings on Earth? Why abandon them and go lost in space? Most must be tired of the space fantasies of the usual, banal kind. Who hasn't by mistake found themselves in a cinema where space ghosts and flying saucers do their stupid dance? And nobody could miss comics. Because of saturation you have some demands for renewals in the genre. But when not even such a bright guy as Kingsley Amis can extract any fun or frightening effects from a subject, one has to come to the conclusion that subjects for the moment have dried up. The authors language usually has a sort of irreverent and sloppy charm, but the translators Sigbrit and Carl-Olof Lång have allowed themselves a vulgar-blabbing jargon that in no way raised the mood. Nothing becomes jollier by using the word "ol'men" instead of "old men". Director Eddie Stenberg has applied all possible sound effects from whistling to explosions of screams sin anguish, but it all seems painfully familiar. Whatever intentions Amis had, nothing became clear from the play. The satire missed – if it now was a satire.

Kingsley Amis had at the time just published his *New Maps of Hell*. the first "outsider" study of the sf genre with was both serious and a bit positive. He was talked about, but his radio play didn't please this Margaret Stenström – who neither I nor Google know anything about. Does anyone know if the

Amis play "Enemy planet" is published anywhere? (Google has no clue.)

Our buddy Wernher von Braun has happier space news, in Aftonbladet June 28, already in 1953, "Reading for space fans":

The first step of conquering outer space is to place a remote controlled lab – a "baby space station" – 300 km above the Earth, the world's foremost space rocket expert German Wernher von Braun says in an article in this week's issue of Collier's. von Braun and space scientists are convinced that the small remote controlled satellite is the forerunner to a big space station that may come within 5-6 years. It would circle Earth in 60 days /typo: hours/ on 300 km height with a speed of 24 000 km/h. von Braun is the chief of the US Army's research centre for remote controlled projectile in Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. "Work on the baby satellite can start at once, because it's known how it is constructed, powered etc," von Braun says. The baby space station will resemble a 1 metre ice cream, cone cone, with a tip of mirrors that take power from the sun. The conical space station contains a complicated myriad of instruments and microphones, which by radio and TV transmitter informs viewers on Earth what happens in the baby satellite. Three small, very intelligent rhesus monkeys will live on board the air conditioned space station where they are feed from an automatic food dispenser. Every movement by the monkeys will be seen on a TV screen. von Braun also explains how the baby space station will leave orbit. "Before launch the space station looks like a remote controlled Viking rocket except that it's three times as big, 50 metres tall and 10 metres wide at the base. During launch it becomes gradually smaller as two of three motors are thrown off, one at a time as they use up fuel. The station must be launched over water so that the lowest motor thrown away already after a minute from start won't hit someone or something. Nobody has to worry about the second motor, since it's thrown away at such an altitude it burns up before hitting ground. When they at the third stage reach 100 km and a speed of 24 000 km/h the third motor is automatically thrown off and the conical tip glides without power to orbit at a height of 300 km reached 44 min later. The entire trip to the designated orbit takes 48.5 minutes, von Braun ends.

Vilse i rymden
 Massor av håriga, kläbbiga armar slingrar sig kvävande kring de stackars rymdfararna i Kingsley Amis' "Fientliga planet", en science-fiction-fantasi som Radioteatern presenterade på torsdagen.
 En stöttrupp av vetenskapsmän har tagit en utomordentligt angenäm planet i besittning. De fem männen värmer sig vid atomkaminen medan de begärvade och urstärka robotarna anlägger en landningsbana. Ute i rymden snurrar en invasionsstyrka otåligt i sin omloppsbana i väntan på att arbetet skall bli färdigt.
 Men på planeten bryts idyllen. Där frodas i mörkret fientliga, brunglänsade gelekumpar, enorma till formen men ändå i stånd att ta sig ut genom en ventilationsströmma. En robot får ett nervsammanbrott och blir aldrig sig själv igen. En av vetenskapsmännen dör under kvalfulla vrål. De övriga forskarna försöker intala sig att det bara är fråga om sinnessvillor.
 △
 Vad har nu Amis menat och velat. Varför stannar han inte på jorden. Varför ägnar han sig inte åt att beskriva ett bakrus eller något annat mindre abstrakt? Han har ju visat att han har utmärkt hand med de varelsen som vistas på jorden. Varför då överge dem för att gå vilse i rymden?
 Rymdfantasier av det vanliga, banala slaget måste väl de flesta vara utleda på. Vem har inte av misstag hamnat på en bio där rymdspöken och flygande tefat har trätt sin idiotiska dans. Och de tecknade serierna har väl heller ingen kunnat undgå. Just på grund av övermattnaden ställer man vissa krav på förnyelse inom genren. Men när inte ens ett sådant kvickhuvud som Kingsley Amis kan avvinnas ämnet några lustiga eller skrämmande effekter, då måste man dra den slutsatsen att ämnet för tillfället är uttröskat.
 Författarens språk brukar ha en sorts vanvördig och slarvig charm, men över sätarna Sigbrit och Carl-Olof Lång ha de nedlåtit sig till en vulgärhejig jargong som knappast montrade upp stämningen. Ingenting blir i, ex. roligare för att man använder ordet "gubbs" i stället för gubbar.
 Regissören Eddie Stenberg hade antagit alla tänkbara ljud effekter från visslingar och explosioner till ångestskriken allsammans verkade pinsamt väl bekant. Vilka Amis avsikter än kan ha varit, inte blev de klarare av föreställningen. Satiren slog slint – om det nu var en satir.
 MARGARET STENSTRÖM

Läsning för rymdfantaster
 NEW YORK (AP) — Första steget mot en erövring av världsrymden är att placera ett fjärrstyrt laboratorium — en "baby-rymdstation" — ca 300 svenska mil över jorden, säger världens främste raketexpert, tysken dr Wernher von Braun i en artikel i veckans nummer av Collier's.
 Enligt von Braun är rymdvetenskapsmännen nu övertygade om att den lilla fjärrstyrda satelliten är föregångaren till en stor rymdstation, som kan uppföras inom 5-6 år. Den skulle kretsa kring jorden på 60 dagar på 300 mils höjd och med en hastighet av 24.000 km./tim.
 Von Braun är nu chef för amerikanska arméns forskningscentrum för fjärrstyrda projektiler i Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.
 — Arbetet med babysatelliten kan börja omedelbart, ty man känner till allt om hur den skall konstrueras, drivas etc, påpekar von Braun. Babysatelliten kommer att likna en 30 fot glassstrut, i vars spets sitter bukiga speglar, som drar åt sig kraft från solen. Den koniska rymdstationen innehåller en komplicerad myriad av mätinstrument och mikrofoner, som med radio, radar och TV-sändare underrättar iakttagarna på jorden, vad som försiggår inne i babysatelliten. Tre små, mycket intelligenta rhesusapor skall bo ombord i den luftkonditionerade rymdstationen, deffar något eller någon. Ingen behöver bekymra sig om den andra motorn, ty den kastas av på så stor höjd att den är uppbränd, innan den träffar marken.
 När man vid tredje stadiet når en höjd av tio svenska mil och en hastighet av 24.000 km./tim, avkopplas den tredje motorn automatiskt och den koniska spetssektionen glider utan motorkraft till omloppsbanan på en höjd av 30 svenska mil, som nås 44 min. senare. Hela färden till den förutbestämda omloppsbanan tar 48,5 min. slutar von Braun. — Thuilin.
 Luftkonditionerade rymdstationen, där de får sin föda från en automatisk livsmedelsutdelare. Varje rörelse som aporna gör kommer till syn på TV-skärmen.
 Von Braun förklarar också hur babysatelliten skall gå ut på sin plats i omloppsbanan.
 — Före uppstigningen liknar rymdstationen en fjärrstyrd Viking Rocket med undantag för att den är tre gånger större, 50 m. hög och tio meter bred vid basen.
 Efter uppstigningen blir den gradvis mindre genom att två av dess tre motorer kastas av, en i sänder sedan de gjort slut på sitt drivmedel. Stationen måste lyfta över vatten, så att inte den nedersta motorn, som avkastar redan någon minut efter starten,

metres wide at the base. During launch it becomes gradually smaller as two of three motors are thrown off, one at a time as they use up fuel. The station must be launched over water so that the lowest motor thrown away already after a minute from start won't hit someone or something. Nobody has to worry about the second motor, since it's thrown away at such an altitude it burns up before hitting ground. When they at the third stage reach 100 km and a speed of 24 000 km/h the third motor is automatically thrown off and the conical tip glides without power to orbit at a height of 300 km reached 44 min later. The entire trip to the designated orbit takes 48.5 minutes, von Braun ends.

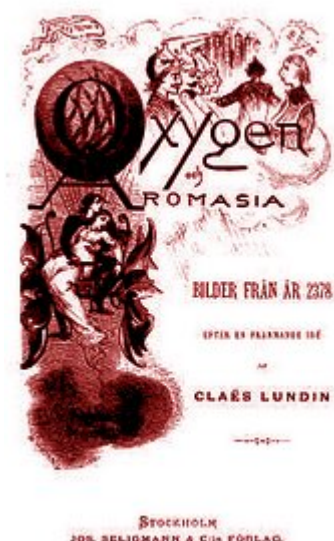
It sounds like von Braun was ready to launch a satellite already in 1953. And from different other sources we

know he indeed was! What happened was that the US Navy was given the task but their Vanguard rocket wasn't ready and the Navy wouldn't let their *main enemy*, the freaking US Army, use their Redstone and steal the honour of launching the first satellite, or "baby space station" as it was called. Instead the Soviets stole the show! But we should be grateful the Vanguard exploded on the launch pad, because if it had been first space wouldn't have become prestige and there would be no space race and perhaps no Moon landing.

Let's return to signature Flips (Gösta Rybrant) who was clearly fascinated by this "science fiction" thing that had just popped up. In his Aftonbladet "Chronicle" Apr 24, 1954, he finds old akiffy:



Reality is more wonderful than fantasy...science fiction...an artform I have recently been associated with. You must be with the times in the realm of fiction. Sf is, as the knowledgeable reader knows, stories about life of people in 100 or 1000 years. It seems they will have some trouble also then. Lots of troubles., One moment The Martians invade the Earth and Earthers must dress up in space suits and wander through cosmos and kick their ass. Or it's people from Venus that arrive and behave unduly. And the poor Earthmen must dress up in space suits and wander around cosmos to kick Venusian ass. All this happen, as said, in 100 or 1000 years and the stories are quite fantastic. That we in those times haven't found other arguments than kicking ass seems beyond the grasp of the authors. That would be too fantastic, which is sad. The human imagination lacks borders it seem. Or as one of my artist friends said the other day when fancied the so called concretists. "The poor griffiers /???/ think they can finds form not already found in nature!" he said as he pondered over the wild arabesque pattern of the spaghetti laying before him....Jules Verne who wrote sf long before anyone had found out it would be named that, wrote about the sky travels of engineer Robur long before Bleriot had lifted his first aircraft, but his feats are now sunken to yawning routine. Captain Nemo sailed around the world beneath the sea at a time you could only dream about traffic under water, but they have now built a submarine powered by atomic energy, something not even Verne could have dreamt of. Does anyone now consider it such an exploit to travel around the world in days as Phileas Fogg. The other dsay I got hold of a book titled Oxygen and Aromasia and it was really entertainingly written by one Mr Claes Lundin and printed by Isaac Marcus Bookprinting Ltd in 1878. It is also sf and tells about certain strange events in Stockholm in 2378. this author had really mustered all the imagination he had so he lets the young hero Mr Oxygen be boss of a company that makes weather. He sends rain that way and high pressures this way, an idea very comical in 1878, though they can now make rain in America at will and already has a hassle with the legal question of who owns the atmosphere. Aromasia is the heroine in Claes Lundin's tale and an artist. Since Wagner and his followers have made the entire music-listening half-deaf in 1878 you can't play the piano the usual way so they invented the smell keyboard – ododion – on which you bring forth the most ingenious compositions. Aromasia has for instance made an "odirate" showing "materialism winning over criticism and finishing the Nicaragua canal". Claes Lundin must have smiled when he made this up and thought it was so preposterous that his fantasy would never be matched by reality...



Oxygen and Aromasia has by some been called the first Swedish sf novel though there are other candidates, eg *The English Flyer* from 1741 according to Sam J Lundwall's bibliography. Bertil Falk has translated the first chapter of the novel to be English, found here: <http://www.bewilderingstories.com/issue256/oxygen1.html>

Mailing Comments

Skip this if you aren't interested in what I say to folks in EAPA and N'APA. Really! But why not do a fanzine of your own and join? We need more fanzines. Tweetgram, Telebook, Facer and such junk is so boring! Quotes of what I comment quoted in red.

Henry Grynsten: "Science can be divided into...The physical sciences...The biological sciences...Social sciences like anthropology and economics study the social and cultural aspects of human behaviour." Only if "science" is combined in a *compound* term. But the lone word "science" by itself will almost always point to natural science. Your quote from Encyclopedia Britannica - you are lazy with giving sources BTW! - begins with (and I'll mark the parts that directly points to natural science!): "science, any system of knowledge that is concerned with the physical world (1) and its phenomena (2) and that entails unbiased observations (3) and systematic experimentation (4)." 1) Physical world! le natural science, which deals with what we can touch and see (unlike "social sciences" which is abstractions, like "society", "mind", "history"). 2) The physical world has

phenomenon! Things that can be measured.3) It has proven very difficult to make something "unbiased" in social sciences, so it must be natural science this points to. Natural science measures things with instruments that give clear and 100% unbiased data. 4) Systematic experimentation is what natural sciences deals with. Social sciences has huge difficulties doing experiments. It's very difficult to be systematic with social non-linear phenomenon. So here it also points to natural science, not social sciences. And if you don't believe it here in "Difference Between Science and Social Sciences": <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-science-and-vs-social-sciences/> "Between Science and social sciences, there exist a recognizable difference." [] AE: Antropology and economics are social sciences, which are "undermined by postmodernism and similar anything-goes-ideology..." Henry: "That's just an opinion with no basis other than ideology." It should rather be called an assessment. And many agree: "The postmodern assault on science" <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3463968/> "Debunking Postmodernism and the Regressive Left 101" <https://socialdeocracy21stcentury.blogspot.com/p/the-philosophy-of-postmodernism-and-its.html> <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Postmodern> The last is rather fun, with multiple attacks on postmodernism, e g: "Postmodernism is the ultimate lubricant invented by social sciences in order to fuck every concept and structure that humans ever came up with." "Postmodernism is a cargo cult. It seeks to duplicate the form of rational inquiry, while lacking the substance." "Postmodernism: pseudo-intellectual Trojan Horse of tyrants everywhere in the western world." You can't possibly be unaware of that postmodernism is the subject of huge amounts of criticism! And it has a lot of bias is a fair assessment." [] /If you/ "don't accept the results of the social sciences because of the replication crisis, you should also throw out medicine and the natural sciences." They have their share of replication crisis too, but much less so. It's easier to replicate things that show up unbiased on instruments and have linear properties. And BTW I don't mean "no science can be relied on". That's a straw man. But there is no doubt that social sciences - ie not science - has magnitudes worse replication problems. [] "climate change...the science behind it isn't "soft science" As I said, science also has a replication problem, but of what remains a *big chunk of it is within "climate science"*. The higher degree of replication problems within "climate science" makes it softer. Examples of replication failures: - Michael Manns "hockey stick" of claimed temperature curves, criticised by av McKittrick och Mcintyre. - Numerous "prognoses" that have shown to be wrong. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/50-failed-eco-pocalyptic-predictions-hashim-sheikh> <https://wattsupwiththat.com/2022/08/20/failed-climate-predictions-willie-soon-phd/> <https://www.agweb.com/opinion/doomsday-addiction-celebrating-50-years-failed-climate-predictions> - The Sauna climate theory saying CO2 causes warmth, but history data sees CO2 follow a temperature increase. <https://skepticalscience.com/co2-lags-temperature.htm> - <https://www.newswise.com/factcheck/rising-temperatures-may-cause-a-rise-in-carbon-dioxide-but-this-does-not-refute-human-caused-climate-change> <http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/thermo/icecore.html> Much more could be mentioned! [] "we are not /talking about ethics/. We are talking about objective finds about inequality. Either inequality leads to increased murder rates and teen pregnancies or it does not, and what Wilkinson & Pickett and many others say is that it does." First, W&P's *The Spirit Level* has met lots of substantial, empirical critique for cherry-picking. Secondly: Please prove that a statement about murder rate isn't about ethics. Ethics is about good or bad. Most are of the opinion that murder is bad, but that's not a proof and not science - there is nothing "objective" in it. (Same with teen pregs.) [] "Haven't you said that there may be something like objective ethics?" I have at times aired loose thoughts on the subject as it's worth thinking about and speculate over, but I have no definite conclusions and am not tied to the mast about it. [] "Researchers have shown that creativity is greater in equal countries." Opinion makers from the marshland infested by postmodernism have made such improbable claims. But it's more likely that policies respecting individualism and personal freedom is more creative, because: - Flattening differences requires a degree of oppression, and that quelches creativity. - Striving for "equality" requires to take from some and give to others. But if you take away rewards for being creative and give others for free without creativity, you kill creativity. - Plan economy, required to a high degree if you shall be able to introduce actions to flatten out differences, has an empirical record of being UNcreative. [] "Besides, if science can't answer if freedom of action and thought promote creativity, then how can you be so sure that they do?" It's an assessment, based upon knowledge about what makes people tick. [] /Critique of The Spirit Level would be/ "just a claim(s) with nothing behind it." <https://tino.us/2010/07/the-spirit-level-authors-wilkinson-and-picket-caught-lying/> <https://spiritleveldelusion.blogspot.com/2019/03/the-spirit-level-ten-years-on.html> <https://iea.org.uk/blog/more-spirit-level-delusions> <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/spirit-level-bubble-bursts-as-critics-expose-flaws-6sltg8xfwtw>

<https://thewanderinghedgehog.wordpress.com/2010/05/19/the-spirit-level-why-inequality-matters/>

There is much more! "No they don't" /ignore plausible third causations/. Yes they do. They have no comment on effects on claimed figures by the US lack of universal health care, for instance. They say nothing about effects of extreme Russian drinking. That attitudes to contraceptives rather than "equality" has with teen pregnancies to do. And so on. "with high inequality, there is also high crime rates" Only to a degree. Copycat memes, mental status of the population, and availability of the tools of violence influence too. Eg in the US there seem to be a "mass shooting" almost every day. It seems that the high frequency of it such "inspire" more of it. Each mass shooting becomes a "mental virus" that spreads, a mass shooting meme. Something similar is with drug gangs in Sweden (targeting each other, mass shootings are very rare here) . How available weapons are is also important, esp in the US with the 2nd amendment. Education is must be factored in, and city planning. To simply have badly designed suburbs will cause crime. Sure, wealth plays a role - but there are also other factors. Me: "They can't explain why creativity should grow if you rule more over people with politics, limits people's choice and actions and take things from them to give to others." You: They can and they do /"explain" how central planning & politics would be creative/ They don't. Except for their constant mantra that "inequality" explains everything. "Communist countries like the Soviet Union, North Korea and Cuba. Nobody wants that, not Wilkinson or Pickett or me." They want Communism Light. "There are exactly 0 countries with no taxes whatsoever" Monaco has no income tax, at least. (But I'm not arguing for 0% tax, but for *lower tax*.) It's not "contradictive" - you can argue for the use of something, but be against overuse. "I thought you considered Wikipedia unreliable?" Wiki tend to be unreliable for *controversial* subjects. But it's not controversial that Wilkinson & Pickett are activist. They've spent years sifting through data to find what to pick for misleading diagrams and then spent substantial time writing a book and have after that taken a lot of time trying to answer all the criticism... A *lot* of activity, thus: *activists*. "Being an activist doesn't mean that your scientific results are automatically wrong" But it does mean a tendency for being blind to faults with your world view. "joint ownership by the employees" That's is a sort of Soviet Kolkhoz. Their "solution" (to a problem they constructed, BTW) is known to work very bad. Collectives have lousy productivity. "This already occurs with a fourth of all employees in Great Britain" So the UK is part-kolkhoz to 25%. Sad for them. What's your point? /The 1980s wagetaker funds/ "was unpopular among those it was unpopular" The 4th October 1983 movement demonstration reached 75 000 (police figure), the biggest demo ever in Stockholm! /Prehistoric murder rate/ "numbers are an exaggeration". It doesn't seem so. The rates were very high in these "egalitarian" societies, exact figures matter less – even if it was an exaggeration numbers were very high. This indicates it's not a good idea to put prehistoric, primitive societies on a pedestal as W&P do. "We already talked about the term being 'sexual assault'" not "assault" Assault means a military and/or violent attack and/or an effort to subdue someone by force. "Sexual assault" mean doing this AND having a sexual goal with the violent assault. If there is *no* violent attack, there can't be a "sexual assault" because the assault factor is missing. Asimov did not violently attack anyone, so no sexual assault. Groping is something else (and I agree Asimov behaved very bad). That some opinion makers want to distort language by claiming a non-assault is a military or violent attack, is *virtue signalling*: to show how incredibly much you are on the "right side" by giving something an as bad description and name as possible. But as said: this newspeak is risky! It turns Russia's assault on Ukraine with 100 000s of dead into something comparable with just groping! To create such a unbalanced comparison is unacceptable. The newspeak behind it must be rejected, even if some virtue signallers want disagree. /The Spanish FA boss groping/ "did so because he's also sexually awkward and inhibited." I suspect he just totally lost his mind. The Spanish team had just won the highest world title. That could make people totally lose it... Normally I'd say this affair looks exaggerated. It shouldn't be more to it than the wrongdoer apologising. However - I followed things around the World Cup - in the background is that the Spanish football squad had for a long, long time been dissatisfied with the federation, leaders and officials for numerous things. There have been boycotts, open protests and more. This added to the situation, made it extremely explosive. Me: I'm against trying to twist words for ideological reasons. That's Orwellian newspeak." And yet you do it yourself, as you use "assault" To the contrary, I'm correcting misuse and newspeak. /AIs/ "don't have brains to begin with." They are beginning to get something functionally equivalent. (But getting to human complexity will take time, a long time. HAL 9000 isn't around the corner...) Functionally equivalent = If it looks like a brain, swims like a brain, quacks like a brain, it's a brain. "Just because some scientific results can't be replicated doesn't mean that all scientific are false" Some? Up to 50% for social sciences. That's a LOT. It's no better than throwing dice. /growth and freedom/ "are reached by greater equality" No, because it requires dictating to and herding

people. That quelches freedom, it becomes an obstacle for productive forces required for growth. "I was just saying that /Cro Magnon/ were more fit." Yet they died much, much earlier! "You doubt that the average Cro Magnon who used his body all day." Some of those strange admirers of primitive hunter-gather societies actually claim the people only had to work 2-3 hours/day! (I don't agree.) "Modern humans are prone to work-place accidents, traffic accidents" But such accidents are magnitudes rarer than risks by constantly wandering around in the wild, in a society where the murder rate sky high, wild animals roam... (And while some modern habits may not be healthy, the proof is in the pudding: despite everything modern man live far, far longer!) "/Cro Magnon knew/ how to navigate. If they didn't know how to get around they would have died out." Most points to that prehistoric humans were poor travellers. It could take them thousands of years to migrate, say, a couple of hundred miles. They drifted around more like a Brownian motion. (The Australian aborigines BTW had 50 000 years to learn about the place.) "Cro Magnons probably had greater resistance to diseases" Small, isolated groups tend to have worse resistance. Their immune systems haven't met challenges to train on. "would be able to start a fire faster" Finds indicate they weren't that great fire makers, since the standard strategy was to simply carry a fire with you and try to keep it glowing all the time. ME: our grey matter won't become smart by itself. It needs the right stimulation and training. "So you won't mind taking out a tennis ball-size chunk of your brain" What's your point? Maybe someone has removed tennis balls from Henry's brain... "Consciousness is the only way to have IQ." I think there is a co-dependence between the two.

Willian McCabe: I'm against editing or rewriting book according to the thoughts of the day! It sets a bad precedent and makes us stupid. We can't understand history of we don't know what people

thought back in history. As for name or trademarks. If you are Johnny Johnson and write a book and there comes another Johnny Johnson and writes a book, Johnny II must have the right to use his legal name. But if someone releases an AI written book, he/she shouldn't have the right to use the name. The two Johnny Johnsons are actually, legally named that, the AI just picked a name without legal rights. On covid: as noted you can't compared figures between Sweden all deaths noted as "covid ones" if the deceased had the slightest bit of virus positive test, while in Norway a doctor had to separately determine that covid was the direct cause of death... Those are two different death cause criteria! Excess death does away with opinions of death causes, is more accurate, and here Sweden had the *lowest in Europe* figure! No, football fanzines are much later. Comics zines were the second ones, after sf fanzines, then came Star Trek, punk rock and finally football.

Heath Row: I doubt you could easily contribute to the Bertil Falk Space Opera Prize. My only "payment system" is Swedish bank account but I have no experience or knowledge of international transactions. If anyone want to try it it's account No 6153-330 334 578 with a banlk called called Handelsbanken, but I doubt it works. P-movie "Breaking Point" is available here and there if you look around. You might need to know how to find "less legal" sites and saucy ones...

Garth Spencer: Of those about a dozen upcoming Canadian cons, I assume the majority are so called media cons! Upcoming sf literature cons over here for a typical year is one and a half. We have next year's Swecon, and now in November a one-day-con (I count that as a half, I call them "microcons" being more of an enhanced club meeting, a proper sf con should be for at least a couple of days). But We have are several media and RPG cons. A guy named Esper Isberg rents big places to sell plastic models and B-actor autographs 3-4 times year (and strangely enough has a lemming audience!). We have our own Comic Con and probably at least ten gaming/RPG cons every year. But real sf cons...too few. Nice con report. But where were the scandals?



Слава Україні!