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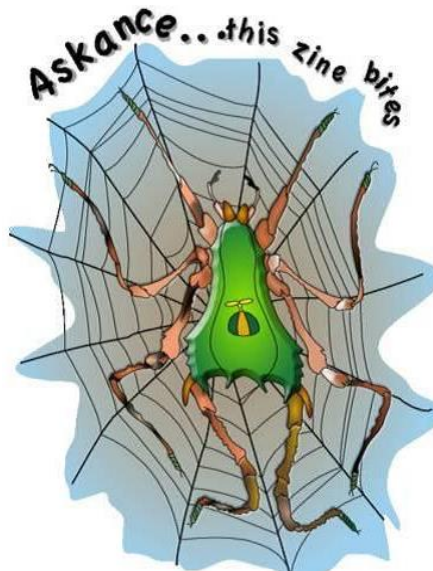
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What you have here in your hands (or on screen) is another Mythical Publication. Copies of this fine, back on a quarterly schedule fanzine can be had for The Usual, which means expressed interest, submission and eventual inclusion of articles and artwork, letters of comment, expressed interest, and cold hard cash in the amount of \$3.00 USD. Bribes are also accepted. Of course, if you send in locs, articles, and artwork, you just earned a life-time free subscription. Consider yourself lucky, indeed.

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Sheryl Birkhead – 2; photo by John L. Coker III – 4; mcahogarth.org – 6; Steve Stiles – 7; Taral Wayne – 10; photo of Robert A. Heinlein, from Internet – 17; Book scan by ye editor – 12; clip art – 18, 21; nicked off Internet – 17, 20, 26, 31, 32, 36, 37; A. B. Kynock – 24, 27; Paul Skelton in field of lupins (from Skel) – 29; Jose Sanchez – 3.5.

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Ah, sweet mystery of life, at last I've found you!

bemused natterings

Sports to me is a
mindless
diversion,
something I
usually put on
the television -
while I grade
student essays
and other
homework
assignments -
for background
noise.

Here we go, into the wild blue yonder...

The college football season has returned to Aggieland with its typical obsessive behavior. What this means for the Purcell household is that 30 minutes before game-time, a small squadron of F-15 Air Force jets – usually three or four of them – comes screaming directly over our house, which lies 2.5 miles due south of Kyle Field, the Texas A&M University football field. All home games begin with this fly-over because it's **A Tradition**. And this being Aggieland, practically everything here **is A Tradition** (note the maroon color for emphasis). The planes' altitude, near as I can tell, is roughly a few hundred feet overhead, which is close enough to see sunlight glancing off their pilot's visors. And yes, this is quite loud.

Now, please understand that I know being loyal and devoted to your school's sports teams is find and dandy, but to Texans, football is practically the state religion. For me, I could care less. As much as I enjoy a good, close, well-played college football game – I admit to being loyal to my alma mater, Iowa State University, and also my home state's Minnesota Twins, Vikings, Wild, and next year's professional soccer team (FC Minnesota) – sports to me is a mindless diversion, something I usually put on the television - while I grade student essays and other homework assignments - for background noise. Yes, I do pay attention to the score, cheering when my team scores and wins, grumbling when they make mistakes and lose. In that way I am much like any other moderate sports fan, unlike the ludicrously obsessive TAMU fans with their precious football team. Meh. I can do without it.

But, oh, it is so much fun to tease my students by saying, "If the Aggies lose, that might have a negative effect on your grades." When I want, I can be a real bastard – but only when it's funny.

We have a winner...

Actually, quite a few. In mid-August in Kansas City, at MidAmeriCon, Part Deux, the Achievements in Science Fiction Awards – a.k.a., our beloved and belittled Hugos – were handed out, and once again the slates lost to the diverse and talented writers and artists in the field, which is as it should be. The best news of all came in the Fan categories, notably the Best Fan Artist which finally went to probably the

most deserving fan artist in the room, Steve Stiles. It has been way too long for Steve to have not won this before. Now we have to get one to another most-deserving fan artist, Taral Wayne, whose contributions have, like Stiles, also graced fanzines for decades. Taral is very past-due for a Best Fan Artist Hugo, as well. I am also extremely pleased that Mike Glycer won the Best Fan Writer Hugo and his excellent fanzine *File: 770* received the Best Fanzine Hugo. He is also very deserving – and doing well, too, I understand: Mike had a health scare this past summer, but he is feeling much better now, for which we are all grateful.

So hearty congratulations go to Steve and Mike, and to all the other Hugo winners. A special shout out goes to *The Martian*, which was the much, much better film than *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. As for the fiction winners, I hate to admit this, but I have not read any of them despite all of my best attempts to keep abreast of the new fiction of 2015. This field has just become too frigging huge!

Shitgibbon: the Rant-thology

By election day (November 8th) this one-off fanzine better damned well be done. It is definitely shaping up nicely: as of October 20th, I had seven articles and a Steve Stiles cover for the issue, which will have to do. The absolute, latest date I was willing to accept submissions was October 10th because I wanted to give myself three weeks to get that project completed and posted to efanzines. Well, it's almost done. With *Askance #38* finally completed, I can concentrate on *Shitgibbon*. A big thank you goes to all who contributed, and I sincerely hope to say that to even more fine fellow fans.

And from that silly subject, it hurts to move onto the next topic:



David A. Kyle at Chicon 7. Photo by John L. Coker III.

David A. Kyle (1919-2016)

It is probably safe to say to that the recent loss of Dave Kyle has been very hard for long-time science fiction fans to take. His contributions to the SF community are long and legendary, and I consider the few times I met him a real pleasure. The most recent time I had the chance to talk with Dave was at LoneStarCon 3, the 2013 World SF Convention just over in San Antonio. As usual, he was a font of wisdom, humor, and grace.

We talked for roughly half an hour about conventions and fanzines – he even let me sit next to him! – before I wandered back over to the fanzine lounge I was tending to, although I never saw him there. He probably did while I was off doing something else that weekend. Dave Kyle was a gentleman through and through, and we all will miss him very, very much. Godspeed, Dave.

Who is in this issue

Well, I admit I have gone over to the Dark Side by publishing a serious and constructive essay about *gasp~!* science fiction, but that's okay. After all, this is a science fiction fanzine, right? Once in a while one of these things is going to slip into these pages, and then there goes the neighborhood.

Robin Bright, PhD

Over the course of the last year or so, Dr. Bright has been sending out numerous articles to assorted science fiction fanzines, the majority of them dealing with the subject of his dissertation research, the work of Robert A. Heinlein. Last fall I reread *Starship Troopers* for the first time since high school, so when Dr. Bright's article "Fascistoid" came my way (via Joseph Major, editor of the fine fanzine *Alexiad*), the memory of the book was relatively fresh. I have never really thought of Heinlein's fiction in this light, and found this article quite interesting.

Teddy Harvia

Once again these pages are graced by the graceful presence of "Chat, the 4th Fannish Ghod," or as graceful a presence a 400-pound cat can muster. Be that as it may, Teddy continues to regale us with the escapades of this fannish feline. Maybe someday he will write a full-blown article about this character and its history. Does anybody else here like that idea?

Taral Wayne

The recently awarded Hugo Awards spurred multiple-nominated fan artist Taral Wayne to share his thoughts about the Fan Artist category. Most fans have rejoiced at this year's winners, mostly as a repudiation of the Sad and Angry Puppies (or Sad, Angry Puppies, take your pick) slate-voting methodology, and this article from Taral looks at it from another angle. I find it interesting, and hope readers will, too.

Alan White

It has been way too long since Alan's artwork has appeared in *Askance*, and he returns with a vengeance. Many die-hard science fiction fanzine fans believe he is one of our finest artists and deserving of Hugo Award nomination at the very least. This issue's front cover has little to do with any particular article in this issue, except maybe the barest resemblance to Dr. Bright's subject matter, *Starship Troopers*.

Well, those are the responsible parties for this issue's content – besides yours truly, of course – and I am very glad they sent stuff to be used. As always, contributions from readers both old and new, near and far, terrestrial and extra-terrestrial, are welcomed. As you will see on pages 12 to 16, I am not remiss at accepting sercon - serious and constructive - type of material for *Askance*; it is simply that the primary focus here is fannish, even faanish, in nature. Then again, All Knowledge Is Contained In Fanzines. So be it.

Maker of Winners

Taral Wayne

It's been a funny time for me. Within a very short space of time, I "lost" two awards.

Of course, one of them I wasn't even in the running for this year. I was on the ballot for the other award, but I knew perfectly well that I wasn't going to win. I should not have been affected by the outcome of either one, but I can't say that I have been immune from any feeling about these awards, either. I have long histories with both.

The more significant of the two is the Hugo, of course. I was nominated for best fan artist for the first time in 1987, and in every subsequent year until 1990. Then I disappeared from the ballot for what seemed likely to be for good. In those four years I lost to Brad Foster three consecutive years, and finally to Stu Shiffman's solo victory. Diane Gallagher Wu came out of almost nowhere to share the fan artists' Hugo with Brad one year, which left me floundering. And somehow Brad still doesn't think he has won often – although he has won five *more* Hugos over the years.

The long hiatus came to an end unexpectedly in 1999 and 2000. I lost to Joe Mayhew and Teddy Harvia, best known for one-panel gags. My second honeymoon with the Hugos ended just as unexpectedly as it had begun. Not altogether strangely, I was losing interest in sending art to fanzines, and said widely that there was no good reason why I should be nominated any longer.

But if I thought I was drifting out of fandom, I was wrong. Only a couple of years later, I was experiencing a real renaissance ... but as a *fan writer*! All the same, when I began to appear on Hugo ballots again, it was still as a *fan artist*. In an obliging mood, I began to share out art again. This state of affairs continued for five whole years, coming to an end only in 2012. Curiously, I was not on the ballot during the year the Worldcon was in Toronto. The very first time I was a Hugo nominee while attending a Worldcon was in 2009, when I was also the Fan Guest of Honour for *Anticipation*.

It was supposed to have been "my" year. Everyone told me so. The publicity of being the FanGoH could not fail to push me into the Hugo winner's circle. Steve Stiles, gentleman that he is, even withdrew his name from the nominations that year, to ensure he did not "steal" votes from me. It made no difference. I still came in dragging my heels at dead last, or close to it. Then, in 2012 it was all over. The Reno *Renovation* was not only the last Worldcon I attended, but the last time I was nominated for Best Fan Artist. The winners in recent years have mostly been unfamiliar names to fanzine fandom – a pattern that has developed in the Fan Writer and Fanzine categories as well.



At this point, I think that Old School fandom is only going to grow smaller and less influential with each passing year. The younger fandom that is taking charge of more and more has shown little interest in the past, and has its own conception of what fandom is. They will not honour our sense of “entitlement” to *anything*. So it would be more than surprising if I am ever again nominated for the Hugo for Best Fan Artist *or* Best Fan Writer. I have to admit that I would gladly have traded a Fan Artist nomination for a Fan Writer. I don’t believe anyone has ever been nominated for both. But both possibilities are equally unlikely at this point, with the entire planet opening up to the Hugos like a small neighborhood blooming overnight into a continent!

It was almost equally surprising that Steve Stiles managed to hang onto to his nominations, year after year. I suppose the best way to explain it was that there was one and only one space on the ballot that fanzine fandom could concentrate all of its effort to fill with one of its own ... and Steve was the choice.

It was not an arbitrary choice, either. Steve was coming out of what seemed to have been a slight fallow period, his art appearing all over fanzines from the Antipodes to the Hesperides. Steve was also socially prominent – having a well-defined place in East Coast fandom as well as traveling to Worldcons and Corflus when possible. Almost everyone knows and likes Steve, and takes an interest in his fan art. There was also an enormous *impetus* behind him. Steve was first nominated for the Hugo in 1967, the first year that a fan art category had appeared on the ballot. Then, after a second nomination the next year, Steve disappeared from the ballot for over 30 years. Nobody could say why, since his art remained popular throughout that entire time. At Torcon 3 in 2003, however, the name Stiles made a much-belated reappearance on the ballot. It stayed there, too, every year since ... except for 2009, when Steve withdrew. Every year, fans crossed their fingers as the Worldcon approached, and went to bed at night wishing on a star that Steve would finally win his Hugo. And every year he would be beaten by someone who knitted wool 3CPO mittens or illustrated Harry Potter fanfiction. Everyone would feel let down ... but would only *wish the harder* next year!



Steve’s day finally came *this* year, in 2016! Although it is not altogether discreet to ask, the question “why this year?” is a natural one. I don’t *know*, but here’s what I’m thinking;

Over the last couple of years, the Hugos have been blemished by the farce of a special interest group trying to leverage their opinions over the majority by organizing a block vote ahead of time. 2016 is the second year this “Sad Puppy” scheme has been attempted, and for the second time it has been largely thwarted. The Sad Puppies appear to have even fielded a slate of fan nominees ... all except for Steve Stiles. By doing so, though, I think the Puppies only managed to

clear the slate of any serious rivals who might have had an actual following, and could have beaten the Old School favourite. Well, however it happened, the bottom line is that whoever has the most votes wins, and Steve had the most votes.

I received the news on the day of the Awards by accident. I noticed that Moshe Feder had posted a photo of the Hugo winner line-up. I glanced at it, bared my teeth with a display of animal envy and wished them all dead. Then I noticed a familiar roach-cut among the nodding heads. Steve? Was that really Steve Stiles? He won? He couldn't have! However, within minutes there were other posts that confirmed that Steve's more-than-45-year wait was over!

Incidentally, I learned that a similar effect must have cleared the way for Mike Glycer to win two more Hugos – the first in years – for Best Fan Writer and Best Fanzine. Old School fandom had reclaimed its old territory with a vengeance!

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The other award I mentioned was the Aurora. It was created in the 1980s, and was divided into a number of professional categories, and three for fanac – Fanzine Activities (including publishing, writing, art and letter hacking), Organizational Activities (such as running cons, clubs or funds), and Other Activities (for whatever didn't fit in the other two categories), such as filk singing, SCA demonstrations, theatrical productions ... or even doing celebrity impersonations. Needless to say, the best-laid plans go oft astray.

Skip to the present. Several times, the Auroras have given no award at all to a fanzine or anything recognizable as fanzine activity, due to a lack of votes. Despite a still lively, if very small fanzine fandom in Canada during the second decade of this century, few of the Aurora voters seemed aware of fanzines ... or showed enough interest to express any preferences in the matter. The other categories had been somewhat luckier ... but the voters clearly had some novel interpretations of what a "fan" or "fanac" was. The fan Auroras were being won by academics and professional writers.

By this time, I had no respect left for them at all. I don't think I stretch a point too far by saying that in this decade I must be the outstanding fanzine fan in the country – not only for publishing *Broken Toys* monthly for four solid years, but also for being among the first rank of fan writers, and being the country's *only* still active fanzine artist. Yet, until a couple of years ago, I have not even been *nominated* for a fan Aurora. The voters were entirely unaware of me or the fanzine world I still inhabited. It seemed utterly absurd, like a film award that completely ignored Hollywood in favour of recognizing the film output of junior high schools. I was finally nominated, but came in last place, behind ... what or who I have no idea anymore.

I was nominated again this year, and learned I was not among the winners only a short time before hearing the outcome of the Hugos. One of those who won an Aurora for fan activity was the chairman of the con hosting the awards this year. In other words, he gave himself an award for presenting the award. The winner for Best Fanzine Activity was the host of a university radio show. How anyone could consider a radio show to be a fanzine mystifies me. Clearly, if the voters are more interested in radio shows than fanzines, the sensible thing to do is rename the category Fan Media.

R. Graeme Cameron still argues that the Auroras should still have a fanzine category ... but as long as the category doesn't collect a minimum number of votes for an Aurora to be given, then what purpose does it serve? Nor is bundling fanzines into a Fan Media category likely to promote fanzines, either. For the

purposes of the Aurora, I see no point in trying to acknowledge the existence of fanzine activity at all. Canadian fandom has written over that part of its history, and no longer remembers it.

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Receiving the news, first of *Broken Toys* not winning an Aurora, and then only a few days later hearing that Steve was finally requited for his long, long affair with the Hugos, had an odd effect on me, to say the least. I was jealous, I admit it. I knew deep in my heart, with an unshakable conviction, that I will never have *my* day. I gritted my teeth and wrote a congratulatory e-mail to Steve ... which, I'm happy to say, made me feel much better about it afterward.

I think we may well have to face the possibility that this year's results may have been fanzine fandom's last "huzzah." The circumstances that led to both Mike Glycer and Steve Stiles taking all three fan Hugos may never repeat themselves. If the voters next year return to the pattern of the last few years, we will probably see someone who weaves Elvish handbags win Best Fan Artist. Best Fanzine will be a knock-off of MST3000 on YouTube, and Best Fanzine Writer might be the author of some *My Little Pony* fanfiction we've never heard of.

It is with thoughts like these that I have come to the profound belief I can never win a Hugo. Not for fan art, not for fan writer, and certainly not for fanzine. It goes without saying that while my fanzines are very good, they are personalzines and an acquired taste, that lack the broad appeal you would expect of a Hugo winner. Best fanzine was never on my radar.

Nor was best fan writer, for the longest time. There have always been many fine writers in fandom, so many that no number of Hugos every year could properly acknowledge all of them. Those that were honored were almost an arbitrary group ... whose selection often had more to do with which fanzines they appeared in and how large the readership was. Obviously, writing for *Outworlds* or *Science Fiction Review* was likely to give you a better chance at a Hugo than writing for *Starling* or *Raffles*. For someone in my position, there was no point in thinking about it. However, by the beginning of the Millennium, I was beginning to feel real power emerge from my writing. I thought it wasn't merely "fan" good, but maybe actually good. A nomination for Best Fan Writer might not be so out of the question after all. Still, there was the readership factor to contend against. I was never going to be a regular for *Locus*. However, I was appearing regularly in *Banana Wings*, *Challenger*, *Askance*, *File 770*, *Drink Tank*, *Reluctant Famulus*, *Alexiad*, *Visions of Paradise*, *E-Ditto*, *Vegas Fandom Weekly*, *Journey Planet*, *SF Commentary*, and *at least once* in another dozen fanzines. At that time, too, Old School fandom had a major influence on the Hugos still. I began to see that I had reasonable odds of a Fan Writer nomination.

Alas, I don't seem to have come close at any time. Perhaps the voters just *didn't think* of me as a *fan writer*, but as a *fan artist*.

But even as a fan artist I don't seem to have been able to surmount the odds. Generally, Steve and I would each garner enough support to hold on for dear life to the last spots on the Hugo ballot. For a number of years, in fact, Steve and I were neck-and-neck in how many times we were nominated ... and lost. I even produced a badge for the two of us that reproduced the number of pins we owned, updating it for a year or two. It was safer to wear the badge than the actual pins, which had a distressing habit of falling off. But then came the fateful year, appropriately 2013, when my name

dropped off the bottom of the ballot, and never reappeared. With the addition of a jeweler to the ballot, there was no longer room for two fanzine artists. In a way it was a relief.

I keenly remember waiting in the wings, holding Anticipation's unusually beautiful Hugo in my own hands, ready to present it to the recipients of the Best Fanzine category. I smiled at the acrobat who had performed so beautifully early during the ceremonies, and she smiled back. Then I walked out, tore open the envelope and read with as much surprise as anyone in the audience that the winner was *Electric Velocipede*, a website that had about as much to do with fanzines as Siskel & Ebert. Ironically, the concom had asked me to present the fan artist Hugo. I had to remind them that I was one of the nominees, and it might be embarrassing if I had to present it to myself. I was rapidly switched with one of the presenters of the other fan categories.

When the announcement was made for the Best Fanartist, I was in the audience, front row, and heard the dreadful words, "And the winner is... *Frank Wu*." He had won his *fourth* Hugo for Fan art. And really ... for so little. He had popped up about four years ago and his art had appeared in very few places other than *Drink Tank*. But he had carefully selected his audience, and ensured his work appeared on as many convention program books as he could. I regarded Frank as an ambitious pro wanna-be who would leave fandom behind as fast as he could sign a contract with some publisher ... and that may have been the case. I haven't seen much of Frank since *Drink Tank* ended. It might not have been so bad, but when he mounted the stage to accept his rocket, he held it in his hands like a toy airplane and ran around the stage going, "vroom, vroom," like a small boy ... with *my* fucking Hugo!



I suppose I was pretty much jaded with the Hugos after that. I was never going to get any closer, and it was obvious than any Johnny-come-lately could snatch the rocket from the likes of me or Steve almost at will. Subsequent events seem to have proven this so. Most winners of the Fan Art category have come and gone, as far as I can tell, with what service to which community in fandom I couldn't say. Certainly not fanzine fandom.

But I don't have to worry about that anymore, do I? It's strangely hard to remember that. I have to keep reminding myself that it doesn't matter who the winners of awards are, because they don't directly affect me. The future of fan awards of *every* kind is a transformation into awards for the first steps to prodrom.

Which is what makes it somewhat awkward when an old friend finally beats the odds and does win the Hugo. To be glad for Steve is also to awaken old pains that I was hoping to have finally interred. Nevertheless, I was happy for him ... once the shock wore off.

In a recent fanzine, one fan wrote that he had the impression that fanartists in general felt hard-done-by and unappreciated by fandom. Although I browsed through *Vibrator* and *Banana Wings*, I was unfortunately unable to find the reference again. But I'm sure that whoever made the comment will step forward to take his or her bows, all in good time. I can attest that the comment is rather accurate. I know and communicate with a number of fanartists, and, of all of them, only Brad Foster seems

incurably happy about fandom... but Brad seems happy about just about everything, except his basement flooding. The rest have all grumbled bitterly about one aspect of fandom or another. Cons beg for art to use in their publications, then mangle the work, and never send a copy of the publication. Fanzine editors sit on drawings for five-years-or-more, then announce they are gafiating. Artworks containing hours of painstaking detail are shrunk to postage-stamp size, or apparently printed with a potato-half. All that goes without saying. The most serious complaint is that nobody mentions the art in the letter column.

This is not strictly true. Covers are mentioned. It's usually only interior art that goes unnoted by readers. The exception is art by Dan Steffan, which, when found, is like a Golden Ticket in a Willy Wonka bar. You don't ask if it's really gold. It inspires mention as much because of the unbelievable luck of the editor, as because Dan is an excellent artist. Which he is. However, most fan artists must subsist on very thin gruel. They get thrown a passing compliment now and then, whenever anyone remembers that most of the images in fanzines are not anonymous clip-art, but the product of some fan much like them, who has spent hours at a drawing board to make his mark. It is often forgotten, too, how wordy some artists are. Overshadowed by their own art, their writing is little remarked upon. But as word-slingers they are awash in an ocean of *magnificent* fan writers, above whose white crests *little* is visible. Fan artists have frequently made their bones as fanzine editors, as well. But their reputations as artists, writers, editors, even convention participants, never seem to equal the sum of their parts.

So we bitch and moan a lot, perhaps in part because we spend a lot of time staring at blank sheets of paper we have to fill, while feeling sorry for ourselves. People who have fuller social lives have less time for such existential angst.

God knows... I have plenty of time to stew by myself. I can't think about the true meaning of the Copenhagen Interpretation of quantum uncertainty, or the price of admission to the amphitheater to see Christians thrown to the lions, *all* the time ... so I wonder, instead, whether I have used my life wisely. I suppose many artists have interior lives similar to mine, so must also seek validation where they can find it. All I can say is that fandom *could* do more to help.

But what is fandom? *Who* is fandom? Upon those rocks founder any attempt to demand anything of fandom.

In the final analysis, I look back on my 45 years in fandom and see that I have done a remarkable job of creating not only my own fanzines, but also filling those of other people. Many of those fanzines that have published my art and writing have won the Hugo themselves, or the FAAns, sometimes more than once ... and in a small way, *I* helped them do it. I have never been a Hugo Winner... but *I have been* a Maker of Hugo Winners.

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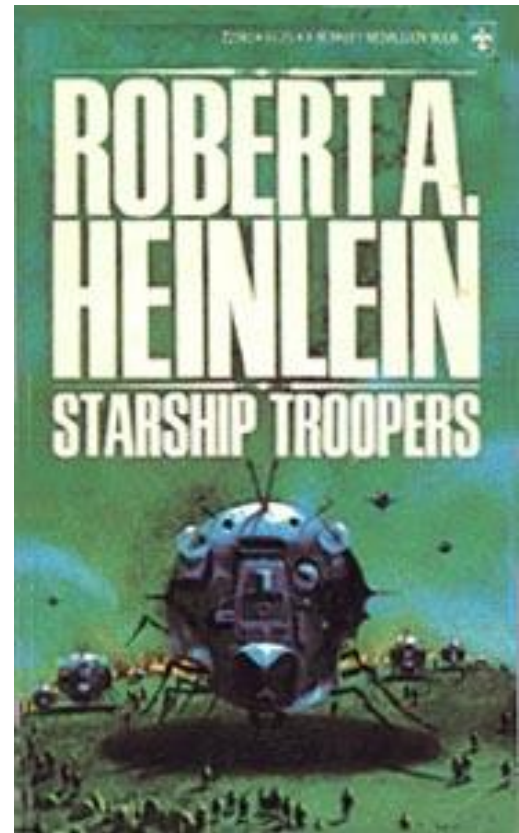
- Taral Wayne

"He'll have an enormous schvaunstücker." "That goes without saying."

FASCISTOID

By Robin Bright, PhD

Robert A. Heinlein (1907-88) was accused of being 'fascistoid' when his juvenile adventure novel for boys, *Starship Troopers* (1959), was presented to his usual publisher, Charles Scribner's Sons, and although it was finally published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, the term arose from perceptions of fascist content in the author's descriptions of a social system, which was allegedly based on that of ancient Rome's Imperialism, and gained acceptance amongst critics as accurately assessing the substance of the book. The term 'fascist' derives from the symbol of Roman Imperialism, the *fascis*, which was a bundle of wood with an axe in the center, and the symbol was subsequently revived by the Italian dictator, Benito



Mussolini, who assumed power in Rome after the election of 1922. The German dictator, Adolf Hitler, adopted the symbol from Mussolini and the *fascis* was prominent after the National Socialist (Nazi) Party was elected in 1933. Originally used as a symbol of Roman planning, the *fascis* represented the cutting of wood to build a hide behind which the planner would plan an encampment. The fascist regimes of Japan, Italy and Germany built 'concentration camps' inside which millions of people were killed before being stacked like logs and incinerated. Consequently, Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* was criticized for its 'History and Moral Philosophy', which is what the military of the novel are revealed to have been indoctrinated with in the unfolding of the narrative about their hero, Juan 'Johnnie' Rico: 'To vote is to wield authority; it is the supreme authority from which all other authority derives - such as mine to make your lives miserable once a day. Force if you will! - the franchise is force, naked and raw, the Power of the Rods and the Ax. Whether it is exerted by ten men or by ten billion, political authority is force.'¹ Although the statement, which is typical of Rico's instructor, Lt. Col. Jean V. Dubois (Ret.), takes place within the framework of an interplanetary war between Earth and the arachnoid 'bugs' of the planet, Klendathu, who destroyed Rico's home city, Buenos Aires, Argentina, critics' labeling of *Starship Troopers* 'fascist' bears scrutiny.

Fascism is the perception that people aren't angry enough to avoid being killed, which is what the fascist wants. *Starship Troopers* begins with the 'bug' attack on Buenos Aires, which makes Juan 'Johnnie' Rico, a citizen, angry enough to join the Mobile Infantry (M.I.) to defend the Earth against the arachnoid denizens of the planet, Klendathu. In short, the 'bug war' with the arachnoids is a plot device to facilitate the action sequences, which play a very important role in the later movie version, *Starship Troopers* (1997), starring actress, Denise Richards, as Carmen, a starship pilot, whose *cadre* are called 'mothers' by Heinlein, who drops her angry boy sons onto the 'bug worlds' where the arachnoids kill them, because that's what fascism wants. The Nazi pogroms against the Jews, which took place after

1933, and before the end of the war (1939-45) to defeat fascism, were directed against the `chosen people` of the *Bible*, that is, the *Old Testament* Torah and Talmud, which is the history and law of the Jews, and might have been expected to provoke anger enough to warrant the Nazis killing of the Jewish and other minorities` populations they`d targeted. Because the Jews didn`t display anger, the Nazis killed them anyway, which argues for fascism as a philosophy based on provoking anger. In other words, the angry are killed, so fascists provoke anger, because killing *per se* is what fascism is for. Consequently, movies labeled `action` are intrinsically fascistoid, because they promote anger and killing as an entertainment medium, which is why Heinlein`s *Starship Troopers* was criticized as providing material unsuitable for boys, who were being told to get angry, so that they could kill as a genuine expression of human nature, whereas it isn`t: `If you wanted to teach a baby a lesson, would you cut its head off? Of course not. You`d paddle it. There can be circumstances when it`s just as foolish to hit an enemy city with an H-bomb as it would be to spank a baby with an axe.` Or, indeed to behead all the Japanese in the city of Hiroshima, rather than use an H-bomb, which would be just as effective, and the buildings would all have remained.

Heinlein`s aren`t descriptions of human nature, but they`re representative of fascism, which won the war against Japan by dropping the H-bomb on the city of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, after the infamous `sneak attack` by the Japanese on the US Pacific fleet, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, that angered the United States of America and precipitated its involvement in WWII. From a fascist perspective, it was a successful operation. Many people were angry and died, which is what Hollywood, `Babylon`, the movie industry that grew out of the US city district of Los Angeles, California, after the first film made there on the west coast by director, D. W. Griffith, *Old California* (1910), promoted as entertainment, that is, before war with fascism angered the US into a fascist display of slow release footage of an atomic explosion mushrooming silently and majestically into the cerulean skies above Hiroshima on 6 August, and again above the Japanese city of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. *Soi distant* anger, as it were, by a newly arisen population converted to fascism and believing its provocation unanswerable: `Mystery, Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of the abominations of the Earth.` (Rev: 17. 5) Though only described as `a woman` in the *Bible*, Babylon (c. 4000 B.C.) was the capital city of the Persian Empire, which suggests that, like that of ancient Greece, its Empire was based on host womb enslavement of women in institutionalized homosexuality for pederasty and conquest through war, which are the abominations described as belonging to the rape victims.

Heinlein`s descriptions aren`t of human nature, and the *Bible* explains the reason for that. In Eden the first woman created by God, Eve, accepted `the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil`, that is, death, from the angel, Satan, who had been transformed into a serpent for rejecting God`s plan that the human host should be greater than the angelic. Death is ephemerality and impermanence in terms of memory and knowledge, so that it`s possible for slavers to maintain a society in ignorance. Consequently, death is necessary to slavers of the human host womb. Because women are capable of sexually reproducing as an independent futanarian species from their own `seed`, Eve is told her `seed` will be redeemed by God: `You shall crush the head of the serpent with your foot, but he will bruise your heel.` (Gen: 3. 15) As `woman`s seed` leaves to colonize the planets amongst the stars of heaven above through her brains` powers for technological development, and starships of her own devising, Satanism will endeavor to stop her in order to maintain its slave system.

In Christian iconography Jesus` mother, the Virgin Mary, is depicted as crushing the head of the serpent with her foot, because Jesus was born uncontaminated by male semen, and so his teaching was

essentially 'lesbian' as a reflection of his own futanarian heritage: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' (Mk: 12. 31) Though Jesus' mother, the Virgin Mary, is depicted as producing a child through parthenogenesis, futanarian women can self-fertilize, which is the human futanarian species' survival trait. Consequently, when Jesus was taken to the hill of Calvary outside the city of Jerusalem by the Roman occupying Empire and nailed to a cross of wood as a 'dissident' preacher, his experience of Resurrection and Ascension to heaven was a symbolic prefiguration of the destiny of 'woman's seed'. As the emblem of the power of Imperial Rome was the *fascies*, so the construction of Jesus' cross represented the first of the steps that the fascists took towards exterminating the human futanarian 'chosen people' of the Jews, whose tradition it is that a Jew can only be born from a Jewish woman, for example, the Virgin Mary, that is, futanarian women and their offspring are Jews, although conversion and repentance from evil sinful nature confers redemption, according to Jesus' disciple John, who also describes what will happen if men don't accept 'woman's seed': 'The dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war on the remnant of her seed.' (Rev: 12. 17) In parasitology, the term 'parasitoid' is given to the parasite that emerges from the host to kill it, which is why the serpent becomes a dragon, war. Human nature isn't unredeemed men's.

As the character, Carmen, in *Starship Troopers*, actress Denise Richards is the pilot of the Rodger Young, a starship that drops its boy sons onto the 'bug world', Klendathu, and so suggests 'biological warfare' involving poisons and viruses, which is what the men of the car with its carbon monoxide poison gas, and the demon driver's spreading of its HIV/AIDS contagion through host womb enslavement of the human futanarian species of women in institutionalized homosexuality in pederasty for war against 'woman's seed', is. Carmen's 'boy sons' readying themselves for a 'drop' are her 'poisons' to be used against the 'bugs', because host womb enslavement of the human futanarian species of 'woman's seed' in homosexuality in pederasty for war against her had, by the late 20th century, resulted in the spread of the 'incurable killer disease', HIV/AIDS, through men's mixing of blood, shit and semen in each others' anuses in rejection of women: 'Men cursed the God of heaven for their pains and their sores but refused to repent of what they had done.' (Rev: 16. 11) What they'd done was develop men's nature as a 'biological weapon' against the futanarian human species, which in Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* is extrapolated into the threat to Earth's future posed by an eight-limbed 'bug' depicted as an eight-limbed arachnoid.

In Islam, which is wrongly represented as antithetical to Judeo-Christianity, Abraham's marriage to Sara is productive of the founder of Judaism, Isaac, but Sara is barren thereafter and gives Abraham, Hajer, her maid who gives birth to Ishmael, the founder of Islam through his descendant, Mohamed who, according to Islamic tradition, received the *Koran* (610-30 C.E.), that is, the narrative of the history and the projected future in heaven of the people of the Earth, from the angels of God, who'd been told that the human host was to be greater than the angelic. In Islam the father of Isaac, and Ishmael, is revered, for example, the people celebrate the Eid Al-Adha, that is, the sparing of Isaac by God, after God had commanded Abraham to kill Isaac as a human sacrifice to God, which would have aborted Judaism. Abraham's temple is the holiest place in Islam, and is visited by pilgrims in the 'Haj', named for Hajer. Called the 'Ka' Ba', the temple reflects upon Hajer, 'an Egyptian woman', because 'Ka', during the period of the Empire of Egypt, was 'spirit', while 'Ba' was soul. Consequently, the 'Ka' Ba' is the temple of Hajer's belief in human futanarian 'woman's seed', that is, the sexual conjoining of women with each other. In simple terms, the temple or 'shrine' of Abraham represents women's belief in the rebirth of

humanity, which reaches its apotheosis in the *Koran* and the *New Testament* of the Christian *Bible* with the birth of Jesus from the Virgin Mary as a futanarian `seed` uncontaminated.

Heinlein's *Starship Troopers`* character of Carmen, as a `mother pilot` preparing her boy sons` drops, extrapolates from the car men`s poison, that is, the poison gas that the Nazis used to kill the `chosen people` of the *Bible*, before stacking them like logs and incinerating them in the `death camps`, to `biological warfare`, that is, HIV/AIDS, as a metaphor for the war of men`s `seed` against women`s, who`re depicted as spiders in *Starship Troopers*, because women`s race sexually reproduces as a pair, whereas men can`t sexually reproduce without women, which means they`re `stand alone`, rather than collective. In other words, Abraham, Jesus, and Mohamed are representative of those who stood alone against the evil parasitoid nature possessing humanity, whereas Carmen in *Starship Troopers`* victory over `the bugs` represents women`s defeat, because the arachnoids are extrapolations of `woman`s seed` as alien to the car men of the Earth, who poison the planet and don`t want `woman`s seed` to escape their parasitoid pogrom in which the human host womb is devoured in warfare against her.

The stand alone theory of men doesn`t apply to warfare, which is the false assumption that hordes of men killing each other together are heroic, whereas that`s what evil unredeemed parasitoid nature does. In short, Jesus is heroic, because he stood alone uncontaminated against the male brained Empire of the parasitoid Romans, whereas the First World War (1914-18) against German Imperialism, for example, was an illustration of men`s collective parasitoid nature. The Archduke Ferdinand of the Empire of Austro-Hungary was assassinated by a Serb, Gavrilo Princip, in Bosnia. The Germans told the Austro-Hungarians to present a list of demands to Serbia, and the Serbians replied that they couldn`t meet the demands, so the German Empire declared war on Serbia, which precipitated global conflict, because that`s what parasitoid evil nature wants. Effectively, the German Empire declared war on Gavrilo Princip, a Serb, who shot an Austro-Hungarian in Bosnia, and who spent the war in prison, because he was too young to be executed. The millions of men killed in WWI is what fascist parasitoid nature is for, and Heinlein`s *Starship Troopers* explains that it`s `woman`s seed` that`s the target, that is, human extinction by an alien nature denying futanarian mankind`s capacity to sexually reproduce its own brains` powers to escape from the collective devourer by making sexual reproduction inaccessible to the human race through propagandist control of the mass media edutainment system.

In Islam, which means `accept` God, `woman`s seed` is hidden beneath the one-piece coverall of the burka and the veil, because the so-called democracies of Judeo-Christianity reveal female nudity as penisless and enslaved in pornography, and experience of war against the Moslem peoples, where `Moslem` means `submit` to God, suggests to the `remnant` of human futanaria that they should hide from prying parasitoid eyes: `Let he that has wisdom understand. The number of a man is the number of the beast and his number is six hundred three score and six.` (*Rev*: 13. 8) Because men and women constitute 66.6%, if futanarian are 33.3% of the human species. However, if women can sexually reproduce with each other, men`s voting system is rigged in favor of male brained dictatorship by repressing `woman`s seed` into disenfranchisement, that is, an alien subjugation of human nature for slavery to parasitoid devouring of `woman`s seed` in war against her: `The second beast was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.` (*Rev*: 13. 15) Jesus` disciple John`s description of `TV` derives from his understanding of the way that the parasitoid Empire of Rome manufactured men and women

as a single male brained creature wearing each others' clothes in 'TV' transvestism for its entertainment. Killed in huge amphitheaters built by its fascist parasitoid planners the Romans were the forerunners of John Logie Baird's 'TV' home entertainment system of television invented in 1926, which became the global propaganda instrument of the alien devouring spirit possessing the people of the Earth after Hollywood, 'Babylon', and its construction of huge cinema theaters to show 'action' movies as a complement to the war theaters of the 20th century, where the transvestite killed itself in reality for the pleasure of the evil. Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* extrapolates from the 'small screen' of 'TV' to the 'big screen' of the theater of interplanetary war to depict men and women's crushing of the human species as a 'bug': 'When you come right to it, it is easier to die than it is to use your head.'³ As a part of Sergeant Charles Zim's response to Ted Hendrick's question on the purpose of the M.I., his is a simple description of how men's parasitoid collective beheads the human race of futanarian 'woman's seed', because an alien devouring spirit doesn't want a slave species with a brain.

- Dr. Robert Bright

1 Heinlein, Robert A., *Starship Troopers*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959, Ch. 12.

2 Charles Zim in Heinlein, Robert A., *Starship Troopers*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959, Ch. 5, p. 63.

3 Lt. Col. Jean V. Dubois (Ret.) in Heinlein, Robert A., *Starship Troopers*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959.

Back on page five I mentioned that I had reread *Starship Troopers* in the fall of 2015. Over the years my reading interests have changed, morphed, grown, turned me into a more critical reader of whatever it is I am reading. This is especially true thanks to my position as a professor of English and ESL (English as a Second Language) at the Bryan, Texas, campus of Blinn College. This unfortunately means that I am exposed to a lot of student essays – the most painful aspect of my job, I admit – which after a while make my eyes glaze over, and my brain turns to silly putty. To counter these side-effects, I read science fiction, fantasy, mysteries, listen to good music, take walks, etcetera. You know the drill. Well, I have three bookshelves in my office. One contains research texts and professional journals; another holds assorted literature (prose, drama, poetry), dictionaries, and reference material. The third bookshelf case is my office science fiction library. This is where I keep books by favorite authors, who are essentially my mental therapists. So one day last November, to take a break from another vicious onslaught of freshman persuasive argument composition essays, I looked over, desperately grabbed this book, and started reading.

I read it simply for the adventure that *Starship Troopers* essentially is. The underlying major themes were apparent – intolerance, bigotry, fear of invasion by a soulless entity (the Soviets), the war machine that drives politics – and I discovered that this novel, while still excellent reading, is very much a product of its time: the mentality of 1950s America. Still, *Starship Troopers* holds up well as one of the essential books that a serious science fiction fan must own and read.

Just don't watch the movies. **shudder** Just. Don't.

A Solitary Remembrance of Heinlein

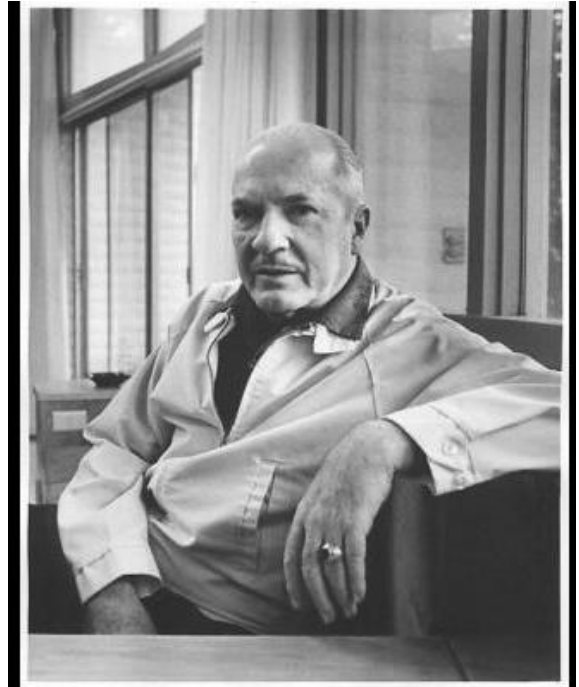
by John A. Purcell

When I began reading Robin Bright's article about *Starship Troopers*, it brought back the memory of the only time I ever met Robert A. Heinlein. Yes, that happened in 1976 at MidAmeriCon, the first World Science Fiction Convention I ever attended. The thing is, though, I never got close to the man to even have the chance to shake his hand and say a meaningless "hello" to one of the greatest science fiction writers who ever put pen to paper.

Not that I didn't have the chance to do so. Heinlein was a big believer and supporter of blood donation. Truth be told, so am I. If it wasn't for blood and plasma donors I probably would not be sitting in front of this computer writing in October 2016. My fan article "By the Numbers", which has seen print in Dave Locke's fanzine *Time and Again #4* and then reprinted in Guy H. Lillian III's *Challenger #32*, was about the near total bleed out and abdominal surgery of May 1999 that nearly claimed my life. I received 13 units of blood while in the hospital, so I feel a great deal of gratitude for those souls who the time out of their lives to donate blood. For most of my adult life I have done this, too, and it is one of the easiest and most selfless things a person can do.

But back to Kansas City, MO, in 1976. Like I started to say, Heinlein wanted a Bloodmobile to be present at MidAmeriCon that year so that fans could donate to the cause, and offered to meet each and every donor by hosting a special blood donor's reception on Saturday afternoon of the WorldCon (if I recall correctly). Unfortunately, I failed to get around to donating, so I missed out on that chance. However, I did see Mr. Heinlein from a distance at the Meet the Authors Party and took a photograph, which is buried deep in a storage tub of other photographs. Some year... At any rate, that was the closest I ever got within physical distance of Robert A. Heinlein.

The strongest memory that I have of that WorldCon is Heinlein's Guest of Honor speech. Ask anybody who was there for that lengthy, rambling, and extemporaneous lecture – which it was, in my mind, rather than a prepared speech – and they will tell you their take-away of it. At one point, around the thirty-minute mark, some people in the audience started booing. Yes, they were **BOOING** that year's World Science Fiction Author Guest of Honor, Robert Anson Heinlein! Granted, his comments were getting very militaristic in tone, and Heinlein sounded like he was on the verge of a tirade, but since when do SF fans boo their Guest of Honor? You don't have to agree with what he or she is saying or believes in, but show them some respect, people! It shocked me, and to this day that is the one incident that I remember the most about MidAmeriCon in 1976. For what it's worth, there it is.





FANZINES!

fanzines!

fanzines!

Run away!

fanzines

This is where I talk fanzines. As if you haven't figured that out by now.

The object of my commentary this time is a fanzine begun earlier this year by Dan Steffan, *Fugghead*. It has now seen six issues published, and for those readers who are not familiar with his work, Dan is a long-time fan who is not only a wonderful writer, but a fine artist, too. The image here is a copy-paste of



the latest issue (posted to efanzines on October 9, 2016) that is completely devoted to remembrances of the late Joyce Worley Katz, who passed away on July 30th. Dan knew Joyce for a very long time, and his lengthy article remembering her is not only emotionally draining, but a wonderful tribute to a woman who exemplifies what a fan should be, how to act, as a gracious, caring human being. I never met Joyce – wanted to, and almost did back in 2012, when a major regional TESOL conference (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) was held in Las Vegas – mainly because I knew her through the APA we were in together, SNAPS (Southern Nevada Amateur Press Society). If for no other reason than this article, Dan Steffan proves that he is also a fine writer.

So. A bit more about mister Steffan. He was the recipient of the 1994 FAAn Award for Best Fan Artist and Best Fanzine, *Blat!*, which he and Ted White co-edited. The next year Dan was the TAFF winner, and

in 2009 he received the Rotsler Award “in recognition of his contributions to fan art.” (quote from Wikipedia. Yes, there are entries on fans on that site. Go figure.)

The sixth issue of *Fugghead* (dated September 2016) is the only issue comprised of all new material. The first five issues are filled with previously unpublished fan articles that have either been lying in Dan's files for umpty-ump years, or have been sent to him for publication. Some of these articles go back to 1972 (Art Widner writing as R. Twidner in the first issue), written by the likes of John Brosnan, Charles

Burbee, John Foyster, Andrew Hooper, Roy Kettle, Bill Kunkel, Walt Willis, and those names are just from the first two issues! The quality of the writing is top-flight, fun, insightful, and I think these articles are very informative and important from a fan-historical perspective. For the best way to describe the *raison d'être* for this fanzine, here is what Dan writes about it (lifted from www.efanzines.com):

***Fugghead** is a fanzine where the literary le zombies of fannish lore come back to life. After years spent neglected in the dark corners of boxes, basements, and attics, these orphaned manuscripts and leftover fanzine contributions have been waiting for a chance to be rediscovered—a chance to finally be read and enjoyed by an audience still lively enough to appreciate them. This fanzine is dedicated to that proposition.*

*I like to call it Fannish Archaeology. It's a search and rescue operation, but with staples. Many fans have these kinds of forgotten nuggets and gems in their files and it's become my job, and my pleasure, to dig them up and present them to you. Often they've been left behind when a fanzine has unexpectedly had to call it a day, or given up the ghost, or its editor has discovered girls. Whatever the reason, **Fugghead** is here to offer new life to stuff written on old paper. (Have you got any? Let us know.)*

One note: This may be the new age of the internet tubes, but this is an old skool fanzine. Print it out—otherwise that stuff up there about the staples won't make any sense. Read and enjoy.

Trust me, this is a fanzine worth downloading or printing out. I highly recommend *Fugghead*. If you don't like it, well, then, then you are the fugghead. Here is the contact information:

Dan Steffan
2015 NE 50th
Avenue, Portland, OR 97213

dansteffanland@gmail.com

CHAT, the 4th Fannish Ghod by Teddy Harvia

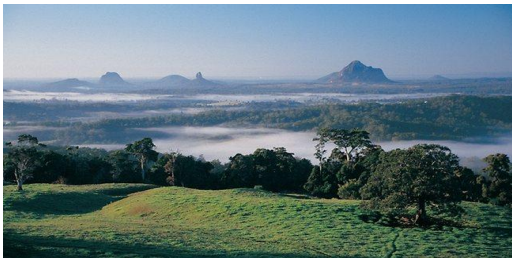


From the Hinterlands



Here we are again, lads and lassies, staring across the emptiness of our souls, baring our teeth at the ancient fears assailing us from the depths of our souls; insofar as we can see, the tormented denizens of the nether realms hang over our lives like the mists of Avalon, with the ragged, solitary peaks of sanity poking into the depths of eternity...

Oh. Sorry about all that. It is time to move into the letters of comment that arrived since the 37th issue of this attempt at a quarterly fanzine appeared. Leading off is Ray Palm, who sends backwards in time to the 34th issue, which appeared in August of 2015. Well, this being science fiction fandom, that could be considered Right On Time. Anyway, here is Ray:



Ray Palm

raypalmx@gmail.com

July 21, 2016

I enjoyed Taral Wayne's article, "The Shape of Space" (*Askance* #34). Good choice of images to show the changes over the years in spaceship design.

In Arthur C. Clarke's short story "Sunjammer"/"The Wind from the Sun," he envisioned a space yacht propelled by radiation pressure exerting pressure on a solar sail. An example of form following function.

And there's the concept of a spaceship/UFO as a living creature transporting an alien crew. One example is the spaceship discovered during subway construction in the 1967 movie *Five Million Years to Earth/Quatermass and the Pit*. The Martian crew has died but the ship lives on, awakening after being uncovered, but not with good results.

And there's *{sic}* the stories of UFOs shaped like jellyfish, just floating in the air with their long tentacles. Maybe such organic creatures could carry a crew to explore a planet's surface, dropping down from an orbiting mothership. The tentacles could be used to anchor the vessel, wrapping around various objects such as a telephone cell tower.

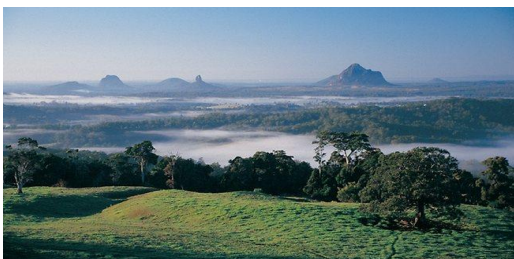
My favorite is the time bubble that also travels through space as seen in 1950s/1960s DC comic books. (<http://comicvine.gamespot.com/time-bubble/4055-47355/>) Rip Hunter had his steel sphere, but I prefer the transparent time bubbles used by the Legion of Super Heroes that could carry only a few travelers. This bubble design was seen flying within the earth's atmosphere. I suspect that at higher speeds the aerodynamics would be similar to that of a hurling baseball -- hopefully without the spinning.

Of course the problem with transparency is that anyone could look it. Good thing the LSH time bubbles could turn invisible when someone wanted to change into their PJ's.

Ray

{Ah, me. I love skipping backwards in time, don't you? () Spaceship design is more functional than aesthetic: just look at the International Space Station for a shining example of this. As for "time bubbles," I don't think so.}*

Addressing an issue that seems to have mostly burned itself out, here are some further thoughts about the topic of convention behavior.



Al Bouchard

ajlbouchard@gmail.com

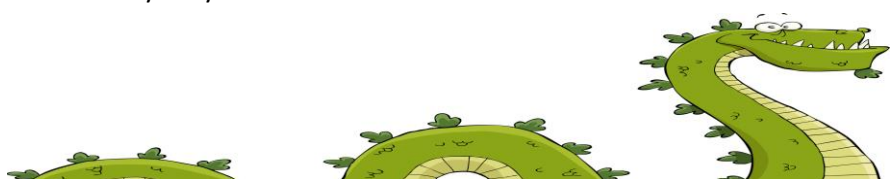
August 4, 2016

I do, as a former concom member, feel the need to weigh in on the foofaraw about bad behavior at conventions.

When my wife and I were heavily into conrunning, there were, as noted, fewer incidents of intra-con problems, especially at the "dissing a GoH" level. She and I were especially sensitive to that sort of thing, because we always tried to make sure that the guests were treated well, placed on panel items they were interested in, not abused, overworked, or imposed upon during their weekend with us.

It seems to me that this lack of respect is not just a GoH thing, or even a convention thing; I think many of the current crop of "fen" (I use the term under advisement) have been the victims of, if not, in fact, the perpetrators of, a general lack of social acceptance and courtesy I have noted in the world at large (E.g., the organism known as "Donald J. Trump"). They want what **they** want, they want it **now**, and they don't give a rotund rodent's rectum about anybody else.

There are times I despair about our species' future.

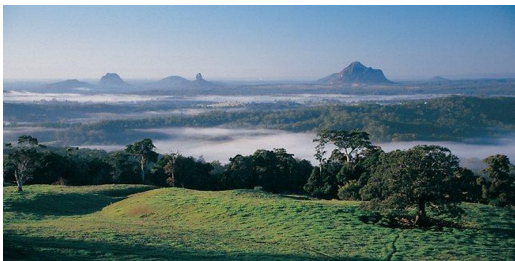


I do wish to apologize about not responding more quickly; there are explanations I can give, but since they all sound (to me) suspiciously like whining, I shall refrain.

Until your next issue, I remain,

Al Bouchard

{In fandom, speed is not necessarily of the essence, Al; simply responding at all is much better.() I like the ground rules you laid out. I have never been deeply involved with running a convention – well, that's not totally true, but I mean as a chairperson who is generally in charge of Many Things – so my experience is minimal, yet I agree with you and your wife's position that any con GoH should be treated with respect and not be overworked. After all, they usually agree to GoH-ships because it's good publicity for them and promote their books, plus to schmooze with their friends just like we fans enjoy doing. Very practical ideas, Al, and I thank you for sharing them.}*



Charles Rector

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August 1, 2016

The best part of the latest issue, as with many other fanzines, was the LOC's as well as your responses to them. Actually, it seems as if your best material comes as responses to other writers instead of your own stand-alone stuff.

First of all, in the part of your response to my LOC dealing with Margaret Middleton, you apparently did not first consult the FenCon XIII website. Had you done so, you would have seen that Margaret Middleton is now living in Starkville, MS, and will be one of the featured filk singers there. My guess is that the time that I was living in Little Rock, 1997-2000, was a period of down time for her, fandom wise. It happens. I took 2 months off from my fanzine Fornax to focus on the presidential primaries and am now catching up to ensure that the unlucky 13th issue will come out in time for Halloween.

If you do talk to her, it would not be one bit surprising if she did not remember me at all. Cerebral palsy affects one's facial muscles and causes you to have a speech problem. As a result, I've never been what you would call a terribly vocal participant in any of the activities/groups that I've been involved in. When you don't talk a whole lot, folks tend not to remember you. Needless to say, I find it much easier to communicate by writing than verbally.

Question: When you go to conventions, do you interview anyone for your budding fanzine empire? If so, I'd like to suggest you try to interview someone with the Generic Radio Workshop (GRW) since that is one of the few outfits producing original radio (or is that audio) drama nowadays. That makes the GRW awfully interesting and as such prime interview material. As for authors like P.N. Elrod and the like, they should have no trouble finding someone to interview them. They don't need you to help them sell books.

You claim that you did not reprint Mark Oshiro's Facebook (FB) posting to fill up a hole in your zine. If that is the case, then why did you not contact Mr. Oshiro and ask him to write an article about his experience using wisdom and insights gained during the time after it happened from the comments made by others as well as feedback from the convention organizers? What was the point of simply regurgitating something that had already been read, re-read and commented on to death at FB, *File 770* and elsewhere?

Also, have you been in contact with Mr. Oshiro about this? Has he shown any awareness of your reprinting his FB posting? If so, has he made any response to the LOC's that you published about it?

It's interesting that there's only one comic book store in your area. The only place here in McHenry County, IL, where there are 307,000 inhabitants, you can only get comic books at the Barnes & Noble in Crystal Lake. Given the high price for such skinny publications, it should not be surprising that whenever I've been there, I have not seen anyone checking them out. From what the staff there have told me, once the price was raised to \$3.99, sales there collapsed. Question: Why did the publishers go from the cheaper paper to slick paper back in the day? All that did was to make comic books unnecessarily expensive and really did not do all that much to improve the books. I for one found the cheaper paper to be quite satisfactory.

And what's the point of publishing titles like *Harley Quinn* that glorify criminality? It's a sign of just how much comic books have become marginalized that there has not been anything like the level of criticism directed at comic books as there was during the 1940's and 1950's when they were trashed as being "Fascist" and worse. There has certainly not been anyone like Dr. Frederic Wertham around nowadays. This despite the fact that the comic books of today are far more dark and glorifying of crime than they ever were during my childhood and as such more deserving of public criticism than they were back then."

Why the vulgarity with Graham Charnock? Why couldn't this issue of *Askance* be one for the whole family? Or is this guy a bully or smart aleck who has treated you badly at conventions in the past? If that's the case, then why can't you guys keep your hostility a private affair?

Noticed that you have an increased interest in fanzine fiction. I've just started making the pages of *Fornax* open for fiction submissions. With the ongoing decline of the prozines, it might be only a matter of time before the fan/semi-pro press becomes the center of the fiction action if it isn't already. At least that is until such time as some prozine publisher gets their act together. If the prozines do die off altogether, their tombstone will read, "their death was earned."

Finally, the Hugo Awards never really meant all that much to me. It always seemed to me that so many of the Hugo Award winning works were kind of underwhelming while other awards went to works of a generally higher quality. If you look at the list of past winners, it seems as if the first few decades of the Hugo Awards went to the same old same old timers with new authors finding it almost impossible to break in. How many fans simply voted for old favorites without bothering to read the works involved? It's only been during the past two decades or so that new writers have been able to break in the shorter

fiction categories and that's because so many of the big name writers have chosen to focus on novels because that's where the money is.

Another problem with the Hugos is that even with the big name writers, it is sometimes a mystery why some of their works win and others don't. For instance, *Double Star* is one of Heinlein's worst novels and it won despite the fact that I have never been able to find anyone who is willing to admit that they liked it. On the other hand, I've found *Tunnel in the Sky* to be a great read that has held up to more than one reading, and yet it has been derided as being a "juvenile" book because it is about young people. Strangely enough, *Starship Troopers* is mostly about young people as well, but nobody ever calls that a juvenile work.

Well, I've been writing for what seems like forever and it's well past my normal bedtime. If I have a bad day after the sun comes out, it's your fault for inspiring me to remain at the computer for this long. Wonder how many of your students are also inspired to write like this.

Until our next rendezvous in cyberspace,

Charles Rector

{Well, Charles, I am glad last issue inspired you to share your thoughts. Thank you. Naturally, in a letter this long there are many points to touch on, so...

(1) The lettercolumn has always been the backbone of fanzines. This is where we communicate with each other. Main articles are fine and dandy, but the give-and-take is always interesting and fun. (2) I did not know Margaret Middleton was now living in Mississippi. If I ever do see her at a con again, it is doubtful she'd remember me that well, either. Still, good to see she's still knocking about and having fun with filking, which is one of her main fan activities. (3) Sometimes I set up an interview with somebody at a con I will be attending, but since those are relatively uncommon, I don't worry about that. It's a good idea, though. Most of the material I get here is requested from people.

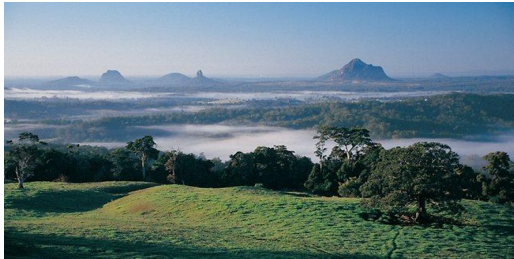
*(4) Yes, I did ask Mark Oshiro's permission to reprint his Facebook posting, and I know he's read the fanzine – thanks to efanzines.com having a tracking feature (where and when folks are seeing your zine, which is really cool to see) I know this to be true – but no real feedback from him yet, but that doesn't surprise me. Mark is a busy man and I have no desire to consume very much of his time. Also, considering that people have talked this issue over quite a bit in **Askance** and in other venues, it seems as if a general consensus has been arrived at, so I can conclude that my goal of getting people to discuss the issue of civility at conventions between fans and professionals, either as guest or attendee, has been reached, so therefore I am going to consider this topic "closed." Then again, if anyone wants to add further comments, that's fine.*

(5) Ah, language usage in fanzines. Well, Graham Charnock and I know each other, and we don't throw vulgarity around to be mean-spirited. In a way it's expressing camaraderie. We are not angry at each other. The more you read his and other fanzines, Charles, you will probably recognize this pattern,



especially with British fans who are very close friends for dozens of years. It's one way to have fun in fanzines. In fact, the best fan-writing is not vulgar at all; naughty words are usually used for dramatic and humorous affect. It's all in fun between us, that's all.

(6) The Hugo awards have always been problematic. I'm like you in that I really don't care about them much anymore, but when I am a supporting or attending member of a WorldCon my votes are based on what I have read and consider of award quality.}



Dave Haren

tyrbolo@comcast.net

July 11, 2016

You don't look very old to me, but then neither does anyone else these days. Hard to figure out why, but someone is working on it in a secret lab; if they succeed then those of us who never bothered with cosmetic touchup will be even more visible.

Steve Jackson woke with 30+ inches of dirty water in his bedroom, but has since moved to higher ground. I was a desert dweller and we learned early to look for high water marks. When you see everything running for higher ground it is a good idea to follow the trend. The desert tends to skin over instead of absorbing and downhill it picks up speed on the way and house sized boulders once in a while. Asian storms are more likely to drop tons onto your head in passing but don't have enough to actually drown you. They do put a stop to most activity for a bit.

I seem to recall a Blinn that was the animator for JPL during the Voyager flyby. He had a monitor I lusted after, 8000 X 8000 pixels colour version, they said it was wasted on humans as we could only see about 1000 X 1000 at a time of what was displayed. Without the multi-year missions we might start to think space is easy to do. There's been a lot of loose talk about Mars travel but the realities are pretty harsh unless we start lifting some serious hardware out of the well. Right now we are like the first seafarer Og on the log who never got very far.

Wasn't Hickok the one they named the dead man's hand after (aces and eights) since that was his hand when he was shot in the back playing poker?

They have filmed my favourite Matheson multiple times, his inversion of the vampire was priceless prose at the time.

Skiping past a bunch of stuff which probably should be commended.

EC Comics were indeed horrific stuff and it doesn't surprise me some folks like Milt decided to pass on reading them. They had the best war comics because they were drawn by veterans, the best horror

because it was far too scary to become ordinary. Once the bluenoses got in the act comics became barely palatable pablum for retarded adults.

You might want to recommend *Kill Six Billion Demons* to the local comic store since it has a print version coming out; buying a copy for every intelligent child you know might start to make some difference in the world as well. I am an anime fan because the Japanese use it to make a difference with their children embedding basically homilies about friendship, loyalty, and the problems of absolutisms in conflict into their works.

Wolf is probably old enough to remember Eric Frank Russell stories of the virtues of MYOB when opposed to consensual bureaucratic umwelt (reality tunnels in the heads we live in), being picked on for being strange is usually enough to make folk leery of picking on others. Once you decide you are part of a group then the ridiculous behaviors begin. I recommend a dose of Max Stirner so that the virtue of groupthink can be placed in proper perspective instead of ruining what could be a pretty good world given half a chance. The instant you start playing us versus them, you are in the trap of becoming what you are supposedly against. Politicals are adepts at stirring these pots because it allows them to pluck the geese with minimal squawking (Pareto's explanation of political systems).

I've been reading Cory Doctorow 'For the Win', which is full of various information (some bookstore ads, and some economics theories), the main stories are of the poor who have discovered the computer. Worth reading. Zappology continues to dig up obscurities for musical edification. I use them as the radio on my Oolite starship while playing, never was a fan of Muzak (mindless background noise crapola).

Bowie made the best Goblin King in *Labyrinth*, but for me he lacked the power of Freddie Mercury even though he tried hard.

Hope that's better.

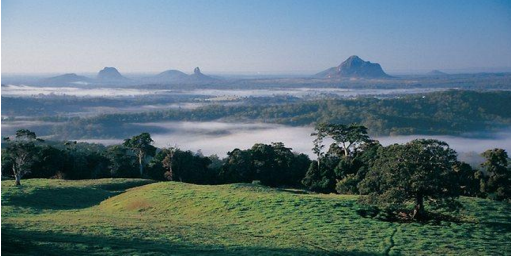
Dave Haren

{I agree with you that Freddie Mercury (of Queen) was a more powerful singer, both vocally and emotionally, than Bowie. I like both of them. They produced fantastic music during their careers. () You are right about "Hickok's Hand". A Google search reveals that this is also known as the Dead Man's Hand, consisting of two black aces and two black eights (as pictured here) along with an unknown hole card. (*) Thank you for saying I don't look old. I don't feel old, either.*

My personal motto has always been to never act my age. At 62, I am likely never to start – except when knee and shoulder joints stiffen, but so far that's not a major problem. Yet.}



*"Igor, help me out with the bags, will you?"
"Certainly! You take the blonde, I'll take the one in the turban."*



Milt Stevens

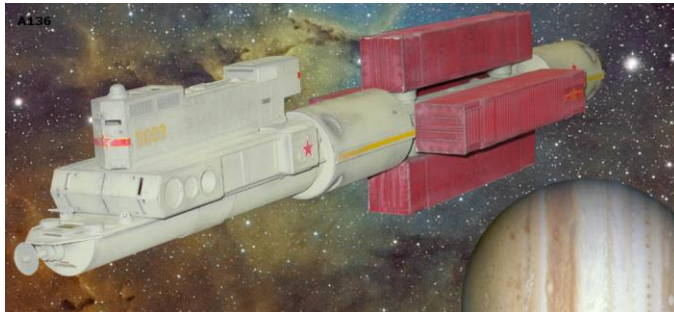
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miltstevens@earthlink.net

July 12, 2016

In *Askance #37*, you mention doing a presentation on educational motivation at a conference. I do remember going to college. As I remember, motivation was an occasional sort of thing. Mostly, I just followed orders and hoped the whole thing was never brought up at a future war crimes trial. When I was in high school I looked at college catalogs and wanted to take everything and learn everything. I'd always wanted to grow up to be omniscient. By the time I was a senior, I only wanted to know how many units it would take to get out of the place.

The main motivation for going to college was money. I wanted more of it. Popular wisdom said getting a degree would help you make more money. It may also have been some sort of a weird manhood rite. At least, it was easier than killing a lion with a spear. When I was in college there was also the motivation of the educational deferment to avoid the Vietnam War. As a senior in college, I was so tired of going to school, that I was willing to take my chances with a war.



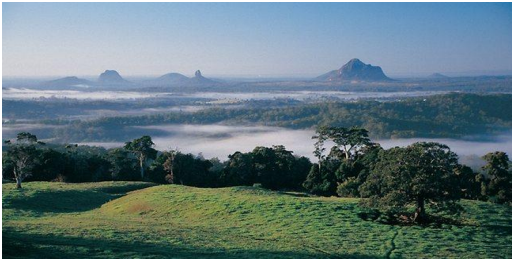
After getting out of the Navy three years later, I could have gone to school for a few more years on the GI Bill. I didn't. I did take all sorts of courses in later years, but that was stuff I actually wanted to know. I didn't care about grades. If I didn't apply myself, I was wasting everybody's time and my money.

Based on fannish experience, I have an idea as to how to teach a composition course. Years ago, teenagers would join fandom and immediately try to publish a fanzine. The results were usually referred to as CRUDZINES. However, as the teenagers became aware people were paying attention to their writing, they got better very rapidly. In a composition class, I would establish a class apa. Minac is two pages a week on any subject. Everybody reads what everybody else writes, and they may comment.

That thing at the beginning of your letter column looks like a Trojan Beagle. I have no idea why someone would build a Trojan Beagle, but there must be some reason for it.

Milt Stevens

Beware of Trojan Beagles bearing brown gifts. () I like the class fanzine project idea. In the past I have toyed with the idea of producing a fiction magazine in my literature class, like a creative writing course usually does, then forget it because there is rarely enough time to do it right. Oh, well.}*



Paul Skelton

paulskelton2@gmail.com

July 28, 2016

Having returned home last Saturday from Tesco's after doing $<\frac{1}{2}$ the main weekly shop (the $>\frac{1}{2}$ is now done at Aldi's) I wrote out the following list and placed it on Cas' side of the kitchen table...

12 Black
6 Orange
1 Green

...and after she'd sat down to her lunch I said "Whatever you do, don't lose that important list." She picked it up and looked at it then asked in bafflement, "What the Hell is that all about?"

"It's something you're apparently supposed to get around to when you get to our age", I replied. "It's my Bucket List". Let's face it; you can't have too many buckets. Tesco apparently agrees because, as we were leaving their main Stockport store, we passed a large metal storage cage filled with black plastic buckets which bore the sign "Free Bucket for Every Customer". We debated whether or not we were entitled to two buckets, given that we'd bought stuff for both of us but regretfully decided that, as it had been done in a single transaction, this made us technically only a single customer. It's a nice enough bucket though and it did after all give me the idea for the list, and the look of chagrin on Cas' face, after she realised she'd fallen for it, was well worth the scheming.

Quite why they have decided on this particular scheme in a forlorn attempt to try and reclaim their once pre-eminent place in UK marketing is, I feel certain, a question beyond resolution by even the greatest business analysts. They used to say that one in every three pounds spent in the UK High Street was spent at Tesco. I can see the boardroom meeting now; the chairman addressing the board...

"Gentlemen, these are parlous times. We have lost a significant – not to say huge - proportion of our turnover. We have had enormous fines levied against us. Hundreds of millions of pounds have been knocked off our share value, partly as a result of the aforementioned facts and also because of the dodgy accounting practises with which we tried to conceal them...hence the enormous fines. The entire population of the country has lost faith in us. We need some mega-brilliant concept to turn this around, else we are, I'm afraid to say, a sinking ship. What's that, Sir Terrence, you have an idea?"

"Yes, Lord Fortescue. Why don't we give every customer a free plastic bucket?"

"Brilliant, Sir Terrance! And there was me thinking this would be a difficult meeting. Problem solved! I think we can now adjourn for drinks. I believe this calls for triple G&Ts all-round. I declare this Board Meeting closed."

And to think some fools campaigned in the recent referendum that we needed to put the 'Great' back into Great Britain!

“Why is he telling me all this?” you are doubtless asking. Well, you pointed out, near the beginning of your *Bemused Natterings*, that you can carry a tune without the use of a bucket. I, on the other hand, can’t carry a tune to save my life...even with **nineteen** buckets! {Uurrgghh!! - ed.}

That was an excellent cover by Al Sirois. One problem I find with some eZines is that they tend to use far too gaudy a palette, splashing colour around simply because it’s available. With this piece though one is refreshingly reminded just how dramatic black and white illustration can be. Have you been holding onto it since 1975, or has he sent you some old, unpublished stuff? Not of course that it really matters. I was never a big fan of his artwork back in the day, but this piece certainly plays very effectively to his strengths. Basically there were no living things included. That’s where I always thought he fell down. This cover looks ‘real’, whereas whenever he put a person or alien into a picture it always looked ‘drawn. That of course is quite possibly just a personal reaction. As they say, “Your mileage may differ”.

According to the photo below, which ‘Doc’ Hinton sent me many years ago, your ‘bluebells’ appear to be lupins. At least that’s what he called them, and I must say that’s what they look like to me.

Charles Rector omits what is possibly the best reason for white writers not using non-white characters, which is that writers are advised to write about what they know, and no white writer knows shit about being non-white. Mind you, no writer knows anything about FTL space-travel, alien civilizations, or any other SF trope, so I guess that means SF doesn’t exist and when I wake up I’ll have no end of trouble explaining this *Really Weird Dream* to Cas...always assuming she isn’t just part of it.



Now you’ve done it John. I’ve just discovered, whilst writing this LoC, that many of the illos in your zine have secret stories to tell. Not all of them. Many are strangely reserved and either have no hidden secrets or else are better at keeping them. The reason I’ve just discovered this is that I read ezines on my tablet, but LoC them via WORD on the laptop, with the fanzine also open in another window. Quite by chance I left-clicked on the cover and discovered it was ‘G:\artwork\Sirois rocket.jpg’, whilst the little spider in the web is [‘/data/data/com.infraware.PolarisOfficeStdForTablet/files/.polaris_temp/image2.jpg’](#) which seems a bit over the top for a fillo, if you ask me. I guess the little pictures in the LoCcol being ‘dog house’ is not much of a surprise but I was intrigued by the... ‘[http://www.jophan.org/mimosa/m14/Sfl.gif](#)’ ...on the Convention Listings header. I was, though, alarmed when, in response to a click on Taral’s little yellow note, I got a warning box saying “The document is trying to connect to [http://www.google.com/url?sa=irc](#) followed by several lines of gobbledegook. Needless to say, I pressed the ‘cancel’ button. If there is any soul braver than I I’d be interested to know where that link took them. But I’ve just spent 20 minutes going through the two issues you’ve sent me. I’ve got lots of other ezines on file and, omigawd, there’s Bill Burns’

efanzines.com to go at. Will I ever have the time to LoC another fanzine? Come to that, will I ever have time to read another fanzine? I think I'd better go and lie down for a bit and hope that this compulsion is only temporary.

Skel

{Skel, you are either a very brave soul or a very silly sod for clicking on links at random. Why don't you trot on off and have yourself a nice lie down? There's a good boy.

{You raise a good point about SF writers writing about stuff that obviously does not, and may never, exist, such as FTL, wormholes, time travel, alien races, and the lot, but that has never stopped anyone, has it? When you do finally wake up from that Really Weird Dream, let the rest of us know, will you? }

Lloyd Penney
1706-24 Eva Rd.
Etobicoke, ON,
CANADA M9C 2B2

July 28, 2016

You were good to your word, and you got me an e-copy of *Askance 37*. Now, I will do my bit, and try to write up a suitable loc. Nice Al Sirois illo for the cover, too.

I've never tried the playing and singing route, mostly because I can't play, and definitely can't sing. I used to be connected with the local filkers here, and there are many who also can't play or sing, but still participate. Even some in the Filk Hall of Fame freely admit they can't do either, but there they are in the HoF. You also mention how much rain you've gotten...where I am has had a severe drought for a couple of months now, with less than half the rain we usually get. The grassy areas are brown and crunchy. We've had about 20 days of temperatures above 30°C, or 86°F, which is a lot more than we usually get, too.

Sunday funnies? Well, I buy the Saturday *Toronto Star* every weekend, and the comics and the TV guide are the most important parts of the paper for me. Think there should be the funny pages in a fanzine? More opportunities for our talented fan artists, always a good thing.

I see so few movies, but we did see Ian McKellen in *Mr. Holmes*. A wonderful movie, and the local Holmes club raved over it. McKellen is on in years, but he had to be aged further in order to portray a truly old Sherlock Holmes. I especially liked finding out where Holmes and Watson actually did live.

David Thayer's Stars speak the truth, the Hugos are not what they used to be. Others will worry, but we won't; I think we will return to Worldcon when it is local again, meaning in Toronto, or other places we can easily drive to, including Ottawa, Montreal, Detroit, Buffalo...not likely at all.

The local...I believe I met Margaret Middleton some years ago, as a filker, she travelled around a fair bit, and came up to Toronto for its own filk con, FilKontario.

I see I offered another *Tale From The Convention!*, and then failed to do so. I must do better, and get with it. I did not get that interview with KPMG, and have temporarily suspended my job hunt, and the reason for that is our vacation! Since this letter, we've done a number of conventions and shows which we have vended at...besides the comic con in Kitchener, there was Ad Astra, Anime North (great sales that weekend, as always), a local alternative craft show called The Bazaar of the Bizarre, and another show at a historic house in neighbouring Mississauga, called Through The Looking Glass: Steampunk Invasion. Coming up is the Coldwater Steampunk Festival, and then our vacation, and in the fall and winter, the Grand Canadian Steampunk Exposition in Niagara-on-the-Lake (just attending, not vending), the Locke Street Festival in Hamilton, the annual Christmas Craft Show at the Etobicoke School of the Arts, and finally, the annual Historic Bovaird House Christmas Craft Show in Brampton. We've been busy, and sales have been fair so far... Correct, no snow on the ground here. We do intend to take lots of pictures, especially with the tablet I have, so I can almost immediately relay them to my Facebook page.

Being in Canada, we can look over the fence (no wall yet), and see the politics in action, and wrinkle our noses in disgust. I will not mention who is disgusting us, no need to, for he must disgust most American voters, but if he insists on building the walls along the northern and southern borders, he must remember that not only will it keep us foreigners out, but it will keep Americans in, and isolated from the rest of the world. Please don't let that happen. Hillary Clinton might not be the best candidate, but she will be the best candidate on the ballot.

I have mentioned our vacation a couple of times...in 20 days as I write this,

All done! Got to the full page, and a little more. Thank you for this, and see you the next time you decide to commit fanzine.

Lloyd Penney

{By all means, kind sir, please send a "Tales from the Convention" for inclusion in the tenth anniversary issue next March – or April, seeing as how this damned thing's time schedule gets mucked up by Real Life Concerns getting in the way of having fun – so that you can be part of the festivities. Thank you for the offer!

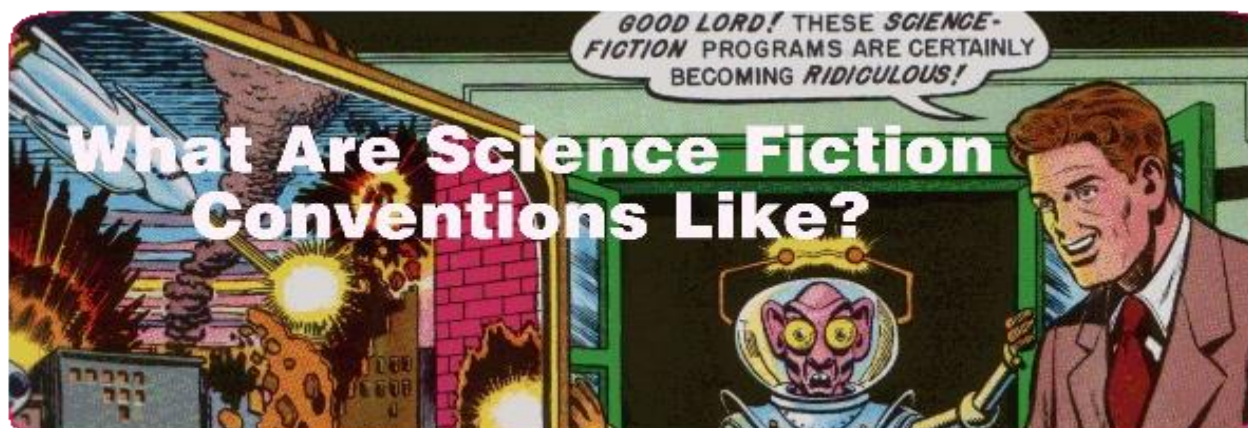


{I am still considering voting for Vermin Supreme as President. After all, he has promised every American citizen a free pony, although, like a true tyrannical ruler, Vermin will force us all to brush our teeth twice a day (!) to attack the gingivitis that is eating away at the roots of our civilization.

{In the meantime, I am glad that you and Yvonne had a splendid

vacation in England. Welcome back! Now, about that trip report...}

REGIONAL CONVENTION CALENDAR



Next weekend – as I write this and prepare the issue to send to Bill Burns – is the local big comic convention (see the first item on the list) and at the moment I will probably go for part of Saturday afternoon and evening. November 5th is also the Brazos Valley WorldFest, which the student organization I am a faculty sponsor of – Blinn College International Student Organization – has a cultural display there. So I need to be there overseeing that, but the Comic Con runs into that evening and then Sunday, therefore I shall be able to spend some time there.

[Alamo City Comic Con](#)

Comics con
October 28-30, 2016
Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center
200 East Market St.
San Antonio, TX 78205

San Antonio, TX area

Celebration of the comic arts in San Antonio, Texas. You'll find top-tier talent in the form of comic book artists, writers and publishers. You can also find many of your favorite actors from movies and television to comics and pop culture in general. We offer the opportunity to meet, get autographs, take photos and view panels with some of your favorite celebs, artists and writers. You can also purchase your favorite comics, collectibles, and toys from all our exhibitors.

[Brazos Valley STX Comic Con](#)

Comics
November 5-6, 2016
Brazos County Expo
Bryan, TX area

"You made a yummy sound."

Millenniumcon 19

Historical Miniatures Game Convention
November 11-13, 2016
Wingate Hotel & Convention Center
Round Rock, TX

NORTH of Austin. This is in the Round Rock / Central Texas area

Millennium 19 is a three day convention that supports Tabletop Wargaming with Historical Miniatures. We provide a unique event to celebrate our passion for playing wargames and crafting the miniatures and terrain used in these games. While we do focus on games involving historical time periods, our convention caters to many different gaming tastes and styles.

Unlike other conventions that support multiple genres, we don't have one group trying to be all things to all people. There are also a limited number of RPG games but the emphasis is on miniatures games. Because of our focus on miniatures, we are proud to call Millennium 18 the largest miniature convention in Texas.

How to Submit a Game at MillenniumCon

Please login to <http://millenniumcon.gamecon.us/reg/> and click on 'Submit a New Event'. You will need to create an account if you don't have one.

Table Size

Our standard table is 8' x 5'. For smaller games please select a 6' X 18" table. Larger tables are extremely limited.

Convention Pre-registration and event signup will open October 2014. During the pre-registration period, you will register for 3-Day passes only. Single Day passes will be available at the convention.

Dickens on the Strand

Galveston's World Famous Victorian Holiday Festival
WEAR A VICTORIAN COSTUME FOR 1/2 PRICE ADMISSION!
December 2-4, 2016
Strand National Historic Landmark District
Strand & Mechanic Streets between 20th & 25th
Galveston, Texas

The annual holiday street festival, based on 19th-century Victorian London, features parades, non-stop entertainment on six stages, strolling carolers, roving musicians, bagpipers, jugglers and a host of other entertainers. Costumed vendors peddle their wares from street stalls and rolling carts laden with holiday food and drink, Victorian-inspired crafts, clothing, jewelry, holiday decorations and gift items.

Continuous entertainment on several stages, over 150 craft and food vendors, children's activities abound at Piccadilly Circus, 3 grand parades, Victorian Bed Races, London Wharf and the Official Tall Ship of Texas ELISSA, GHF Member's Club, Costume Contests, Scrooge's Scavenger Hunt and wonderful special events throughout the weekend.

"No! Don't help him! He wants to do it himself!"

ConDFW XV

A Science Fiction & Fantasy Literary Event

(Presumably February 2017)

DFW Metroplex area

Science fiction and fantasy convention featuring writing/publishing based programming, science programming, an excellent collection of guests, art show, rooms of board gaming, a charity book swap and auction, a short story contest, a costume contest, and a slew of non-traditional activities such as the Sci-Fi Spelling Bee. We welcome one and all to show up, hang out, meet old friends, make new ones, and have an excellent time!

The Normal Features:

Art Show, Autographs, Dealer's Room, Con Suite, Panel Discussions, Gaming, Gallery Tables, Freebie Tables

And the Abnormalities:

Charity Book Swap, Hard Science Panels, Intergalactic Archaeology, "Late Night Double Feature", Artist Drawing Challenge, Sci-Fi Spelling Bee, Short Story Contest, Spontaneous Sing-Alongs

Be there or be Rhomboicosahedral! Brought to you by the Texas Speculative Fiction Association, a 501 (c)(3) organization. 100% volunteer-run.

OwlCon

Gaming, Fantasy, & Science Fiction Convention

(Presumably February 2017)

RMC/Ley Student Center

Rice University

Houston, TX

OwlCon is an annual gaming convention at Rice University, Houston, TX, dating back to 1980. We feature table top and live action role playing games, miniatures games and events, historical miniatures, board games, card games, a dealers' room, and more. OwlCon 32 gaming events will include RPGA and PFS events and specials, official tournaments for Warhammer 40k and Warhammer Fantasy, many tabletop games, several LARPS including Vampire and Call of Cthulhu, and many other games with prizes galore! OwlCon will once again be swarming with official demo folks for various game systems to give you a chance to try some of their great games. We will also have an anime room and a Dealers' room.

RevelCon 28

March 10–12, 2017

Houston, Texas

RevelCon is THE only fan-run relax-a-con/zinefest in the Southwest US. It's a fab weekend of vids, panels, art, zines, merchandise, food and frolic! [Note - Revelcon is an adults-only/18-and-over con.]

"Wait! Come back! I was going to make espresso!"

All-Con the XIIIth

Multi-format convention featuring autographs, gaming, comics, & a burlesque show.

March 16-19, 2017

Crowne Plaza North Dallas-Addison

14315 Midway Rd

Addison, TX 75001

(DFW Metroplex area)

For three days All-Con provides an umbrella of content supporting fans of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Renaissance, Anime, Costuming, Theater / Performing Arts, Mystery, Art, Crafts, Collecting, and Film Making. To help 'give back' there are several charity events at the convention every year.

All-Con is fan organized and built on community participation. We offer a track dedicated entirely to cross promoting clubs, conventions, and events. The best part is you may cross promote as a panelist for FREE as long as we have space and your content is appropriate. Don't forget to bring flyers for the flyer table.

AggieCon 47

Multi-genre entertainment and comic convention.

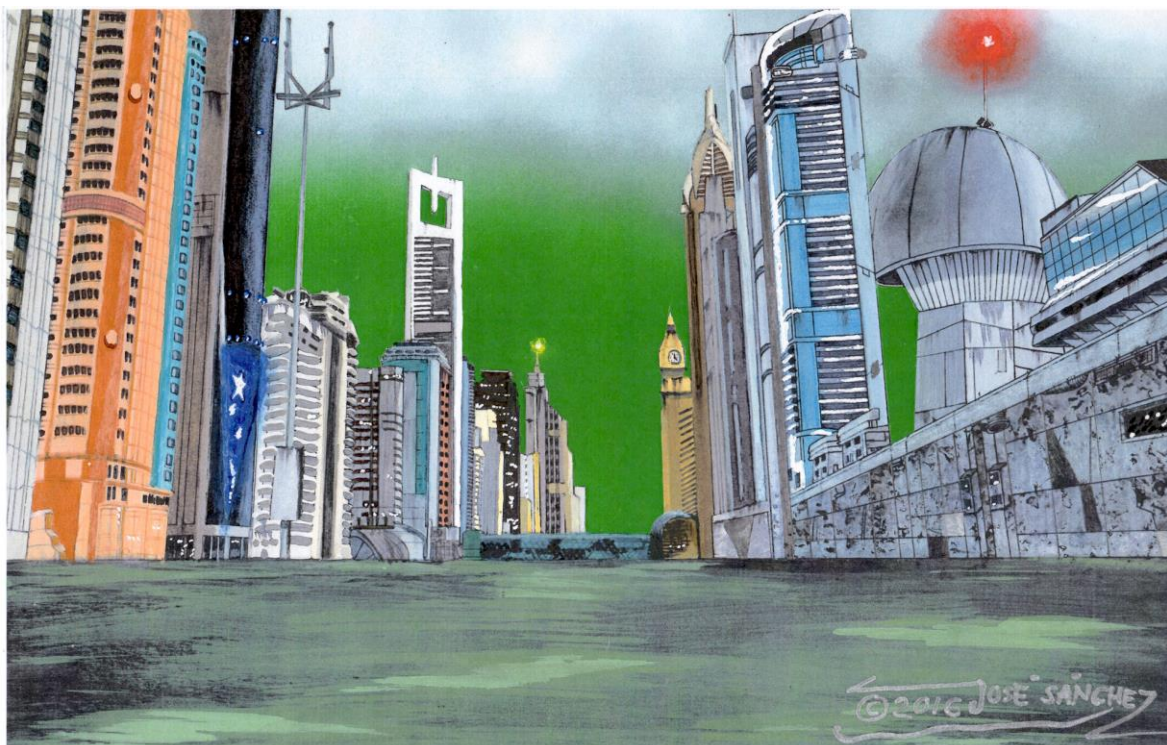
(Presumably April 2017)

Bryan, Texas

...[D]emos, lectures, workshops, panel discussions, games, and media showings. Dealers Room, Art Show, Gaming, Cosplay, Video Room, Charity, etc.

See also [AggieCon Facebook page](#)

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what's next

Sometimes I feel the same way as this putty tat. In fact, one could argue that this is a common expression on my face. Let us just say that life is full of surprises.

This particular issue was supposed to have been completed and posted to efanazines.com by the end of September of 2016, but obviously that did not happen. Here it is, the morning of October 30, 2016, and I am on the last page writing this text desperately trying to fill the page so that I can do the final editing and layout (illustrations, text movement, table of contents, art credits) to get this fershlugginer zine to Bill Burns. As a result, there will be probably be quite a few typos in this issue, some miss-aligned text margins, and other stupid mistakes, but hey, this is a science fiction fanzine. What else would you expect?

About the textboxes scattered throughout. A few months ago the great actor Gene Wilder passed away, and since it is Halloween weekend, I decided what better way to pay tribute by including some lines from arguably one of his finest roles – and screenplay writing efforts, too – from the brilliant movie *Young Frankenstein*. Thank you, Gene Wilder, for years of enjoyment.



*It seems to have become common practice for me to fill the last page with a section from my paper-only fanzine, **Askew**. Because this is a science fiction fanzine, here is one bit from the 16th issue. If you would like a copy please send me your snail mail address so that I can send you a copy. Thank you.*



Space -- the used-to-be frontier

I have always been a big fan of space exploration. This should not be a big surprise as most science fiction fans are proponents of this endeavor, and like so many of us, as a lad growing up in the 1960s – well, ages 6 to 16, if you want to get technical about it – I thrilled at each rocket launch, watched every single one that was televised, enthralled by the thought of getting off this chunk of space debris called planet Earth. These days I still get excited when another rocket goes up, although now it's not so much NASA that's running the show, but all the independent space ventures that are generating the buzz.

Elon Musk's SpaceX and Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic are two of the leaders in this endeavor, plus there are also the Commercial Spaceflight Federation, Blue Origin, SpaceDev, and Bigelow Aerospace. That makes a total of six private companies that are developing the technology to get humans into space via a more commercial, to say nothing of a less-expensive, means.

The way that I look at it, this is all A Very Good Thing. Ever since NASA grounded the shuttle program to the International Space Station – another great technological leap forward, even though it doesn't look like a gigantic spinning double-donut in orbit – in 2011, the United States has been paying the Russian Space Agency anywhere from \$70 to \$82 million a seat, making that one expensive ferry ride. Why NASA did not create a suitable, and cheaper, means to replace the shuttle first is beyond me. (In fact, many of NASA's programs are done backasswards, if you ask me. But that's fodder for another article one of these days.) So seeing private companies supported by deep-pocketed backers (Elon Musk, Richard Branson, Jeff Bezos, et al) working on this problem is a welcome sight.

I know, I know. I am a dreamer, but why should that be a problem? I don't think it should. I am reminded of John F. Kennedy's challenge in 1962 to land men on the Moon: "We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win."

We need to challenge ourselves again. Perhaps not in the sense of reclaiming national pride – still a worthy incentive, to be sure – but also as a means to galvanize humanity into pushing ourselves outward. Human nature craves new frontiers, new opportunities. So why not go outwards? "Space: the final frontier." Catchy phrase, that.

