

INTERMISSION #109

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com for EAPA, N'APA and some other fannishly smitten fen. Follow @SFJournalen's newstweets on Nordic sf/f/h&fandom. Six decades of sf news! Watch Intermissionvision Misprint Contest. 50 typos compete. Vote for your favourite! And then we storm the TV studio as it's all fake votes. Early June, Anno Virii 2021.

Editorially: Pandemic and the Missing MP

For more than a year I have used this editorial column to comment upon the Situation Regarding A Certain Micro Organism. So why break a winning streak! There may be some interest among readers, since the corona apocalypse Sweden has been handled a bit differently in Sweden. We have had plenty of advice and actions - wash hands, work from home if you can or feel symptoms, avoid crowds etc - but there has never been a lockdown, forcing everyone to stay at home, no mask mandates (aside from advising it in rush hour commuting, which I notice many ignored), no police on the streets handing out tickets for imagined virus offences, and so on.

But there has been one thing that has hurt, a cap on public gatherings (the organiser but not participants may here be fined). It used to be 50, but in December as the British Mutation began to spread politicians panicked and set the cap on 8. With 50 small clubs and entertainers could have events and earn if not a buck, at least 50 cents. I think the politruks over-reacted with 8 Statistics show that "tough measures" have limited effect, compare eg Florida with California. While it may stop some infections, the *negative* effects from a hammer blow to small businesses, restaurants, sports, churches, culture, etc are huge. Even more devastating is it creates an atmosphere of fear which turns people away from other health care. Millions of cancer screenings, operations, treatments etc are cancelled, which could mean many *more deaths* from that than from the virus.

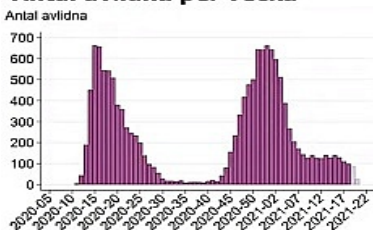
Though vaccinations have picked up speed, with warm weather and the Sun's UV rays killing corona, and death curves going flat, these slow-thinking opportunistic political party pigs have time and again moved the date for easing unnecessary "restrictions", from April 11 to May 3 to May 17 and as I write finally 1 June, when they couldn't postpone it any longer. Culture workers have circulated angry petitions against the harmful 8-person limit. And sports clubs are furious. Max 8 means organised training was stopped, which eg hits kids' soccer training. That's 100 000's of

children but also older players (though elite teams are classified as "pros" and not affected). Children also suffer from distance schooling which reports show is almost worthless. The clergy has also protested, rightly pointing out that max 8 on a service is silly considering the huge open spaces churches have. No entertainers or artists of any kind have had shows. Doing it "virtually" is not the same and its difficult to get paid, competing with free entertainment on Youtube. Museums, hotels, galleries have been near empty. Tourism is hampered, even after June 1 June due to internationally closed borders.

Those In Power now try to

continue scaring with dreaded new mutations and abroad I note they unscientifically insist vaccinated (very unlikely spreaders!) must continue with masks. I suspect they cling to masks just for the symbolism and that they like to push people around. The vaccines are effective also against mutations and when you read

Antal avlidna per vecka



Public Health Agency, June 3: corona deaths fall towards zero, with vaccine, weather and rising herd immunity.

even after June 1 June due to internationally closed borders.

Vädjar i media: "Lämna din plats i riksdagen"

Sverige • Partivännerna får inte tag i riksdagsledamoten Sara Heikkinen Breitholtz (S). Nu vädjar de till henne via media att ta konsekvenserna av att hon blivit delgiven misstanke om brott efter en trafikolycka i slutet av förra året.

– Lämna din plats i riksdagen, säger Ann-Louise Lundqvist, ordförande för S i Kungsbacka i [Kungsbacka-Posten](#).

Skalet att de vädjar i media är att de inte lyckats nå henne på annat sätt.

"Leave your Riksdag seat!" the S party pleaded, via newspapers "since they've been unable to reach her in other ways". The missing MP may be the reason the PM not easing virus measures despite vaccine, summer warmth and plunging curves.

this 50-55% of all adult Swedes have had the jab, which together with probably +35% who are immune from antibodies and T-cells means substantial herd immunity. And virtually all elderly, *everyone at any risk*, have been vaccinated. So why continue to pretend and cry wolf? Get real!

But I found a possible and strange explanation for why the government goes on banging the drum: it may be because a Social Democrat Member of Parliament, the "Riksdag", is *on the run from justice!* Why else has the government when statistics say otherwise time and time again delayed easing rules? In December MP Sara Heikkinen Breitholtz crashed into a bus with her car. She had taken strong medicines and is now suspected of driving under influence (she said intense stomach pain was the reason for the crash). And then she disappeared. She has been unreachable for months. The Social Democrat party has tried everything but can't find her, and is forced to plead through media.

The thing is this threatens the government's very thin parliamentary support. During the epidemic the Riksdag has been reduced to 55 members (it's usually 349 MPs) in an internal deal between the parties, maintaining the proportional party strengths. Not counting the outlier and not too trustworthy so called Sweden Democrats the present government normally has 144 MPs in support and the opposition 143. But having an MP on the run from the law (as it seems) it becomes 143 to 143 - majority gone! The government risk losing votings, but *not in the 55 member Riksdag* where the government has 23 against 22! As long as you can maintain an appearance of a crisis PM Stefan Löfven can cling to a 55 member parliament, where he has a lead and a missing MP won't matter...



As this MP is AWOL government delays easing virus measures to keep majority in parliament. Go figure!

This may be the reason or a reason for Prime Minister Löfven's press conferences constantly shifting the goal post for when the virus situation can be eased. Postpone it just a little longer until the parliament goes on summer holiday and you have until autumn to deal with the fugitive MP...

A truly weird situation. And strange but not unexpected is that the papers haven't covered it. I haven't seen one word on what the missing MP does for the parliamentary balance. That she is astray has been mentioned in two inch pieces, on page 12 sort of, but nothing else. But as media is 3/4th left-leaning (=pro gov, says an official Gothenburg University study) they won't rock the boat.

Pretending to be a strong captain in charge of the crisis, guarding the helm against the epidemic, navigating murky waters, fishing for cheap poll points, just to cling to a single vote margin...is a silly and dangerous game. Our trust in politicians sink even more.

--Ahrvid Engholm

How to Beef Up Your PDF Zine!

Try hyperlinks! I used it a lot when I edited the current version of the *Fandboken* fancyclopedia, though there are still many, many more "jumps" I could and should insert in later editions. I'm talking about internal document hyperlinks. I don't see them often in PDF zines, maybe because they take extra time to set up and zines are often are just a few pages and extra navigation help isn't necessary.

But you can make your PDF look a little bit more "flashy" and "professional" with them. Make a Table of Contents with hyperlinks and readers will be able to jump directly to a section of the document, by just clicking on underscored words.

In Open Office Writer you do it like this...(The word processor I use. You can probably do it in Word too, but I have no instructions for that.)

1. You insert a bookmark where you want to be able to jump to. Go to that spot with the cursor. Choose Insert, Bookmark and pick a name for the bookmark, which will turn up as [Xxxx](#) (coloured).

2. Then you go to the spot you want the hyperlink to. Select the words to jump to with and choose Insert, Hyperlink, Document, press the target symbol for Target in document, select Bookmark in the

pop-up menu, select the name of the bookmark and confirm with Apply.

3. Now the internal hyperlink should be set up, and to test it while editing you press Ctrl and click on it. If you want to do a hyperlink to jump back to the original position, repeat 1 and 2.

Especially step 2. may be a little bit tricky but after a while you'll get used to it. I probably won't use this much in *Intermission* because it just complicates things and isn't necessary. But I have two longer comments in the mailing comments which are almost mini essays, that you here can try. One is about [intelligence primates and neaderthals](#) and the other is about what I think is the [way of true fandom](#). Try it! You may like it!

Ascension Day - Read SF!

We just had Ascension Day day here, May 13, which in this old Protestant/Heathen Land of the Svear is a holiday. I don't know if it is so elsewhere, but anyway - I have for a number of years been

promoting the idea of making Ascension Day and the weekend following *Time for Reading Skiffy!*

In the Nordic countries Easter has become a holiday for reading crime fiction, an idea that comes from Norway. (Originating in a story about a Norwegian newspaper headline in the 1920's promoting a new detective tale on a train robbery - look it up.) I believe that science fiction needs its dedicated reading period too. Ascension Day was when Mr JC shot up into heaven, in all practicality *becoming an astronaut!* Even if you believe more in Roscoe than Jesus Christ it seems like a fitting holiday for science fiction.

So next year, when Ascension day comes in May, grab that Asimov or Heinlein or Olof Möller you love and let your eyes race through the pages! And help spreading the SF Reading on Ascension Day idea...

Amerivision Comes to NBC

We learn that the American Song Contest project (based on the Eurovision Song Contest, I call it Amerivision), which I wrote about in last issue, has struck a deal with the US Network NBC! That's one of the main TV networks, so it's good news for Amerivision!

From what I read the 50 US states will compete, plus 5 US territories and Washington DC - 56 contestants in all. That's a little more than in Eurovision, which takes ca 40 competing countries, but it may be a way for the network to get more shows and make it run a little bit longer. It's unclear how the states will select their songs (original material only, any genre is welcome from opera to hiphop) but in Eurovision it varies. Some have local selection shows, some let a panel just select a song. I suspect it may vary here too.

But after local selections, there will be semi-finals and then a grand final, with probably around 25 entries, and the aim is to unleash it in 2022. There will be Eurovision people lead by Christer Björkman (producer of Eurovision shows and the Swedish Melodifestivalen for 20 years) in the production group, alongside US producers of course.

The US of A is No 1 popular music, without doubt, and American show business can generate a lot of energy, so we don't have to worry there. The team will be assisted by experienced Eurovision people (I see that the brilliant script writer Edward af Sillén is among them - great!) and NBC has

UNOFFICIAL RULES FOR THE EUROVISION:

1. Silly costumes preferred. Extra points for lots of fabric.
2. An odd gimmick helps, like a hamster wheel or burning piano.
3. When delivering points you **MUST** say "Thanks for a fantastic show!".
4. Finland and the UK take turns finishing last, except when winning (unlikely).
5. A recount is needed if Greece doesn't give Cyprus 12 points, and vice versa.

ASCENSION DAY

when
mr jc
became
an
astronaut
is...

..a day for READING SF!



been along since electricity was invented almost, so here's no need for concern.

But the question is if this will work in a media landscape that has changed a lot since Eurovision was established? The Eurovision Song Contest was a very modest thing in the beginning, with only seven countries competing when starting in 1956, in a world where the viewer had only 1 or 2 TV channels to choose from. But it didn't matter. There wasn't much media competition, no cable or satellite, no Internet, no mobiles, no video games, no social media. Eurovision could afford to take its time to catch on. I think it really began becoming something as late as in the 1970s.

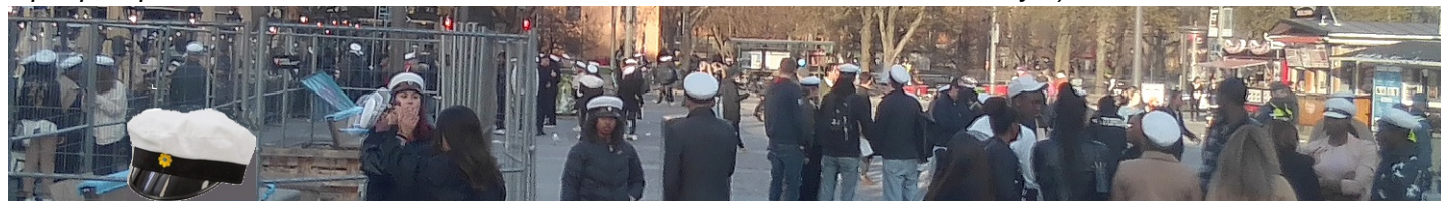


But Amerivision can't afford to wait decades to catch on. It must be a reasonable success from the start, or it will be dumped. An extra edge is that Amerivision of course can be sold abroad too, just as Eurovision,

We make music and friends with every nation. And bankrupt the hosting TV station...We're a big black hole sucking in all the stars. We take over the world and then conquer Mars. That's Eurovision! (2016 hosts explained.)

which will give NBC some extra earnings. I'm sure the Eurovision crowd on this side of the Atlantic is very curious and will love the show. But if all of this will really work out remains to be seen. I will follow it with some interest. And if you want to know more about how it works, watch the 2016 hosts Petra Mede and Måns Zelmerlöw explaining it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6qSt8Qp9ck>

(The Eurovision Song Contest 2021 has meanwhile taken place in Rotterdam, Netherlands, with a physical audience of 3500, all vaccinated. A rock song by the Italian group Månesken won. Their name is actually Danish, meaning "moonshine". They have a Danish member who suggested the name using the "å" character from the Scandinavian alphabets. Sweden came on place 14. The UK was last with zero points, alas. My own favourite was a moody jazz song by the Portuguese group Black Mamba, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qg9SceXaukA>. I like jazz, among many other genres. But I don't fancy top list pop of the last few decades, of which I'm afraid ESC has its share. As synths, sequencers, auto-tuning and other machinery has taken over the studios, and you program rather than play instruments, songs have become extremely boring. I don't enjoy hip-hop, rap and such, since I have this odd idea that music must have a melody...)



Student Caps

The day before Mercer's Day, which fans know as April 31 (see https://fancyclopedia.org/Mercer%27s_Day) is Walpurgis Night here, celebrated with big bonfires - except this year. But it is also Put On the Student Caps Day. All students, who graduate from our equivalent to High School - we call it the "gymnasium" (go figure!) - this day put on their graduation student caps for the first time.

In the US the graduation headwear is some sort of black hat with a square top. Here it is a white cap with a black brim. The white student caps began already in the early 19th century and have been along for a long time. In the picture above you can see a number of students with their white caps, which I happened to pass in Stockholm. They don't seem to care much about "virus restrictions".

I have a student cap somewhere too, but I haven't worn it for a long time. It has no propeller.

A Staple War of Our Times

We read in *Fancyclopedia*, this source of wisdom: https://fancyclopedia.org/First_Staple_War

One of the earliest mock feuds was the First Staple War, a k a the Great Staple War, which got under way in

1934 when Bob Tucker formed the Society for the Prevention of Wire Staples in Science Fiction Magazines (SPWSSFM) and, shortly thereafter, Donald Wollheim formed the rival International Allied Organization for the Purpose of Upholding and Maintaining the Use of Metallic Fasteners in Science Fiction Publications in the United States of America, Unlimited (IAOPUMUMSTFPUSA, Unltd). The two organizations battled away good-naturedly at each other in Brass Tacks, the letter column of Astounding.

I came to think of this when I the other day found a copy of the *New York Times* (their special European edition, if I remember) laying around. I sometimes also find British newspapers, like *The Daily Telegraph* or the awful *The Sun* - a newspaper with virtually no news! Tourists to Stockholm sometimes leave newspapers around which they brought with them, but you can also find these papers in international newsagent shops.

A slight breeze caressed me as I sat down on a bench to read the copy of NYT. The wind felt mild on one of the first warm spring days, though the air flow wasn't strong enough to even rustle leaves.

Except the leaves of news! The big pages of the news reports from New Amsterdam, as it was once called (or New Jorvik, if the Vikings had stayed in North America), fluttered wildly in the wind! Even if I used both hands to try to stabilise them, it was almost impossible to read anything.

And - wosh! - suddenly the pages flew apart. It became a complicated operation to straighten out the pages and fold them back evenly to resemble something like a newspaper. The big problem:

No staples!

Bob Tucker who didn't advocate them would be glad, but I'm afraid I'm here more on the side of Donald Wollheim. It was really the mildest of winds but the lack of staples made the newspaper very difficult to read. And exactly the same goes for British newspapers. A lack of staples seems to be the common denominator of many English language newspapers! (I've seen few exceptions.)

It doesn't even have to be a wind for missing staples making it difficult to read the newspaper. If you hold it the wrong way it falls apart all by itself. How on Earth could a responsible and intelligent publisher ever get the idea to publish a newspaper without staples?

All Swedish newspapers have staples. They are very robust and a breeze to read in the wind (no pun intended). Is it a question of saving money that makes English newspapers staple-less? A few milligrams (or whatever the weight) of staples can't cost much, and the benefit of making reading wind proof surely outweighs it. Or do the publishers want to make it easier to give the paper an alternate use on the WC? Staples could get stuck in the bum which would be painful. Remember though that some papers, like *The Sun*, contains shit from the beginning.

I think it's time for another Staple War, this time aimed at clueless, staple-less newspapers that turn into tumbleweed. Read more in *The Last and First Newspaper*.

By Olaf Stapledon....



The Fäntåstic Shört Ståry Cömpetition

This is info for my Swedish readers, about the yearly "Fantastic Short Story Competition" for sf/f/h - all stories with "fantastic" elements. Entries must be in that quirky language below. It would however be very interesting if someone took a story in English and ran it through Google Translate...

FANTASTIKNOVELLTÄVLINGEN 2021

1. Skicka tävlingsbidrag som ren text (det kallas "ASCII", inga bifogade filer, t ex Word-filer) senast 30 augusti till fantastiknovell@hotmail.com SAMT ahrvid@hotmail.com. Använd rubriken "Tävlingsbidrag".

2. Noveller skall anknyta till science fiction, fantasy eller skräck. (Genre får tolkas en smula generöst. Det bör finnas något "fantastiskt" element.) Man får skicka flera bidrag. Maxlängd 50 000 tecken, inkl blanksteg och skiljetecken. Språk svenska.

3. Vinnarna utses av en jury. Noveller som placerar sig på någon prisplats postas även på SKRIVA:s E-postlista och erbjuds publicering hos DAST Magazine (dast.nu).

4. Förstapris 999 kr. Andrapris 600 kr. Tredjepris 400 kr. De tre författarna på prisplats erhåller också årsprenumeration på tidningen Skriva! Därutöver kan juryn dela ut hedersomnämningen. Alla dessa får ett E-diplom som kan skrivas ut och pryda väggen.

Detta är 22:a upplagan av Sveriges äldsta novelltävling, startad av SKRIVA, den veterligen äldsta författarlistan. För att ansluta, maila skriva-request@freelists.org med rubrik "subscribe".

Stöd våra stödjare! Wela Förlag, Exilium Förlag, författarna Ulf Broberg och Ulf Durling, samt tidningen Skriva. Tackelitack till er! (Hjälp gärna till att sprida denna info!)

HISTORY CORNER

SF-folket tror inte på flygande tefat i Slottsskogen!

— Vi tror inte på flygande tefat i Slottsskogen och vi tror inte på flygande tefat någon annanstans heller.

Säger de 30 unga ideella män som samlats i Björngårdsvillan i Göteborg för påskekongress i science fiction. Så den eventuella flanör som trott sig kunna uppleva interplanetariska strövtåg vid Söldammen på grund av SF-männen kan känna sig lurad. — Science fiction tror man inte på, säger John-Henri Holmberg. Den sysslar man med.

— Men behöver inte tro på det man läser om för att roas av det! Vi vet lika bra som den som aldrig läst ett ord om Mars och Jupiter att ett flygande tefat aldrig existerat.

Herrarna som diskuterar SF fram och tillbaka i dagarna tre skiljer ömt mellan science fiction och fantasy. Det förra är händelser som skulle kunna hända — alltså framtidsperspektiv på vetenskaplig grund. Fantasy däremot är historier som inte skulle kunna hända — rena fantasiprodukter således, ofta med älvor, troll och dvärgar i rollerna.

BLIXT GORDON "FANTASY"

Den ärade Blixt Gordon som numera är camp var en tidig fantasy figur när han drev omkring på planeten Mongo på trettiotalet tillsammans med unga sköna Dale Arden. Tillsammans tämde de med alla syften såväl lejonmän som örnnmän, för att bara inte nämna de gälförsedda fiskmännen. Detta är alltså fantasy och inte science fiction och det kan mänskligheten vara tacksam för.

Fantasy är också det trädklättrarfolk som i litterär form finns att tillgå på SF-kongresser. I själva verket befinner sig trädklättrarfolket på andra och främmande planeter. Deras hjältnor har skönt grönt hår, svarta läppar, röda tänder och gul tunga.

Vilket i alla fall är ett annorlunda kvinnoideal för folk som umgås med veckopressens stjärnögda hjältnor.

Men SF-fantasterna drömmer inte alls om att rycka veckotidningsnoveller eller Kafka ur händerna på de breda lagren. — Vi vill inte frälsa folk för SF, säger John-Henri Holmberg. De som tycker om SF i film och litteratur gör det ändå och vi samlas på kongresser för att utbyta åsikter om författare och SF i andra länder. Vår dröm är inte att folk skall begripa SF, men väl att vi får en regelbunden utkommande tidskrift för kontakten mellan klubbarna.

Och den göteborgska avdelningen heter således Götcon och tror inte på flygande tefat i Slottsskogen eller överhuvudtaget.

VIVECA LÄRN



More sf and fandom history from the vaults of the Royal Library, which last year had its digitised newspaper archive open on-line a couple of months. (As a pandemic measure. Normally you access it there on their terminals.) After ten issues packed with my most interesting finds, Intermission will for a time keep at least a little "History Corner". I'll translate and summarise. Here it goes.

I have covered the 1967 Gothenburg convention before, but here's two more clips. Göteborgs-Tidningen writes March 27, 1967, "SF People Don't Believe in Flying Saucers in Slottsskogen" (the last, "Castle Woods", is a park there):

"We don't believe in flying saucers in Slottsskogen and we don't believe in flying saucers anywhere else either." So says the 30 young, idealistic men gathered in the Björngård's Villa in Gothenburg for an Easter convention of sf. So the possible stroller who believes to experience interplanetary excursions by the Seal Pond will be fooled.

"Sf is not something you believe in," John-Henri Holmberg says. "It is an activity. You don't have to believe in what you read to be entertained by it! We know just as well as someone who has never read a word about Mars and Jupiter that flying saucers have never existed." The gentlemen who discuss sf back and forth for three days carefully separate sf and fantasy. The first are events that could happen - ie perspectives on the future on a scientific basis. But fantasy are stories that couldn't happen - straight products of imagination, often with elves, trolls and dwarves playing a part. /FLASH

Science fiction-träff

Ett 40-tal science fiction-älskare från hela Norden samlas under påsken till kongress i Göteborg. Det blir den tolfte kongressen i sitt slag och den anordnas av branschens tillskyndare i Göteborg som kallar mötet Götcon 1 eftersom det är första gången Göteborg får den äran. Bland kongressens ämnen märks SF (science fiction)-inslag i dagens kultur, SF kontra Fantasy (ej vetenskapligt hållbar fiction), Orientering om utländsk sf och fandom (sf-fans). Filmer visas och skivor spelas, bl a Orson Welles Världarnas krig. Ett pris, "Alvar", utdelas också. Äventyrligheterna utspelas i Björngårdsvillan och man väntar besök av flera bemärkta sf-vänner.

GORDON "FANTASY"/ The honourable Flash Gordon who these days is a cult was an early fantasy figure as he roamed the planet Mongo in the 1930's with the fair Dale Arden. Together they tamed lionmen and eaglemen with noble ambitions, not to forget the gills equipped fishmen. But this is fantasy and not sf, and humanity should be grateful for it. The tree climbing people you can find on an sf convention in literary form is also fantasy. In reality the tree climbers are on other and alien planets. Their heroines have beautiful green hair, black lips, red teeth and a yellow tongue./Unknown what all this refers to!! In any case the female norms are different for people that mingle with the

starry-eyed heroines of the weeklies. But the sf fans aren't dreaming about getting the weeklies stories or Kafka out to the hands of the masses. "We don't want to save people for sf," says John-Henri Holmberg. "Those who like sf in films or literature will still do that and we gather on conventions to exchange views about authors and sf in other countries. Our dream isn't that people shall understand sf, but that we'll get a regular magazine for contacts between the clubs." And the Gothenburg section is thus called Götcon and doesn't believe in flying saucers in Slottsskogen or at all.

I have no idea what tree climbing, green hair etc means... Götcon was also covered in Göteborgs Handels- & Sjöfartstidning the same day, "Science fiction meet":

Around 40 sf lovers from all over the Nordic area gather this Easter for a convention in Gothenburg. It is the 12th convention of this type and it is arranged by the supporters of the field who have called for the meeting Götcon 1, being the first time Gothenburg has the honour. Among the topics of the convention we have sf (science fiction) expressions in today's culture. Sf vs fantasy (fiction without scientific basis), orientation on foreign sf and fandom (sf fans). Films are shown and records are played, eg Orson Welles' War of the Worlds. An award, the "Alvar", is also handed out. The adventures will take place in the Björngårds Villa and attendance by several famous sf friends is expected.

As has been noted, while the sf genre early on was getting a lot of positive attention in media around 1953, it soon turned into scepticism, as you can see in this review of The Man Who Sold the Moon, by our dear Bobby Heinlein, in Svenska Dagbladet March 8, 1954, "Hotchpotch of Crazyness":

This thing called sf is suspicious. The prolific and robust Robert A Heinlein gives the impression he is looking for himself. He worries more than entertains with his attempts to squeeze funny scientific speculations together with discussions among American profit sharks. Idealism and business don't go together. The way these gentlemen try to hoodwink each other in loose lowbrow prose is embarrassingly naive. A street mangler on Norra Ban Square /HQ of the trade unions/ would have much to teach Mr Delos Harriman & Co, when this cute gang tries to make business with real estate on the Moon. The need of people to be fooled is probably big, but they don't get more stupid with technological breakthroughs. That would be grotesque. The great fun in Heinlein's new book isn't the Moon businesses but the stuff about rolling roads, that makes cars redundant. In that chapter there's stuff for a development which very well could become necessary in a generation's time. Such foundations make this genre enjoyable. The vulnerability of technical wonders is also expressed. It's not difficult to believe in it for a Swedish railway traveller who has been delayed many times just because a crow or two around Tullinge had caused troubles with the cables of our electric trains. Mr Heinlein ought to look back to the teacher M Jules Verne, who among other things have written the novel From Earth to the Moon. The modest and blind Verne wasn't blind! from Nantes let the magic wand give even the boldest speculations a bit of probability. His knowledge of science is said to have been substantial.

ROBOTMYSTERIET på Rialto och Rivoli

En enkel sciencefiction, tyvärr gjord utan minsta humor. Handlingen utspelas i ett underjordiskt laboratorium någonstans i den mexikanska öknen, och där har man verkligen robotmysterier att brottas med. Onekligen är en hel del av de vetenskapliga experimenten ganska fiffigt uttänkta, men fullt så mystiskt går det nog inte till i USA, även om man där är mer eller mindre hysteriska då det gäller tekniska hemligheter. Rolig att återse är Herbert Marshall, den här gången som någon sorts överdängare i vetenskapliga mysterier under jorden.
GÖSTA WERNLÖF

Heinlein's wand is more like a pole of a wooden fence, swung around with monumental power. The thunder is worrying; will sf sink to the level of literary canned food like comics?

The not too happy reviewer of course didn't know that Neil and Buzz would walk on the Moon mere 15 years later. A reason sf became "suspicious" was probably the tsunami of Earth-invaded-by- aliens-or-threatened-by-mad-scientists movies arriving from Hollywood. One example, "The Robot Mystery" wasn't particularly well-liked in Expressen March 22, 1955:

Pyttipanna på galenskap

ROBERT A. HEINLEIN: *Mannen som sålde månen*. Till svenska av Harry Östlund och Sven Elmgren. Eklunds. Pris 9:50.

Det här med science fiction svajar betänkligt. Den flitige och robuste Robert A. Heinlein ger intryck av att vara på jakt efter sig själv. Han oroar mer än han förströer med sina försök att knäda in roliga vetenskapliga spekulationer vid sidan av samtal mellan amerikanska profitshajar. Idealitet och affärer hör inte ihop. Herrarnas sätt att på slänglig lågprosa försöka lura varann är blossande naivt. En gatumånglare vid Norra Bantorget i Stockholm kunde ha mycket att lära ut till mr Delos Harriman & Co., när de snygga skaran försöker göra affärer med tomtmark på månen. Människors behov av att låta lura sig är sannolikt betydande, men fördömmningen växer nog ändå inte i kapp med de tekniska landvinningarna. Det vore för groteskt.

Det verkligt roliga i Heinleins nya bok handlar inte om månaffärerna utan om de rullande vägbanorna, som gör hela överflödiga. I de kapitlen finns råstoff till en utveckling som rent av kan bli nödvändig inom någon mans-ålder. Sådant underlag gör den här genren njutbar. De tekniska underverken sårbarhet skildras också. Det är inte svårt att tro på den för en svensk tågresenär som blivit försenad många gånger blott för att en kråka eller två i Tullingetrakten trasslat till det med ledningarna för våra eltåg.

Mr Heinlein borde söka sig tillbaka till lärofadern M. Jules Verne, som bland mycket annat skrivit en roman "Från jorden till månen". Den blide och blinde diktaren från Nantes lät fantasiens trollspö ge även de djärvaste spekulationer något av sannolikhet. Hans naturvetenskapliga insikter lär ha varit betydande. Heinleins trollspö är närmast en gärdsgårdsstör, som svingas med brakande kraft. Bullret oroar; ska science fiction sjunka ner till något slags litterär burkmat av samma näringsvärde som seriefigurerna?

Simple sf unfortunately done without any sense of humour. The plot centres on a subterranean lab somewhere in the Mexican desert, where you truly have robot mysteries to deal with. You must admit that some of the scientific experiments are clever, but one doubts they really do it in quite these mysterious ways in the US, although they over there are more or less hysterical about technological secrets. It's great to see Herbert Marshall again, this time as some sort of super expert on scientific mysteries underground.

Billig mutant

● PINGVINFÖRLAGET har startat en ny billighetsserie, "Atom-boken", som enbart skall omfatta science fiction-romaner. För det facila priset av en krona kan man nu i närmaste tobakshandel eller tidningskiosk inhandla seriens första nummer, "Rymdspionen" av Lee Elliot. Lee Elliot är en helt ny bekantskap för undertecknad och ingen angenäm sådan; troligtvis tillhör han de amerikanska författare som förser de s. k. "pulp magazines" med oanständigt dåliga space operanoveller.

● "Rymdspionen" är en tröttsamt berättelse om hur några Secret Service-agenter från Jorden lyckas smuggla ut en mutant med oömbärliga kunskaper från diktaturplanet Trone, som länge dolt sig bakom en ogenomtränglig elektronridå. Om Elliots författarambitioner sträcker sig så långt, att han med sin roman avser att ge en allegori över det nuvarande politiska läget är tvivelaktigt. Hur som helst är idén i så fall för klumpigt utförd för att motivera att förlaget rubricerar den som science fiction. "Rymdspionen" är helt enkelt naiv space opera och saknar till råga på allt det som stundtals kan försona en med denna genre, en intensiv spänning. Att man över huvud ger sig tid att plöja igenom hela romanen beror på att det är så ynkligt beställt med över-sättningar av amerikanska sf. Det finns ingen marknad för sf-böcker här i landet, påstås det från förläggarehåll. Jodå, det finns det visst, om man publicerar bra sf, men en roman som "Rymdspionen" kan sannerligen varken värva nya proselyter eller tillfredsställa de redan frälsta.

Internet Movie Database says the original title was "Gog" and describes it: "A security agent investigates sabotage and murder at a secret underground laboratory, home of two experimental robots." I found it on Youtube, if you're interested: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhHQF94ETVQ>

The sf books we got around that time tended to be seen as cheap stuff too, or "Cheap Mutant", as in this review in Aftonbladet, August 10 1957:

Publisher Pingvin has begun a new cheap series only for sf novels, "The Atom Book". For the low price of SEK1 /ca 20 1950s cent/ you may now in your closest tobacconist or newsstand buy the first title, Rymdspionen /"The Space Spy", see the cover/ by Lee Elliot. Lee Elliot is a new acquaintance for yours truly and not a pleasurable one; he is probably one of the American authors who provides so called "pulp magazines".

/Google says original title is The Third Mutant, and SF Encyclopedia http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/elliott_lee that it's in fact a pseudonym for British writer William Henry Fleming / with indecently bad space opera stories. The Space Spy is a tiring story about how some Secret Service agents from Earth manage to smuggle a mutant with invaluable knowledge from the dictator planet Trone, which has since long hidden itself behind an impervious electron curtain. If Elliot's ambitions stretches as far as to an attempt to make an allegory about the present political situation is doubtful. In any case the idea is too clumsily done to motivate for the publisher to label it sf. The Space Spy is simply a naïve space opera, which on top of all misses everything that at times may reconcile you with this genre, which is intense thrills. That you at all take the time to read through the novel is due to that there are ruefully few translations of American sf. There is no market for sf books in this country, publishers claim. Well, there is, if you publish good sf, but a novel like The Space spy may certainly not recruit new followers or satisfy those who are hooked.

From space opera to fantasy - ø10 if you can spot the difference! - as we go to Dagens Nyheter March 7 1975, proclaiming a dressed-up masquerade parade. It would never be allowed in dystopian May 2021! But another virus arrived in the 70s, started by the ring-leader JRR, as we see in "From Books through Town":

'Have you read Lord of the Thrones by GRR Tolkien?'
'No, but I have read Game of Ring by JRR Martin!'

Three things happen May 17th: Norway celebrates her national day, Göta canal opens and there's a carneval in Stockholm. Stockholm's Tolkien Society Forodrim has invited their sister societies from Uppsala and Örebro to take part in this fairy tale march. They start in Norrmalms Square, and march away 12 o'clock. The crowd then rattles through Kungsan and Gustav II Square and hits Västerlång Street, upon which the whole company buys tickets to the ferry and upon the blue waves transfers to Djurgården. There they'll have a party in the form of a picnic. All participants have robes, swords and costumes inspired by the stories by Tolkien. That substantial amounts of childishness is also needed must be unnecessary information, so it won't be included. Interested civilians, also those who have nothing better to do, are invited to participate, preferably with their own costume, with as much as imagination as possible. Tolkien had nothing against imagination, as far as we have heard.



Ur böcker genom stan

Tre saker inträffar den 17 maj: Norge firar nationaldag, Göta kanal släpper till och det är karneval i Stockholm.

Stockholms Tolkien-sällskap Forodrim har inbjudit Uppsala och Örebro's systersällskap att delta i detta sagotåg.

Man börjar på Norrmalmstorg, varifrån man avtågar kl 12.

Sedan rasslar skaran genom Kungsan och över Gustav den andres torg och slår in på Västerlånggatan, varpå hela gänget löser biljett till färjan och på bøljan tar sig över till Djurgården.

Där uppstår festligheter av picknickkaraktär

Alla deltagarna har mantlar, svärd och dräkter som inspirerats av Tolkien's sagor.

Att ansenliga mängder barnasinne ävenledes är för handen torde vara en överflödigt uppgift, varför vi inte tar med den.

Intresserade civilpersoner, även sådana som inte har nåt särskilt på hjärnan, inbjuds delta, gärna i egen dräkt, så fantasifull som möjligt.

Tolkien hade inget emot fantasi, efter vad vi hört.

Att ge ut en diktsamling, hette det förr i tiden, är som att släppa ner ett rosenblad i Grand

KRÖNIKAN

Av
Flips

Canyon och sedan sätta sig ner för att lyssna efter ekot. Men det var som sagt förr i tiden.

Harry Martinson.

son, som just släppt ner ett sådant rosenblad, får i dag hålla sig för öronen för att inte trumhinnorna skall spricka av dånnet från alla recensionerna.

Men han är ju inte heller någon vanlig liten poet utan en högst modern diktare som t. o. m. rör sig med s. k. science fiction och skriver om interplanetariska färder med rymdskepp. Om ett sådant rymdskepp heter det att "här slumrar ingen chadwick, putar daisi, / jag rörs i gejderna, jag är vlammm och gondel, min nejd är gander och min fejd är rondel / och vept i taris, gland i deld och yondel".

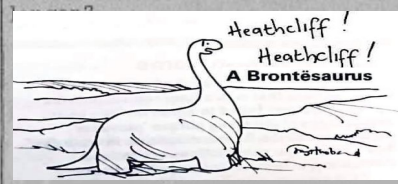
Om Harry Martinson någon gång skulle komma på idén att skriva anonyma brev och då använda samma nomenklatur blir det en lätt match för professor Wellander.



Om rymdskepp med vlammm och gondel, deld och yondel kan man drömma många sköna drömmar

men sköna drömmar har med tiden fått en beklagligt kort livstid, närmare bestämt cirka åtta timmar. Vad som är sanning i morgontidningarna är bara lögn och förbannad dikt i kvällstidningarna (eller kanske ännu oftare tvärtom). I går morse fick man sålunda veta att brittiska flygdepartementet, där mig veterligen aldrig någon chadwick slumrat, sett ett riktigt livs levande flygande tefat och därtill ansett sig böra meddela att det för sin del inte uteslöt möjligheten av ett interplanetariskt fenomen. Genast började man då naturligtvis yra för sig själv att nu, nu, nu stundar det tusenåriga riket, då varelses av en högre intelligens än t. o. m. våra inhemska språkprofessorer beslutat sig för att ta hand om sina besvärliga rymdgrannar för att få en smula ordning på torpet. På kvällen var det flygande tefatet bara en väderleksballong och förbi var den skimrande drömmen. Så där är det alltid. I hanegället hör man den jublande rösten: "Tallyho, tallyho, jag har skjutit en dront..." När skymningen sänker sig över stad och land är dronten förvandlad till en anka.

Men tänk om det nu ändå var ett flygande tefat. Marsmänniskorna är väl inte dummare än att de kan förkläda sig till väderleksbal-



That must be - as far as the Royal Library search engine could tell - the first mention of the Stockholm Tolkien society in the papers. As you note, it was rather sarcastic. Grown men dressing up... But they'd soon get their defender in that paper, in the form of Martin Stugart (known as "Bilbo", member of the Tolkien society) who worked for Dagens Nyheter for many decades. He eg did their events calendar, there often including Tolkien events - and sf events were also favourably treated! Yours truly, your fan historian, hasn't been much into Tolkien, but I have been to some events, eg seen their yearly spring parade a few times (still on, when not stopped by a virus from Mordor). I once even took part in the parade...in 1979, dressing up in a parody costume (armour of cardboard, toy sword etc). Some didn't fancy that stunt too much, so I conclude they try to dive so deep into their fantasy world that they lose humour and cognitive distance to their stuff.

Intermission has covered Harry Martinson and his sf poetry in *Aniara* quite a lot. Here's more, by the signature "Flips", in Aftonbladet November 20 1953. Harry published his first *Aniara* poems in the collection *Cikada* in 1953, the year when these space stories had just arrived on our stage and the cat sat on the mat thinking about if it was worth dragging in:

To publish a collection of poetry was, once said, like dropping a rose petal into the Grand Canyon and sit down and listen for the echo. But that was earlier. Harry Martinson has now dropped such a rose petal that you have to cover your ears for the eardrums not to shatter by the thunder from all the reviews. But then he isn't an ordinary little poet but a very modern one who even works with so called sf and writes about interplanetary journeys with spaceships. One of those spaceships is like "here sleeps no chadwick, putar daisi / I'm moved in the gejderna, I am vlammm and gondel, my nejd is gander and my fejd is rondel / and shrouded in taris, gland in deld and yondel". /Don't worry if you don't understand some words, no one does./ If Harry Martinson ever would get the idea to write anonymous letters and then uses the same vocabulary it'll be an easy game for professor Wellander. You can have many dreams about vlammm and gondel, deld and yondel but sweet dreams have over time sadly had a short lifespan, more precisely eight hours. Truth in the morning papers is only a lie in the evening papers (or perhaps often the other way around). Yesterday we learned that the British aviation department, where as we know no chadwick slept, has seen a real life flying saucers. and on top of that thought they announce that they didn't exclude the possibility of an interplanetary phenomenon. You would then of course be delirious and think for yourself that how, now is the thousand year realm here, when beings of a higher intelligence than even our language professors, decided to take care of their troublesome space neighbours to create some order in the universe. In the evening the flying saucers turned into weather balloons and the shimmering dream had passed. That's always the way it is. As the rooster cackle you hear the triumphant voice: "Tallyho, tallyho, I have shot a dodo...". As dawn comes to town and country the dodo turns onto a canard. But think if it really was a flying saucers. The Martians should be smart enough to disguise themselves as weather balloons.

I'm sorry my fanzine is late! I had a tonsillectomy. But instead of removing my tonsils, the surgeon by mistake took my stencils...

I have no idea why Martinson's use of invented words so impressed critics. They liked *Aniara*, unlike flying kitchenware. Today UFOs are once more flying around, waiting for a US government report.

Finally something not from the Royal Library archives, but it connects to the Atomic-Noah club and Martinson. In early May national broadcaster SVT showed a Swedish sf film I for some reason had missed through all years. Maybe you could call *Intill helvetets portar* ("By the Gates of Hell", 1948, dir Göran Gentele) slipstream, a word invented by Bruce Sterling for the borderline "fantastic", but I think you could very well see it as straight sf. The plot deals with a Swedish scientist researching what would lead to an atomic bomb, using improbable nuclear chain reaction principles of pure fantasy, but needed for the plot. I would have included this film in my recent *Foundation* article (#132, "The Atomic Bomb and Early Swedish Fandom") but I didn't know about it as I had the final proofs last autumn. Here's the plot:

Professor Victor Barring is a Noble laureate atomic physicist who sees science as the way to "find the truth", even if it leads to "the gates of hell".

What results are used for isn't his business. The government is sceptical to his research, so being underfunded he has to accept funding from a mysterious Dr Kanzel who has connections to the military. His wife becomes sceptical to his work, but as his son is taken to hospital he is able to use atomic research for a treatment, which makes him begin to change his attitude that science-is-fact-finding-and-damn-the-torpedoes. To this is added that he finds a substance that would make starting a chain reaction and build the bomb easy as pie. He drifts into a newly started atomic bomb protest movement and speaks on a meeting against the Bomb. Kanzel seeks him out with some goons to coerce him to share his results (it's hinted that Kanzel works for a foreign power) which the professor stalls - until dawn, when Barring says the rising sun would illuminate the situation, and raise the blinds over the table with his chain-reaction substance...

There are many scenes with scientists in white cloaks, turning dials and examining test tubes. Professor Barring is played by Lars Hansson, one of the leading actors of the time in one of his last films. And the script was by the famous writer Sven Stolpe and the experienced Gösta Stevens, so it was a major movie on a blazing hot topic of the day. The government had at the time sent research teams to the US to try to pinch some atomic power stuff. We seriously considered building us those humongous firecrackers after WWII, plans dropped in the early 1960s.

A very interesting film, and an early example of trying to deal with the ethics issues around nuclear weapons.



Mailing Cömmments

First *EAPA*, the May mailing, then *N'APA*, the mid-May mailing. Two of the comments may also be seen as almost **mini-essays** and used as examples of hypertext jumps.

Henry Grynnssten: Wow! Wild Ideas always has long, interesting articles, well-researched, with footnotes and everything. The drawback for me is that it's very difficult to comment these long essays without a thorough reading. But I tend to read fast and stop here and there to read more carefully. Anyway, I'll do my best to give some of my views and comments. **About intelligence primates and neanderthals:** As for the consciousness of higher primates, elephants etc I just keep

the question open. If they have something resembling our consciousness is something we can't say for sure, it may be so - or not. I'm aware of theories that consciousness wasn't something Homo Sapiens had from the beginning and it then sort of popped up, 100 000 years ago or whenever. I'm not so sure that consciousness is either on or off, either a 0 or 1, either there or not. Consciousness isn't likely for most species, but for some there may be a ladder partly climbed. How come? Let us think about when we were children. One may claim we didn't have consciousness when laying in the womb and that it didn't pop up as we ourselves popped out. Consciousness came gradually from the time of birth to the point in time of childhood when we had the earliest memories. I'm sure that if we think about how our own consciousness came about, and really try to look back and think hard about it, we will realise that it was something that came about gradually, a ladder we began to climb. And if so, consciousness *cannot* be either on or off. There must be a gradual scale, though of course that scale is on zero for most organisms - while as said I leave the door ajar for higher primates, dolphins etc. But I don't keep the question open for Neanderthals (or Denisovians, who seem to have been on a similar evolutionary level). I think Neanderthals had at least some or probably a significant degree of consciousness on that ladder. Henry argues Neanderthals had consciousness 0. I think they would have consciousness at least 0.9 (Homo Sapiens is 1), a number Henry argues can't exist since it's 0 or 1. Fine, let's agree to disagree. 0.9 is rather high, but Neanderthals did have big brains, and I wouldn't be so fast with dismissing anthropological finds. Henry doesn't mention that it seems Neanderthals buried their dead, something which requires some advanced thinking, knowing the difference between dead and alive to start with, having the idea to treat the dead with some respect, being able to plan knowing that if the body was just left there it would begin to stink, perhaps even having thoughts of an afterlife... There are several reasons for remains of Neanderthal culture being relatively few. First of all, the number of Neanderthals was probably very small! They had a hard life, and if they were slightly less smart than Homo Sapiens their life was even harder. Secondly, unlike eg the Australian aboriginals living in a dry semi-desert, Neanderthals lived further north, in a forest landscape with rain, forest fires, animals finding and chewing on or eating remains. The small number of Neanderthals lived in places where stuff more easily was destroyed by time. Still, some Neanderthal artefacts have been found, showing some level of culture. As for the language I believe that language came because we need to organise our actions and thoughts...

William McCabe: Wasn't it BBC that did the April Fool's joke about the spaghetti harvest having been bad, so the price of pasta was expected to go up... I'll have comments about the virus stuff in the editorial. I haven't BTW had a jab yet. I'm not really worried about the virus - and may have had a visit by it last spring, so I *may* be immune - and think it is too cumbersome to have two jabs, so I'll think I'll wait for the J&J vaccine which only requires one shot. I like oneshots!

Garth Spencer: Hm, had the N3F a twitter account they lost the password to? Why not ask Twitter staff to get it? Just give them proof that you are legitimate N3F staff. I use "politruk" as derogative slang for "politician". It was what Soviet political commissars were called and I have some limits in my enthusiasm for politicians. They try to meddle too much in the individual citizen's life, like now in virus times. People become happier and more creative if we respect the individual. Letting the collective come before the person is the path to dictatorship. We see all kinds of strange doings by politruks during this pandemonium pandemic period...

John Thiel (who contributed to both APAs): With "We in fandom need more togetherness and less apartness" I interpret it as you are advocating more openness in our fandom to followers of other types of media. Forgive me if my interpretation is wrong, but I will here anyway grab the opportunity to describe what I think is *the way of true fandom*. I'm not so enthusiastic about mediafandom and I'll try to detail why. For me Fandom, with a capital F, is the old, traditional one dealing with sf literature, fanzines, sf magazines and in general *sf in text form*. Movies, TV shows, games, comics and other types of usually visual media are fringe interests for us. People interested in those things are thus often called mediafans, as well as fringe fans. Fringefandom began with

comics fandom in the 1950's, but apart from a few (not many) dealing with both literature and comics, it almost immediately carved out its own path and was never a part of our Fandom. Fringefandom continued with eg the medieval Society for (Un)Creative Anachronism and Star Trek in the 1960s and role-playing games in the 1970s . Both both trekkers and gamers inspired this massive costuming craze. I know traditional Fandom sometimes had costumes too, but *limited* to special shows on conventions. Fringefandom is *huge* and gets all the media attention, since silly people in costumes is "good TV". In Sweden fringefans organise in SVEROK (short for the "Swedish Role-playing and Conflict Gaming federation") with 80 000+ members! But it's not *our* Fandom. Our true and original Fandom is a unique structure in many ways. To summarise 1. Fandom is a *flat, self-organising group that shuns top-down hierarchies*, and based on individualism rather than huge collectives like big federations. In comparison, the SVEROK mentioned is heavily top down organisation. All attempts to create huge federations for our Fandom have failed since fans are fanarchistic, a bit of mavericks. Fringefans are different in this respect, for example marching in big collective "nerd parades". I've never heard of trufans marching city streets in parades. That's something Fandom wouldn't do, it's just too embarrassing. 2. Fandom has *evolved into a complete "society" with its own culture and a long history*, from the late 1920's and on. It has its own information structure (prozone letterhacking early on, fanzines, LoCs, correspondence), its own traditions (conventions, fanslang, myths, awards, etc), an international super-structure (Worldcons, Eurocons, fan funds), its own history research, its literature and art (Fancylopedia, TED, Rotsler, Atom and other mimeo art), even religions (Roscoe, Ghu etc - admittedly not to be taken *too* seriously). I think it was Greg Pickersgill who once noted that "Fandom has a culture the size of a small European country". Fringe/mediafandom simply doesn't have all this! Instead of creating they are more about following and copying (as they have copied filking and fanfiction from us). 3. Fandom has has this *light-hearted, recursive property we call "fannishness"*, to deal with fandom in itself for its own sake, usually in a humorous way. It doesn't have with science fiction at all to do! My own observation is that fringefandom usually lacks a sense of humour and a healthy - what I call - cognitive distance. With cognitive distance I refer to the ability to take a step back and have a look at what you're doing from the outside. That is what you do with fannishness, which is a "meta" position where you can make fun of your own interest. Fringefans on the other hand aim to dive as deep as possible into their media interests, to become a part of it. That's why they make the most detailed construction drawings of USS Enterprise, spend thousands of dollars on collecting plastic stuff from movies and hundreds of hours on sewing costumes and forging chain mail. If you try to become integrated with, a part of your favourite film, show, game etc you don't have a cognitive distance. If we'd merge our individualistic Fandom, with its long history, its own traditions and recursive fannishness, with movies, games, TV shows, all these costumes etc - we'd risk to lose everything that is unique with Fandom! The true, old Fandom with a capital F would suffer if fanzines were replaced by computer games. It would be too sad if *The Enchanted Duplicator* suddenly became something like Harry Potter. We'd suffocate if Fandom was invaded by all this clothes and fabric from costume nerds. If you widen something too much you lose the essence of what you like. Suppose you're a stamp collector and love stamps more than anything. Then someone suggests supermarket rebate coupons must be recognised as some sort of stamps too. And later stickers for sports clubs or rock groups are added. Before you knew it, it has no longer anything to do with philately! I'm not just interested in mediafandom, I don't want to immerse myself in games, movies and such. I know that the Fandom I have known and cherished may be dying - partly because literature is pushed back by new media, but also that many fen are getting old - but I can always privately keep it alive in my heart. I don't want it to be "saved" by being diluted and turned away from what has made it unique. And besides, why on Earth would fringefandom have anything to benefit from trying to invade Fandom? They are so huge and successful by themselves, with cons for 50 000 costumers and federations of similar size. They march the streets and get most of the attention. They don't need us.

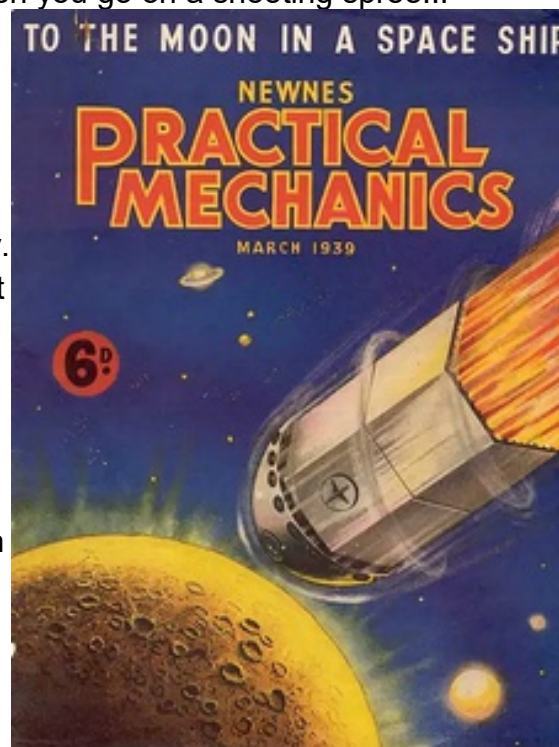
Unless it's a case of trying to pilfer some pedigree and pretending to have the cultural respect of literature and letters rather than superficial pixels of games. Let's have our stuff in our separate ways.

Joe Siclari and Edie Stern: Fanac.org, as well as eFanzine.com, are wonderful initiatives! Making old fanzines available and recording fandom's history are worthwhile projects. And it's in the nick of time as the traditional, real fen are getting old and are dying off one by one, I'm sad to say. Half of *Ansible* today is the RIP row... Traditional fandom is a unique structure and social phenomenon, which needs to be documented (something I do my best to do too). I'm not sure Fandom As We Know It will survive, but if its history is documented future generations will at least know about it and maybe find some nostalgic inspiration.

Will Mayo: "My country is a strange place" you say, adding "Serial killers roam". You seem not to be too happy with the gun-happiness of many Americans. I agree with that Americans have too many guns. I wouldn't like to see all guns in US citizens' hands removed but there are room for reforms. What the heck are they doing in eg Texas? They seem to revert to the Wild West of the 19th century. Extended background checks would be good and banning semi-automatics. If you are forced to make a special cocking move for every shot, you can't shoot as many when you go on a shooting spree... US news sources seem to be reporting one or two mass shootings per day. It's really bad! Another thing that makes the US strange is the lack of a comprehensive health care system, something that would have helped against corona. Obamacare was a step in the right direction, though unfortunately some politicians do their darndest to sabotage it. Health care shouldn't be a matter of money.

Jefferson P Swycaffer: The Royal Library newspaper archive isn't totally digitised yet, but they are working on it and what they have now is quite a lot. BTW, I met Poul Anderson on Seacon 1979, gave him my (crappy) fanzine, and later...received a LoC from him! Great guy! I say that not only from meeting him, but I really like his books. I'm not sure what you mean with DOS being good for cataloguing files. (Maybe the sub-directory structure which wasn't in 1.x but came with DOS2.x.) But what I liked is that DOS was fast, slim and easy to maintain since it didn't depend on hundreds of complicated system files and was free of unnecessary junk. I think there are benefits to both the straight and clear style of Asimov and the more expressional, blooming style of Vance. I have nothing against prologues that are there to tell something of the background of the story, but the prologue shouldn't *start* the plot. I agree the plot itself should start as late as possible, something eg Kurt Vonnegut often stressed.

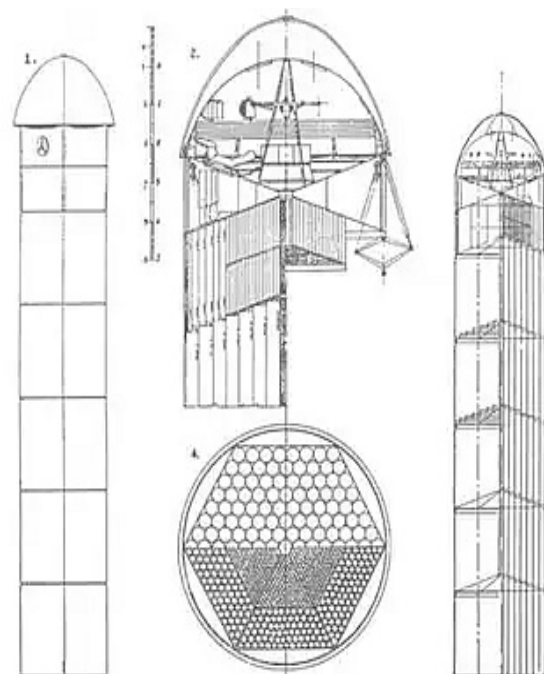
Samuel Lubell: As for what happens here in Sweden regarding the corona virus it is covered in my editorials. But one thing that makes me very irritated is that the politicians constantly move the goal posts for easing recommendations and "restrictions". Wonderful opening lines BTW! Have you phrased them? I agree with all those who note that the Hugo awards have become hugely Politically Correctly twisted! It wasn't exactly true that all ballots earlier were "unjustly filled with male writers". You have to consider that probably 90% of the most successful sf writers *were* males! It'd be only fair and justified if there were more of them on the ballots. Today, I'd estimate that, say, 60-75% of the most successful sf writers are male, so it then really becomes *totally unfair* if virtually no one of them are nominated or awarded. That's is discrimination. I'm sorry to say this, but "inclusiveness" is often extremely *excluding*. "Diversity" is often another word for discrimination, against all those "diversified" away. It would be for the better for all of us if this PC - not as in the IBM computer... - crowd would cool it. Don't they realise that every campaign they perform just gives Trump more followers? (Or over here more votes for these narrow-minded Sweden Democrats. Note: *not* affiliated with US



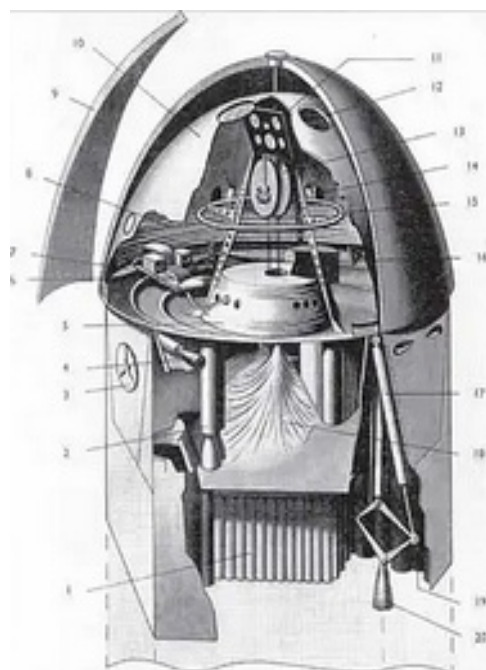
BIS moon project reaching the press.

Democrats.) Furthermore, I think the human brain is flexible enough to place itself in any situation and come up with any idea, so we don't need quotas for different groups to get different types of stories from different backgrounds. These attempts to cancel "cultural appropriation" is just dumb. A white person can and has the right to write a story about a black person (Heinlein did, for instance) and the other way around. After all, an sf writer may write a story from the viewpoint of a green Martian and can certainly with ease handle any version of a Homo Sapiens.

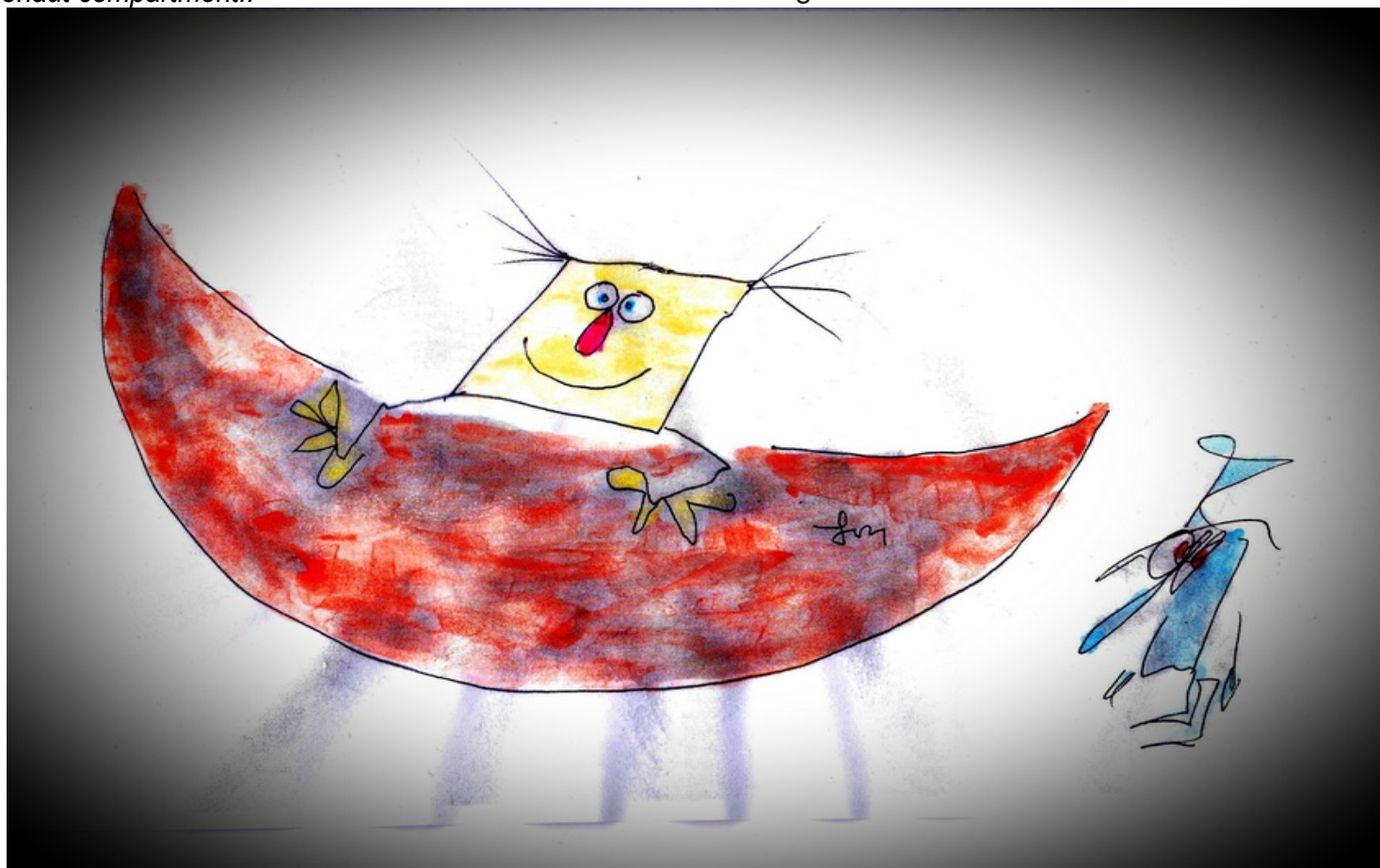
George Phillis: I come to think of the British Interplanetary Society. In 1939 (!) they did a study of a manned moon rocket. Arthur C Clarke was involved. They calculated it would be about the size and cost of a destroyer. They underestimated the difficulties, of course. They imagined to use solid rocket fuel bundled together in tubes, which would drop off as they were used. To me it seems their propulsion is too weak. See more: <https://www.airspacemag.com/space/hms-moon-rocket-3143/> But what would our world be, and the progress that can be made, without propellerheads speculating and dreaming! It may be debated, but for me John F Kennedy was one of the greatest US presidents, just because he believed we should "go to the Moon....not because they are easy, but because they are hard", which for instance laid the grounds for the Internet too.



British Interplanetary Soc's 1939 moon rocket.



Close up of the BIS moonship astronaut compartment..



"The Moon isn't made of green cheese! It's made of water melon..." If we are to believe artist Lars "LON" Olsson.