

INTERMISSION #110

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com for EAPA, N'APA and some other Homo Fiawolensis. Follow @SFJournalen's newstweets on Nordic sf/f/h&fandom. SFJ is 6 decades of sf news! We demand a vote of No Con-fidence, no confidence in all typos! Early July, 2021.

Editorially: Down with the Socialists...

As the pandemic is approaching rock bottom, from vaccine, warm weather and rising natural immunity, I'll leave that subject for now. Something more interesting is brewing. The Swedish parliament (called the Riksdag) June 21st voted for no confidence in Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, of the Social Democrats. (They are a sort of Socialists Light...or Dark or something)

It's the first time in "modern times" a sitting government has been kicked in the ass this way. (Not counting 1990 when the then S government proclaimed an economic package as a "cabinet question", ie a proposition so important that the government would resign if it wasn't voted through. It fell, the government resigned...but came back a couple of weeks later!)

The reason the Löfven government was kicked out is that their "passive support" from the Left Party (formerly the Communists) was withdrawn. And with that, there was enough support from the parties to the centre-right to oust Löfven - despite that they're not generally too fond of former Communists. The reason the Left Party left (no pun intended) Löfven is that the government to get support from two centre parties was to suggest investigating "market rents" for new housing (but not old). The housing situation, especially in Stockholm, is very pressed and an interesting situation (but I won't go into all that). And this brought down a government.



EXPRESSEN



Osäkra S-mandatet kan ge makten åt Kristersson

Historisk nagelbitare väntar • S-ledamot misstänkt för rattfylleri kan bli Löfvens fall

Expressen June 24th: "Unsafe S Mandate May Give Power to Kristersson", ie the opposition leader. Missing MP Heikkinen Breitholtz (see #109) was stand-in for a minister who is now forced to resign & return to her Riksdag seat to perhaps save Löfven. Exciting power games...

Sweden uses parliamentarism, ie the government must have the support by the parliament, unlike eg the US where the president, not congress, appoints the government. More exactly, the Swedish government must be "tolerated" by the Riksdag which means it mustn't have 175 or more - a majority - votes against it in a vote of confidence. In no confidence vote they lost they had 181 votes against. The major newspaper Expressen recently noted that the missing S MP Sara Heikkinen Breitholtz may result in opposition leader Ulf Kristersson from the Moderates to become PM. It would be natural for the speaker to nominate him, and the Social Democrats + support parties can without Ms H-B only muster 174 votes. (News: S moves to take back the vote, letting a minister return to the Riksdag.) I wouldn't be too keen to take the reins, since it's just one year until next ordinary election and at the end of the epidemic one just risks getting the blame for all done wrong. But then the only parties I know are room parties.

Finding a new government could be hard. Löfven doesn't want a snap election (he'll stay with a caretaker government for a while) but one may come anyway, if the speaker of parliament can't find a candidate the chamber will tolerate, and there're eight parties and no clear majority. There are three

parties to the left and five to the right. But two parties to "the right" are also more "centre" and have passively backed the ousted government. And one party to the right, the infamous, xenophobic Sweden Democrats, has a low degree of tolerance from most of the others and are seen as loose cannons... It may end in an snap election, which would happen in September or October (which would only result in a mandate until next ordinary election in 2022).

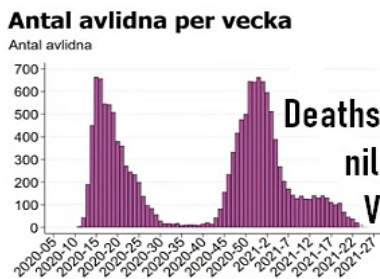
Not that I care very much. I'm not a great fan of politicians. Sure, we should have some politicians but they should have less power, and more power must be with the individual citizen. But I hope this illustrious gang of politruks now will be too occupied so they will let the remaining, unnecessary anti-virus measures lapse.

Those are of little benefit, but with huge medical risks! A recent scary headline, even if it's about the UK: "NHS facing 'biggest pressure in history' as 12 million await treatment",

<https://www.theweek.co.uk/news/science-health/953208/nhs-facing-biggest-pressure-in-history-with-12-million-awaiting> . The latest Swedish figure I saw a couple of months back was that over 1 million were awaiting medical treatment here, and it's now probably 1.5 million - who have to wait for



Despite good spirit (on the table) and masking his feelings (and mouth) PM Stefan Löfven lost the no confidence vote, initiated by Noshi Dadgostar to the right...eh, the Left, the party she leads.



Deaths virtually nil! Public Health Agency 1 July.

operations, diagnoses, medical treatment of all types!

The politicians over-cautious pandemic measures have turned hospitals away from their ordinary work and scared people from seeking care. This is a huge medical problem, which I suspect will cost many, many more lives than the corona virus. Millions denied or waiting for medical treatment will cause many early deaths – much more than this virus, which nearly everyone recovers from and now is stopped by weather, herd immunity and vaccines. (Damage to economy, education, mental health etc not counted.)

I suspect that people being dead tired of Löfven's opportunistic pandemic mismanagement has played some role in ousting him. The latest figures of virus deaths are virtually nil, almost all in risk groups and a majority of others are vaccinated, and to this comes rising natural immunity and summer with virus killing UV radiation.

Fortunately, the Midsummer celebrations - a huge thing here! - are mostly outdoors so it wasn't too much affected. And the small frogs jumped mask-less.

--Ahrvid Engholm

“X Files” à la Suede

We learn that a local film company calling themselves Crazy Pictures, which earlier did the Sweden-is-invaded movie “The Unthinkable” (alternate history makes it skiffy!) now plans a flying saucer flick called “UFO Sweden” (or rather “UFO Sverige”, it'll be shot in Swedish”). It's described as a new version of the “The X Files” and it'll be co-produced by the big film company SF Studios. Variety writes, <https://variety.com/2021/film/global/ufo-sweden-sf-studios-crazy-pictures-1234990612/>



The Archive for the Unexplained, inspiring a film.

Described as a mix between X-Files and Stranger Things, "UFO Sweden is set in a small town and follows a teenage rebel placed in foster care, who suspects that her father is not dead, but has been kidnapped by UFOs. With the help from a UFO association, she is determined to find out the truth. Crazy Pictures got the idea for the film after learning about UFO-Sweden, which investigates mysterious phenomena and manages the world's largest UFO archive, Archives for the Unexplained in Norrköping, Sweden.

UFO-Sweden/Sverige is the national organisation for people hunting flying kitchenware. And they do have this huge archive in the city of Norrköping, spread out on - as I understand - a dozen rented sites. It's quite packed with stuff of everything esoteric or "unexplained". They have also collected some sf material. Sam J Lundwall donated boxes of it, despite - which he once exclaimed with a glee - that he also upon retiring collected a lot of archive stuff and "shipped to the dump to have it burnt!"

They will begin shooting this autumn and premiere will be around Xmas time 2022 - provided of course that politicians get real and don't extend virus shite beyond that... I know Clas Svahn, former chairman of UFO-Sweden, who says everything is as yet a bit hush-hush, but the film is inspired by the organisation. There's a lot of buzz around UFOs right now because of the US government report (ordered by D Trump BTW, in an attempt to find even more conspiracies I guess). I've seen some of the shaky film clips of strange objects, and to at least me many of them simply look like electronic flitter in the instruments. But then I've never been I big fan of this Däniken stuff.

I'm more fond of von Donegan from Bob Shaw's serious scientific talks.



But Von Donegan can explain!

Poetry & Rheligion

I've been a follower of Roscoe for almost all my fannish career, you know this divine beaver Ghod that Art Rapp discovered in 1949. Below are Hholy Vhereses about Roscoe, from Phropheet Rapp. I asked my poetic friend Comet-John Benzene jr to make a Swedish translation, so local fans can become chonverts and on the Ultimatae Day of the 200th Fandom be taken by Roscoe in his shimmering rocket to the Perfect Fandom.

Mr Benzene agreed. "Provided you make space also for another piece I just also scribbled down," he said. "Note that I used some 'half rhymes' - va/hav, fjärde/färder etc - to more closely preserve the message. I'm sure the Nobel committee will be impressed!"

The Swedish version to the left, the original to the right.

FROM THE SACRED WRITINGS OF ROSCOE
by Art Rapp, 1949 (the English original)

FRÅN ROSCOES HELIGA SKRIFTER

by Art Rapp, 1949, translation Comet-John Benzene jr

*Det finns en witter ung bäver; Roscoe är bäverns namn,
han syns vara som varje bäver, men för oss säkert i hamn
ty alla andra är ju bruna, eller lerigt gråa-blå,
men när du blickar upp på Roscoe, finns inget att titta på*

*Han kan inte ej ses i vatten, ej heller uti luft,
och om han inte bet dig, du såg han som en bluff,
Men hans tänder är som mejslar och gör du icke rätt,
Roscoe vet det genast och ger benet ditt ett bett*

*Roscoe vakar över fansen varhelst de nu må va',
från dalgångar och öken, från berg och över hav.
Det är en snäll och hjälpsam bäver, får fans ta friska tag,
han förtjänar allt tillbejdan på var Helig Bäverdag.*

*Dessa dagar äro två, en juli den fjärde
dagen Roscoe i sitt rymdskepp är på himmelsfärder.
Till hans ära denna dag skall råda fannisk vapenvila,
och varje sann adept skall till sf-kongressen ila*

There exists a gay young beaver, Roscoe is this beaver's name,
and he seems like most young beavers, but he isn't quite the same,
for although the rest are brownish, or a muddy greyish-blue,
when you take a look at Roscoe, why the look goes right on thru!

He cannot be seen in water, he cannot be seen in air,
and if he didn't bite you, you would vow he wasn't there.
But his teeth are keen as chisels and if you commit a sin,
Roscoe will find out about it, and he'll bite you on the shin.

Roscoe watches out for stfen wheresoever they may be,
from the canyons to the desert, from the mountains to the sea.
He's a kind and helpful beaver, aiding fen in many ways,
and he merits fannish worship on the Sacred Beaver Days.

These days are two in number: one's the fourth day of July
it's the day when Roscoe flies a fiery spaceship in the sky.
In his honor, on that date, a truce should fall on fan dissension,
and every true disciple should assemble in convention.

*Den andra dagen är Labor Day, dagen Roscoe föddes,
då hyllningar till honom hela fandom överströddes,
då alla fans skall träffas och prata om gångna årets bröl
och skall utbringa skål för Roscoe i gudomligt, gyllne öhl.*

*Roscoe hjälper troende, från första till den sista,
det toge triljarder dagar om man dem alla skulle lista:
han ger Tryckfelsnisse sparken; han ger stadgar mera
stadga*

stencilpennor rullar ej av bordet där de är förlagda

*Han får mimeon trycka läsligt, får färgbanden att räcka,
han stoppar krönikörers historielögner fräcka;
han kättrar in i tidningskiosken, efter sf-blaskor trålar,
och får fanen att dem finna med telepatiska strålar,*

*Roscoe kryper i trånga prång där skatter finns ibland
och trots damm och mörker styr han fanens sökarhand
såden missar de mondäna värdelösta verken
och får fram den guldklimp som sf-hyllan stärker*

*Och Roscoe faller hökar'ns giriga ögons markis
så man säljer sf-böcker till hälften av avsett pris,
och Roscoe vet vad du önskar så när du boken fick
får han den, ock magasinen, bli i allra bästa skick.*

*Och många andra favörer ges sanna, trogna fans
som dyrkar och säger Roscoe den bästa som fanns,
som bevis att följa Roscoes väg, den ärofulla,
skickar de in namnen till Roscoes hedersrulla.*

More in Fancyclopedia about Roscoe: <https://fancyclopedia.org/Roscoe>

Alas, as promised, I'm afraid I'm forced to also present another piece by the illustrious Comet-John. But what the heck is this fishy thing "ABBA"? Is it something you can eat? Like, something in a jar? Who knows...

THANK YOU FOR THE SKIFFY

By Comet-John Benzene Jr

(earlier version by ABBA as "Thank You for the Music")

*I'm rather special, in fact I'm a bit of a slant
If I tell you jokes you probably want them all banned
And I have a talent and here is a hint
You cannot stop reading when I am in print
I write the fanzines galore
All I want is to do it some more!
So I say thank you for the skiffy, the stars that's gleaming
Thanks for rockets spacewards streaming
Who can live without it? I ask from my cosmic mind
What would we find
Without fanzines and the fans, we'd be blind!
So I say thank you for the skiffy
For giving it to me*

The second day is Labor Day, the date of Roscoe's birth, when tribute should be paid him over all the fannish Earth, when all fen shall meet their fellows to look back upon the year and shall drink a toast to Roscoe in that other great ghod Ebeer.

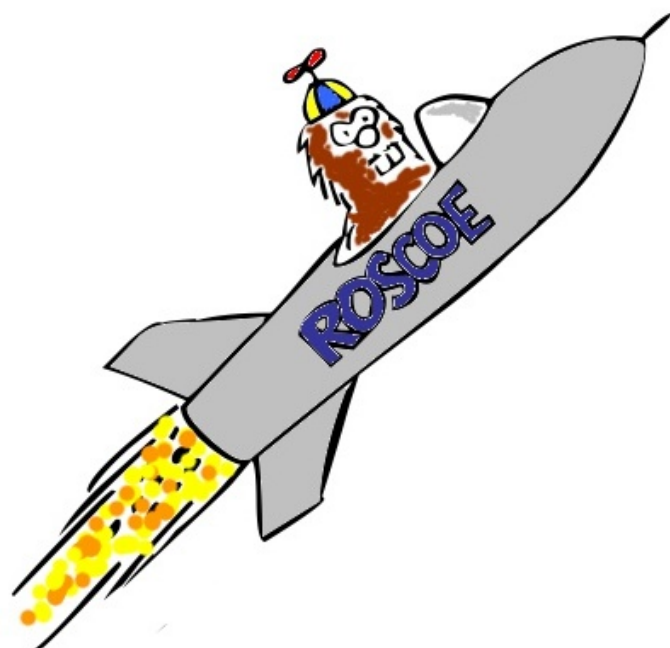
Nbw, Roscoe helps his followers in many, many ways: just to list them would consume about a hundred billion days: he reduces typing errors; he makes fandub laws more stable; he keeps laid-down pens and styli from a-rolling off the table.

He makes mimeos print legibly, makes typer ribbons last; he keeps hacks from pulling boners when they're writing of the past; he climbs into crowded newsstands, ferrets out the stfsh zines, and attracts the fan's attention via telepathic beams.

Roscoe crawls in cluttered corners where the bookstores' treasures stand and despite the dust and darkness guides the groping fannish hand that it misses the obscuring mass of mundane, worthless books and brings up the rare edition for which every stfan looks.

And it's Roscoe who puts blinkers on the greedy dealers' eyes so they sell their stf like other pulps, at half the cover price, and it's Roscoe who takes cognizance of what you're always wishin' and arranges that you and the mag in perfect mint condition.

And many other boons befall those true and faithful fen who agree that Roscoe merits being honoured among men, and to prove that they are striving to full the Roscoe Goal, submit their names for listing on the Roscoe Honor Roll.



Hugo said I was 124C41

plus Willis said my puns were second to none

And I often wondered who made it all start

Surely that fellow was incredibly smart

I sense a wonderful man

Well, whoever it was - I'M A FAN!

So I say...

I've done my fanac, I am the boy with inkstained hands

I want to crank it out for everybody

Do fanzines. Write a Loc. Be a fan!

Thank you for the skiffy...



New Human Species Found

Paleoanthropology and researching the human family tree has made huge progress in recent years. We found the mini man *Homo Floresiensis*, nicknamed the hobbit, and also a finger in Siberia. It might not seem much but you could extract DNA from it, and by DNA analysis - by a group lead by Svante Pääbo of Sweden - it was shown to be a finger of a new *Homo* species, named Denisovians from the cave where the finger was found.

Both were contemporary with us *Homo Sapiens*, who BTW has had her history prolonged as remains found in Morocco were shown to be 300 000 years old (before this *Homo Sapiens* was thought to have appeared 150-200 000 years ago). Genes from our third contemporary the Neanderthals have by the Pääbo group been found to be partially mixed into ours.

(Especially in cancel culture proponents, I'd suggest...). At least four members of the *Homo* family lived on Earth at the same time! But it could be five! An old skull find from WWII time has re-surfaced in China, which could be a new member of our family tree. *New Scientist* writes,

[https://www.newscientist.com/article/2282223-dragon-man-claimed-as-](https://www.newscientist.com/article/2282223-dragon-man-claimed-as-new-species-of-ancient-human-but-doubts-remain/)

[new-species-of-ancient-human-but-doubts-remain/](https://www.newscientist.com/article/2282223-dragon-man-claimed-as-new-species-of-ancient-human-but-doubts-remain/)

The nearly complete human skull had an elongated cranium from which a heavy brow bone protruded, shading the gaping squares that once housed eyes. And then there was the skull's unusual size: "It's enormous," says paleoanthropologist Chris Stringer of London's Natural History Museum.

*Perhaps aware of the magnitude of the find, the man secreted the skull away in an abandoned well. Now, nearly 90 years later, a study published in the journal *The Innovation* makes the case that this skull represents a new human species: *Homo longi*, or the Dragon Man. Two additional studies reveal that the stunningly preserved cranium likely came from a male that died at least 146,000 years ago. Its mashup of both ancient and more modern anatomical features hints at a unique placement on the human family tree.*

Now we only wait for finding remains of fancient fen! I've heard they are preparing an expedition, lead by the famous professor Von Donegan, that will excavate camp sites for old fannish tribes, according to legends and reader letters in 1926 *Amazing Stories*, in the woods known as Forest Ackerman.

Here they have earlier found a piece of bone resembling a stencil stylus, presumably crafted by our fancestors, and pieces of flint carefully formed into primitive spaceships. In a nearby cave, wall paintings were also discovered resembling prehistoric room parties, made in ochre and charcoal. All this has earlier been covered in documentaries by film makers Hanna and Barbera.

But we already know that fancient fan could craft stencils from thinly hammered hide and make a primitive mimeo from buffalo bones and carved out stocks. Aside from being able to brew bheer. chemical analysis has also shown they could make a corflu-like mix from herbs and beaver secretion (That could be the roots to the Roscoe cult.) But how this cultural quantum leap came about is still largely unknown. There are even speculations that early fen had contacts with aliens from space, a theory proposed by one wacky Dr Clarke who suggests we civilised by a big, black block of stone.



Reconstruction of dragon man.

Hey, you can't take a selfie with a piece of rock, stupid!

Let's hope answers can be found in the hunt for Homo Fiawolensis!

History Corner

Time for some more sf and fan history, from the vaults of His Royal Majesty's Library in Stockholm and its digital newspaper archive. *Intermission* has for a long time had lots of this stuff, and I'll continue (on a smaller scale than with the ten recent history issues) as long as there's interesting stuff left among the thousands of newspaper clips saved. Nordic readers may try to read the originals, pasted in as illos (they may be a bit blurry for technical reasons) but for those who have no clue about the lingo of the kind, considerate and peaceful Vikings I'll make translations and/or summaries.

First a report from an sf con I myself was involved in. Me and some buddies did two cons we called Conscience, in 1993 and 1995 in Stockholm. Medium-sized by our



Did we have pre-historic space contacts with aliens this way? (From comic book *The Hedehöns Kids in Space*, a sort of Swedish version of the *Flintstones*, by Bertil Almquist.)

Sf som sektträff

Rymden har förlorat i dragningskraft, men för författarna blir verkligheten alltmer spännande. Science fiction-romaner säljer i stora upplagor men de riktiga fantasterna är få till antalet. På internationella Sf-kongressen möttes de i underjorden för att prata om framtiden och äta nötter.

På väg in passerar jag en oansenlig port, en smal korridor och går med försiktiga steg nedför en osäker spiraltrappa. Det känns som att kliva in i ett skyddsrum, unken luft sticker i näsan, det är skumt, men i trappan hörs musik som är så mild att den bara kan vara skapad av en person, drömmaren Ralph Lundsten. Smekande ljud från rymden, sfärernas musik, vögleder besökaren ned i den lilla boulehallen på söder i Stockholm, där en tredagars internationell science fiction-kongress, *Conscience 95*, ska hållas mitt på gruset.

Estetiskt sett är det helt rätt att förlägga en sf-händelse till just en underjordisk lokal. Bra sf-litteratur förmedlar ofta en obehaglig känsla av att vara instängd i rummet och tiden. Men underjorden är också en talande metafor för den klassiska sf-litteraturens ställning i går och ännu mer i dag. Det som var vetenskapens visionära frontlinje har på ett drygt decennium överträffats av verkligheten. Rymden har dessutom forlorat i dragningskraft. Istället för utåt vänds den litterära sf-romanen inåt mot den minsta rymden, mot elektronikkens svarta hål, datarymden.

En sf-kongress av i dag borde ha framtiden för sig, nu när William Gibsons cyberspace-trilogi gjort rymdlitteratur rumren, men tvärtom verkar glansdagarna ligga en bra bit bakåt i tiden. I flera debatter under de tre dagarna är vi knappt fler i publiken än i panelen, och då är det inte enbart esoteriska ämnen på dagordningen: futuristisk litteratur, rymden som den sista vildmarken, digital sf, litauisk sf.

Amerikanen Norman Spinrad har rest från sitt hem i Paris för att berätta för oss sju-tio personer om sina kontroversiella böcker, inte minst om *The Iron Dream* från 1972, en fiktiv sf-roman av Adolf Hitler. På bokens omslag skulle egentligen ha stått Hitlers namn, men förlaget fick stora skälvan och istället blev det "Norman Spinrad presents Adolf Hitlers Hugo Award winning SF Classic *The Iron Dream*". Boken övermattes till tyska men hamnade omedelbart på indexlistan, och där är den fortfarande. Den får säljas men inte öppet, bara under disk.

Spinrads böcker har provocerat många, också trogna sf-läsare. Som en av frontfigurerna för den amerikanska motsvarigheten till Englands new wave-rörelse blev bans

sf-romaner, med inslag av sex, våld, politisk satir och pseudopsykologi, ofta förtalade. Böckerna handlade inte om rymdskepp utan om förtryckta planeter och makttinrigar, något som under det kalla kriget ansågs alltför verklighetsstroget för att helt viftas bort som fantasier.

William Gibson och andra cyberpunkförfattare som Bruce Sterling och John Shirley började i det tidiga 80-talet att skriva mörka framtidsberättelser med mättad prosa och minimal intrig. Men detta var inte, som ibland påstås, ett brött mot traditionell sf utan snarare en litteratur som väl förvaltar ett arv. Cyberpunkens rötter förgrenar sig i många håll: men återfinns också inom sf, hos amerikanerna Spinrad och Harlan Ellison men kanske mer hos britterna Michael Moorcock och J. G. Ballard, två av genrens språkliga och tematiskt allra främsta nyskapare.

Det nya som hände under 80-talet var att de fysiska och psykologiska inslagen i sf kompletterades med bioteknik och motkraften från punkrörelsen. Människa och teknik förenades och rymden fick på ett annat sätt än tidigare en inre, levande och oroväckande tidstypisk dimension.

Trots att somliga författare skriver emaljligt populära böcker är genrens verkliga fantasier få till antalet, inte fler än några tusental världen över. **Sf-fandom**, den informella rörelsen av fans, har i Sverige existerat sedan tidigt 50-tal då tidningen *Uppått* uppstod och för en tid blev franskens gemenskapens nav. De mest aktiva började träffas i små, interna klubbar där man diskuterade filosofi och rymdlitteratur och i stället för kongressmat drack te och åt nötter, något som därefter blivit ett signum för svenskt **fandom**.

Acheivd Eogholm är arrangör av konfe-

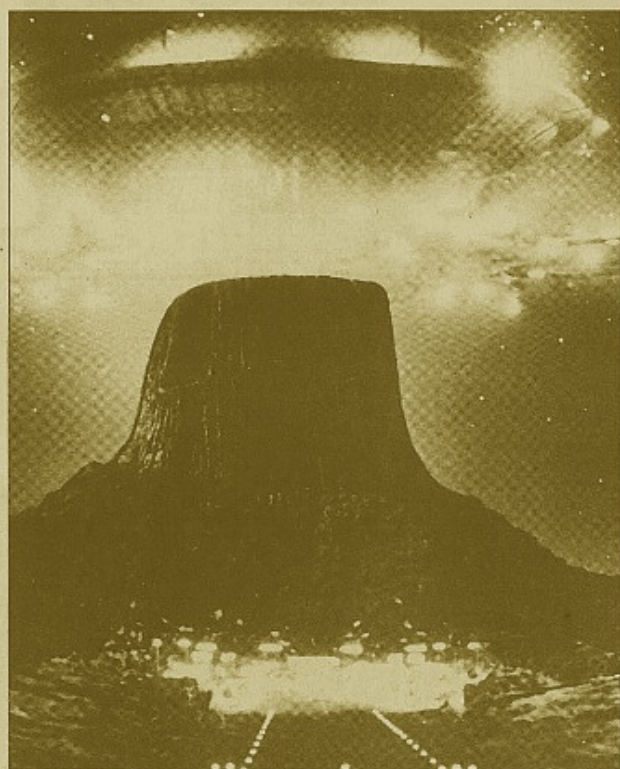


Fiktivt mörker. I mörka källarlokaler möts science-fictionfantasterna för att fundera över den mörkande framtiden och nya elektroniska landvinningar. De har landat i Utopia. Här är det själva verkligheten som förändras. Ovan har Johnny (Keanu Reeves), i filmen *Johnny Mnemonic*, lagrat 320 gigabyte stulen data i hjärnan.

rensen och tillika ett äkta sf-fan. Han ger ut små, stencilerade fanzines med artiklar mestadels skrivna av honom själv. Han är ett världsnamn i de underjordiska kretsarna och en centralgestalt i Sverige, även om han inte alls vill framstå som märkvärdig. Den familjära och ganska oprofessionella stämningen runt kongressen ger en känsla av släktträff, eller skulle man säga sektträff, för på många sätt liknar intresset för rymden en religion.

Nom musikkens science fiction finns framför allt ett världsnamn, Ralph Lundsten. Han är föreståndare och stjärnguide i sitt rosa *Andromeda* i Saltsjö-Boo, en inspelningsstudio som tillika är ett galaktiskt rike med egen ambassad. Lundsten ägnar sig i högsta grad åt det främmande men hans framtidssyn liknar ingen annans: när andra under kongressen talar om transnationella storförtegar säger han att ande och material är ett och odelbart, mot en allt hårdare värld konstrar han med att framtiden tvärtom ser ljus ut, och ljusare blir den för den som lyssnar till rymdmusik från *Andromeda*.

På sitt eget sätt tar Ralph Lundstens uppenbarligen framtiden på allvar, men han är ett undantag. Den hissande känslan i sf – i böcker, filmer och spel – ligger annars i glappet mellan fakta och fiktion, i skildringar som är så överklaga att de nästan verkar troliga.



Ohjälpligt passé. Flygande tefat är inget för dagens Science fiction-entusiaster.

Det faktum att muren föll i Östeuropa var, tycker somliga, nästan som att uppleva sf i verkligheten. Kommunismen störtades och alla väntade på ett utopia, men istället började det spricka och sedan har det blöstat upp tidigare opptäckta konflikthårdar i både öst och väst.

Den internationella panelen med deltagare från Litauen, Ukraina, Ryssland, Frankrike, USA och Sverige hade förstärkt olika svar på frågan vad som gick fel, men ingen åsikt var lika disluteabel som Norman Spinrads. För honom var det glasklart: Lösningarna på det före detta Sovjetunionens problem heter Sovjetunionen, liksom ett åter-skapande av Jugoslavien löser kriget i det forna Jugoslavien. De östeuropeiska gästerna var artiga och nöjde sig med att höja ögonbrynen eller lämna lokalerna.

När sf-fantaster konfronterats med en föränderlig verklighet börjar det ofta gnissla, förr eller senare. Det senaste exemplet är cyberpunkförfattarna som beskylfts för att teckna en drogdränkt och föga positiv framtidsbild. I själva verket har de bara fantasiserat utifrån vad de redan ser omkring

sig och mixat gatukulturens artefakter på ett ovanligt attraktivt sätt. De är knappast skyldiga till den kalla datortekniken, även om böckerna lämnat bestående bidrag till designen och vokabulären.

Vad som däremot hotar sf som litterär genre är att den tid vi lever i erbjuder långt större, mer provocerande och revolutionerande förändringar än de mest spektakulära romanerna.

Det florerar till exempel en hypotes om att människan inte är skapelsens krona utan det näst senaste steget i utvecklingskedjan, nödvändig bara för att uppnå datorn och roboten. Tanken är orimlig, visst, men inte helt vettlös, inte med tanke på att människan själv konstruerar en artificiell intelligens som ska överträffa vår egen.

Verkligheten har förändrats, och därmed också fantasin. Om sf som litterär form kommer att ha en plats framöver är därför snarare en fråga om hur väl den kan tolka samtiden, inte framtiden.

Sven Ränlund

standards (around 100 attendees) and both were also what we called Baltcons, a regional con series for Baltic Sea countries running for about 15 years in the 90's and 00's. (But fizzling out in the late 00's due to lack of interest and need - most Baltic countries joined the EU, travel and fan contacts became easier and fen could just as well attend the Eurocon and ordinary skiffy cons.) In 1993 GoH was Jerry Pournelle, and I know some think he is a descendant of Genghis Kahn but I should tell you that he was a perfect gentleman and quite interesting (and he was also an old fan, you know).

In 1995 we had Norman Spinrad, an fascinating guy (who I once visited in Paris, ie he was away but the wife was home) and famous for eg *The Iron Dream* and *Bug Jack Barron* (a novel of some interest in an era of a certain Trump). Though the con worked reasonably well, the 1995 con got some slightly raised eyebrows for the venue having a floor of packed sand... It's not easy to find the perfect venue, as you know. Hotels are usually too expensive. Local council facilities usually ban bars, with no understanding of fandom's traditional thirst for bheer. We found this sports site in a big cellar, which already had their licenced, reasonably priced bar. It was a club for the French game of boule, where you throw metal balls landing in sand, you know Boule has become a popular summer game here. It's played in the parks and this sports hall could also offer it winter time. I remember we lost a lot of money on the '95 con (concom passed a hat, with a big hat size for Yours Truly...) as we gave a lot of subsidies to Eastern European fans to turn up - over 20 did!, from the Baltic States, Ukraine, Romania, Poland etc. But the dates. Smack in vacation time weren't perhaps the best.

I did the con PR and managed to get some articles and mentions in the newspapers, radio interviews and so on. Internet was new and all the rage, though few were connected I remember I did a lot of net-PR. The papers had just begun getting E-mail, so I could bombard them at a time few others did!. But I didn't see this piece before (prev page), from Göteborgs-Posten August 12 1995, "Sf As a Sect Meet":

Space has lost its attraction, but reality becomes increasingly exciting for the writers. Sf novels sell in huge numbers, but the real fans are few. On an international sf convention in Stockholm they met underground to talk about the future and eat nuts. On the way in I passed a modest gate and carefully descended a spiral staircase. It feels like entering a bomb shelter. Stale air enters the nostrils, in the low light music is heard which is so mild it can only come from one person, the dreamer Ralph Lundsten. A soothing sound from space, music of the spheres, directs the visitor down into the boule hall in Stockholm's Southern district, where a three-day international sf con, Conscience 95, is held in the sand. Aesthetically it's quite right to arrange an sf event in an underground site. Good sf literature often conveys an eerie feeling to be locked in time and space. But the underground is also a metaphor for the situation for sf yesterday and even more today. What earlier was the the visionary frontline of science has in just over a decade been surpassed by reality. Space has also lost its attraction. Instead if turned outwards the literary telescope is turned inwards, towards the smallest space, the black hole of electronics, computer space. An sf con of today should be something for the future now when William Gibson's cyberspace trilogy made space literature kosher, but to the opposite it seems the golden days were yesterday. For many debates during the days we are not that many more listening than in the panels, and it isn't only esoteric subjects covered: futuristic literature, space as the last frontier, digital sf, sf from Lithuania. The American

Vampyrer, varulvar drar in på kåren

□ Just som Stockholm började stänga till pingst inneslöt sig bleka och sammanbitna personer i Kärhusets hörsal på Hollandargatan till en alldeles egen sorts härryckning.

Fjärran från solskin, fåglalåt och jordiska trivialiteter satte de sig att lyssna till märkliga sagor om fentomer och vampyrer, kosmiska äventyr och interstellära katastrofer.

Det var Sveriges sciencefictionister till ett antal av tvåhundra män och ett fåtal kvinnor som möttes till FANCON 2. Varvid CON stod för kongress och FAN inte hade med vanligt jävelskap att göra utan fastmer var det engelska ordet för entusiast. Tvåtan betydde inget särskilt, den stod där ändå eftersom nuffror nu en gång hör till i sciencefiction.

□ Unga Entusiaster

Entusiasterna var övervägande unga, utom Carl Johan Holzhäusen, som är en bit över de sjuttio, få journalist vid Hjärtans Göteborgs-Posten och några som pensionärer. En av våra mest uppskattade sciencefictionförfattare.

Svenska akademien för sciencefiction, en något fläskare upplaga av de vanliga Aderton, kommer under FANCON:s förlopp att tilldela honom 1974 års Sciencefiction-stipendium, en gubbe smidd i vanligt jordiskt trä.

Kongressen hade mjukstartat redan på bilpingsstation genom att titta på sciencefictionfilmen "Varulven jagar Frankenstein", ett verk av sådan enastående uselhet, enligt kongressordförande John-Henri Holmberg, att det blivit ett ständigt inslag på alla SF-sammankomster.

□ Groparna imponerade

Man hade därefter tittat på stan, dess näringsställen och uppscendevärande gropar i topografien. Kongressens utländska hedersgäst, engelsmannen Brian W Aldiss, en av resarna i den internationella sciencefictionlitteraturen, var klart imponerad såväl av utminueringen som groparna.

Det föreföll som om han väl kunde tänka sig att förlägga sin nästa fantastiska roman till denna gästrika men surrealistiskt söndertuggade huvudstad.

Sven Christer Swahn, lundensisk kulturperson och yngre bror till Jan Öyvind Swahn, den lärde i Lund, var svensk högtalare vid kongressen. Han har skrivit böcker om åtskilligt, bl a såväl om staden Lund som om Fritiof Nilsson Piraten, och har alltså ett ut-



Sven Christer Swahn, science fictionist från Lund i begrunden inför en avert ur genten.

vecklad sinne för det fantastiska både i verkligheten och dikten.

Efter att redan som pojke ha låtit sig fascineras av Tarzan, apornas son, har han nu på medelålders blivit övertygad sciencefictionist och utgett böcker som "Vår män i Nyhavn", en omtumlande berättelse om en skånsk journalist som dröjer sig kvar på Nyhavn 17 och uppdagar att Köpenhamns formilgen kryllar av atlantider, det vill säga ättlingar till innebyggarna på det sjunkna Atlantida.

Mången svensk som stannat över natten i Nyhavn har ju misstänkt något liknande, men ingen har i skrift lyckats framställa det så övertygande som Sven Christer.

□ Debatt på engelska

Om detta talade han dock inte till kongressen, utan läste i stället halvdygt ur manuskriptet till vad som i höst skall utkomma som bok om svensk sciencefiction. Den första genomlysande sammanfattningen av konstarten, ansåg sig kongressordförande Holmberg kunna garantera redan i förväg.

Den allmänhet som vill veta mer om vad sciencefiction egentligen är har en chans kl 12 på annandagen på Kärhuset. Då diskuterar Brian Aldiss, Sven Christer Swahn m fl med sig själva och med publiken om "Sciencefiction - underhållning eller budskap". För att Aldiss skall ha en chans i debatten talar man på engelska.

Norman Spinrad has travelled from his home in Paris to tell people about his controversial books, not the least *The Iron Dream* from 1972, a fictitious sf novel by Adolf Hitler. The cover would have had Hitler's name, but the publisher became very worried and instead it read "Norman Spinrad presents Adolf Hitler's Hugo Award winning SF Classic *The Iron Dream*". The book was translated to German but was immediately put on the index list where it still is. It means it can be sold but not openly, only under the counter. Spinrad's books have provoked many. As one of the front figures of England's New Wave movement his sf novels with portions of sex, violence, political satire and pseudo psychology were often slammed. The books weren't about spaceships but about oppressed planets and power struggles, something that during the cold war was seen as too realistic to be ignored as fantasies. William Gibson and other cyberpunk authors like Bruce Sterling and John Shirley began writing dark future stories in the early 80's, with stark prose and a minimum of plot. But this wasn't as often claimed breaking the traditions but rather literature which well nurtures its heritage. The roots of cyberpunk comes from many directions but are also from sf, with the Americans Spinrad and Harlan Ellison but perhaps more from the Brits Michael Moorcock and JG Ballard, two of the most inventive and strong in language and theme in the genre. The new thing happening during the 1980s was that physical and psychological parts of sf were completed with biotech and the counter culture of the punk movement. Man and technology were merged and space obtained an inner, living and worrying dimension in another way than before. Though some authors write incredibly popular books, the real fantasists of the genre are rather few. Not more than a few thousand world-wide /thinking of the attendees of a Worldcon, probably/. Sf fandom, the informal movement of fans, has existed in Sweden since the early 1950's when the magazine *Häpna!* Came about and for a time became the hub for the fans. The most active began to meet in small internal clubs where they discussed philosophy and space literature and instead of convention food drank tea and ate peanuts /Lars-Olov Strandberg's treat/ something that since have become a symbol for fandom. Åhrvid Engholm is one of the convention organisers and also a real sf fan. He publishes small, stencilled fanzines with articles mostly written by himself /well, at the time I did news in the SFJ newszine, usually not articles, print run actually near 300! Sorry for the next claim, not coming from me.../ His name is known world-wide in these underground circles and he's a central figure in Sweden, though he doesn't want to claim to be any special. The familiar but unprofessional atmosphere around the convention gives a feeling of a family affair, or one could say sect meeting, because interest in space resembles religion in many ways. In the sf of music there's one name of world reputation, Ralph Lundsten. He's manager and star guide for pink Andromeda in Saltsjö-Boo, a recording studio which also is a galactic realm with its own embassy. Lundsten has to a high degree dealt with the alien, but his views of the future are unlike others: when others during the convention talk about big, transnational corporations, he says that spirit and matter is one and indivisible, against a tough world he replies with that the future looks bright, and it becomes even brighter for anyone listening to music from Andromeda. Lundsten obviously takes the future seriously in his own way, but he is an exception. The staggering feeling in sf - in books, films and games - comes otherwise from the gap between fact and fiction, in differences that seem so unreal that they almost seem probable. /A fine way to phrase it! The fact that the Wall fell in Eastern Europe was, some think, almost like experiencing sf in real life, Communism was toppled and everyone waited for utopia, but instead it began to crack, and undiscovered conflicts have since popped up in both East and West. The international panel with members from Lithuania, Ukraine, Russia, France, USA and Sweden had of course different answers to the question of what went wrong, but no opinion was discussed as much as Norman Spinrad's. For him it was clear. The solution for the former Soviet Union was the Soviet Union, and re-creating Yugoslavia would also solve the war in Yugoslavia. The East European guests were polite and satisfied with raising their eyebrows and leaving the room. When sf fans are confronted with an obsolete reality cracks appear. The latest example is the cyberpunk authors who are accused of painting a drug-drenched and negative picture of the future, but in reality they have only noted and imagined things from what they already see around them and merged the artefacts of street culture in an unusually attractive way. They are hardly responsible for the cold computer technology, even though the books have left lasting contributions to design and vocabulary. But what threatens sf as a literary genre is that our time offers far bigger, more provoking and more revolutionary changes than the most spectacular sf novels. There's for instance a hypothesis around that man isn't the crown of creation, but the next last step in a chain of development, necessary only for inventing the computer and robot. The thought is unreasonable, for sure, but not totally insane, considering that man will himself design an artificial intelligence that surpasses our own. Reality has changed, and with that also the fantasy. If sf will find a place in the future is rather a question of how well it can interpret the present, not the future.

A lot of interesting thoughts in what I may say is an unusually well-written newspaper report from a con! The writer is the for me unknown Sven Rånlund. A pity I saw it only 26 years afterwards. I would have sent him some more SFJs and fanzines and congratulated him for serious take on the genre. (Googling I find it seems he has left journalism and gone into music. It may explain his respect for Ralph Lundsten's music, the composer and cosmic philosopher whom I have covered earlier here.)

Lets move to another con. *Intermission* has covered 1970's Fancon before, but here's another piece

I found, from Dagens Nyheter, June 2 1974. The "corps" referred to is what the student union house was called, *"Vampires, Werewolves sweeps into the Corps"* (clip on a previous page):

Just as Stockholm began to close for Pentecost, bleak and silent persons enclosed themselves in the auditorium of the Corps on Holländar Street for their own very special ecstasy. Far from sunshine, birdsong and the trivial things of Earth they sat down to listen to strange tales of phantoms, vampires, cosmic adventures and interstellar disasters. It was Sweden's scienfictionists to a number of 200 men and just a few women who met for FANCON 2. In which CON stood for convention and FAN didn't have with devilry to do but is the English word for enthusiast. /"Fan" is since long used that way in Swedish too, but "fan" is also an alternative word for the devil! The number 2 doesn't mean anything special, but was there anyway because numbers belong to science fiction. /Eh, it was the second Fancon, Sven! YOUNG ENTHUSIASTS The enthusiasts were mostly young, except Carl Johan Holzhausen who is a bit over 70, ex-journalist at Hjärne's Göteborgs-Posten and now as retired one of our most appreciated sf authors. The Swedish academy for sf, a somewhat younger version of The Eighteen, will during FANCON award him the 1974 sf statuette, a figure carved in earthly wood /by Urban G, presented here before!/. The convention had a soft start already the day before Pentecost Eve by watching the sf movie The Werewolf Vs Frankenstein, a piece of such incredible rottenness, according to convention chairman John-Henri Holmberg, that it has become a permanent part of sf meetings. THE PITS IMPRESSED After that they had a look on town, restaurants and pits in the topography. The convention's foreign GoH, one of the big ones in international sf, was very impressed by both the food

VAREN 1969 visades en rad sciencefictionfilmer i TV, ett lov-
värt initiativ trots att kvaliteten
på filmerna för det mesta var usel
och urvalet diskutabelt. Seriens
producent Sam J Lundwall har
nu i efterhand kompletterat pro-
gramserien med en liten bok,
Science fiction (Sveriges Radios
förlag, 22:50), som gör anspråk
på att vara den första historiken
på svenska. Det stämmer ju inte
riktigt; det finns många som har
skrivit om sf i Sverige, en av de
första var Elisabeth Tykesson i en
essä i BLM 1954. Men Lundwalls
bok är den hittills fylligaste histo-
riken, från Platon fram till Stan-
ley Kubricks mastodontfilm "2001
— A Space Odyssey".

Lundwall behåller sitt ämne
väl, men jag tycker inte att han
får ut så mycket av det. Han har
skrivit en sorts kommenterad bi-
bliografi, som är användbar som
uppslagsbok, men inte mycket
mer. Det egendomliga är att
Lundwall, som uppenbarligen är
en hängiven sf-fanatiker, inte ens
tar sitt ämne på allvar. Stilen är
kåserande och slapp, resonemangen
ytliga. När Lundwall skriver om
Edward Bellamys idéhistoriskt in-
tressanta framtidsroman "Looking
backward 2000—1887" (1888)
anlägger han det konventionella
sf-perspektivet; han tror att bo-
ken handlar om år 2000 och dö-
mer ut den som en naiv utopi.
Men boken handlar om 1880-talet,
sekelsslutets sociala utvecklingsop-
timism och framtidstro.

Uppfattar man inte den idéhi-
storiska-politiska bakgrunden, blir
sf bara en bisarr litteraturgenre,
ett kuriosum. I själva verket är
den, som alla subkulturella före-
teelser, en utmärkt vägvisare till
samtidens myter, neuroser, dröm-
mar och tabuföreställningar.
Lundwalls bok fungerar som en
glimtvis som en sådan vägvisare.

and the pits. It seemed he could very well place his next fantastic novel in this hospitable but chewed away city./There were huge construction projects in central Stockholm at the time, making central city blocks turning into pits with diggers./ Sven Christer Swahn, culture person from Lund and younger brother to Jan Öyvind Swahn, was Swedish keynote speaker at the convention. He has developed a sense for the fantastic in both reality and fantasy. He has now at middle age, after being fascinated by Tarzan son of the apes as a boy, become a convinced scienfictionists and published books like Our Man in Nyhavn. A dazzling tale about a Scanian journalist who stays at Nyhavn 17 and discovers that Copenhagen is full of Atlantes, that is descendants of the dwellers of the sunken Atlantis. Many Swedes have stayed overnight at Nyhavn and suspected something similar, but no one has described it so convincing as Sven Christer. DEBATE IN ENGLISH But he didn't speak about this on the convention, instead he read half aloud from the manuscript to what this autumn will be published as a book about Swedish sf. /It must be his 7xFuture, about 7 specific sf authors, but not Swedish sf/ The first thorough look on the art of sf, convention chairman Holmberg promised already in advance. The general public which wants to know more about what sf really is has a chance 12 o'clock two days after Pentecost at the student corps. Brian Aldiss, Sven Christer Swahn and others will then discuss with themselves and the audience about "Sf - entertainment or message". To give Aldiss a chance in the debate they will speak English. (Caption: Sven Christer Swahn, sciencefictionist from Lund, studies a misfit genre example.)

Sounds like a nice little con. I wonder if this was Brian A's first trip to Sweden? He was invited by Holmberg. obviously, but soon became a big buddy of Holmberg's not so great friend Sam J Lundwall (whom Aldiss met in the late 60's when Sam J did sf programs for Swedish TV). The student corps house was BTW earlier "occupied" by the 1968 students. As French students clashed with the cops, threw stones, torched cars and closed off Paris, their Swedish counterparts...occupied their own house. After sitting there for a day, chanting about a world revolution, they went back home. (And started the "alternative music movement" which a) hated ABBA and b) couldn't play any instruments except kitchen utensils.)

And next clip is connected to Sam J's TV programs (covered here before), more precisely the book that came out of it, a review from Dagens Nyheter June 28, 1970:

A number of sf films were shown on TV in the spring of 1969, a praiseworthy initiative despite that the quality of the films were lousy and the selection questionable. The producer of the series Sam J Lundwall has now afterwards

completed the program series with a little book titled *Science Fiction* /full title “- from the Start to Our Days”, published by Swedish Radio's publishing house/ which claims to be the first genre history in Swedish. That's not exactly true; there are many who have written about sf in Swedish, one of the first being Elisabeth Tykesson in an essay in BLM 1954. But Lundwall's book is the most comprehensive, from Plato up to Stanley Kubrick's blockbuster “2001 - a Space Odyssey”. /Tykesson is covered before, but she wrote just an article. Sam did write the first book./ Lundwall knows his topic very well, but I don't think he gets much out of it. He has written a sort of commented bibliography, useful as reference, but not much more. The strange thing is that Lundwall who obviously is a dedicated sf fanatic doesn't even take his subject seriously. The style is light-hearted and lax, discussions superficial. When Lundwall writes about Edward Bellamy's idea-historically interesting future novel *Looking Backward* 2000-1887 (1888) he uses the conventional sf perspective; he thinks the book is about the year 2000 and dismisses it as naïve utopianism. But the book is about the 1800s, the social development optimism of the end of that millennium and belief in the future. If you don't see the history of ideas and politics sf only becomes a bizarre literary genre, something curious. In reality it's like all subcultural phenomenon, an excellent roadmap to contemporary neuroses, myths, dreams and taboos. Lundwall's book only partly works as such a roadmap.

Two comments. I liked Lundwall's book, because it wasn't academic, trying to be pretentiously deep. It was a light-hearted introduction which just tried to make the reader interested in the genre. And as such it succeeded very well. You can judge for yourself by reading the English version *SF - What's it All About* (but I believe it's expanded a bit compared to the Swedish version). Secondly, it's a bit tiresome with these flatulent snobs who can't accept that everything isn't metaphors and interpretations, that a book actually can be *what it says it is!* I've read Bellamy, and it is definitely a novel that *literally* speculates about how society could be organised in the future. That's after all the point of utopian tales. The grandfather of it, Plato with *The Republic*, didn't make a social commentary of his time's Athens, but presented his idea of a “perfect society”. And utopian writers follow in his tradition. Metaphors works differently. An sf writer says “I here speculate about the future”, *not* (usually) “I want to write about today but for some reason I'll disguise it as the future...”

But let's move on to a comment by Sven Fagerberg, an author who also sometimes dipped his pen in sf, from Dagens Nyheter March 6, 1975 (part of a column, parts excluded are of no sf interest):

And so the stencilled pamphlets. The first is a fanzine, that is a magazine about sf for the initiated enthusiast. A person unknown to me, Mats Linder, has written some, edited, typed it and made 200 copies of the 47 pages. It feels good that such things are done, and it erases the memory of a hundred hopeless so called real books. And there's something that's fun with sf, in it you often find the real joy of spinning a yarn. The first issue of Summa, as the magazine is titled, is about Soviet sf. Summa costs 3 Crowns /ca 50 1975-cents/ per issue. You can subscribe to no more than four (that's already a big promise) by putting a sum on Postal Giro 25 16 52-4, Mats Linder, 2B-9 Körsbärs Street, Stockholm. But I don't know if Mats wants more subscribers. It will just become a lot of work.

Nice plug by Mr Fagerberg. He didn't have too worry too much about Summa. For the next dozen or so years it became the leading serconzine over here with very thick issues coming yearly (often as double- or even triple issues). Mats is still around, now doing a Swedish SF Yearbook with two volumes this far.

In last issue I wrote about the Tolkien parades held by the Stockholm Tolkien Society every spring. Here's more, from Expressen, May 19 1975, “*GANDALF and the whole gang - in the middle of town*” (more with Gandalf a few years later in the Ohlmarks story...):

Elen sila lumenn ometielvo! That means Hi! Or precisely, a star shines during out meeting! That's hiw friendly you greet each other in Elfish. Vanadil taught me that. He is a king. But not in reality. In reality his name is Gabriel Stein and he's a member of Forodrim. That's also Elfish and means “people from the north”. And it's the same as Stockholm's Tolkien Society. To start from the beginning it all comes from John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, a language professor in Oxford who died in 1973, at the age of 81. JRR Tolkien was a very clever

Och så de stencilerade häftena. Det första är en fanzine, det vill säga en tidskrift om sciencefiction för invigda entusiaster. En för mig okänd person, Mats Linder, har författat några men redigerat, skrivit ut på maskin och dragit i 200 exemplar samtliga av de 47 sidorna. Det känns skönt att något sådant görs, och det suddar bort minnet av hundra dödkokta så kallade riktiga böcker. Och det är något kul med sciencefiction, i den finns ofta den äkta fabuleringsglädjen kvar. Det första numret av Summa, som tidskriften heter, handlar om sovjetisk sf. Summa kostar 3 kr per nummer. Man kan prenumerera på högst fyra (redan det ett stort löfte) genom att sätta in ett belopp på postgiro 25 16 52-4, Mats Linder, Körsbärsv. 2B:9 Stockholm. Men inte vet jag om Mats vill ha fler prenumeranter. Det blir förstås en massa jobb.



CECILIA HAGEN

Här är GANDALF och hela gänget — mitt i stan!

Elen sifa lumenn ometielvo!
Det betyder hej. Eller exaktare: en stjärna lyser vid stunden för vårt möte. Så vänligt hälsar man varandra på alviska.
Det var Valandil som lärde mig det där. Han är konung. Men inte i verkligheten. I verkligheten heter han Gabriel Stein och är medlem i Forodrim.
Forodrim är också alviska. Det betyder "människorna från norr". Vilket är detsamma som Stockholms Tolkien-sällskap.

För att ta allting från början så börjar allting med John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, en språkprofessor i Oxford som dog 1973 81 år gammal.

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien var en mycket duktig språkprofessor, men allra duktigast var han på att skriva böcker, sagoböcker. Så till den grad duktig att han kallades "världens siste sagoberättare".

"Sagan om Ringen" heter hans mycket kända sagotriologi. Har ni inte läst den, det är många som tvekar för det gäller att ta sig igenom långt över 1 000, till en början ganska så svårforcerade, sidor, så har ni kanske hört talas om den.

"Sagan om Ringen" handlar om Midgård. Midgård är Tolkien's alldeles egen värld, komplett med egen geografi, egna språk, egna folkslag. Där levde de feta små krullhåriga hoberna som vandrade kring på ludna fötter, där levde de goda alverna, där levde de hemiska svarta ryttarna och människorna och trädandarna.

Han beskrev dem och deras sedvänjor i minsta detalj, med en fantasi och en fabuleringsförmåga som

Minns ni honom så,
Elrond — Martin Sten-
lander, hans dotter
Arwen — Nina Za-
more — och troll-
karlen Gandalf sjöle
— Rutger Fahlén.



förmodligen saknar motstycke. Och folk läste och Tolkienfeber bröt ut, i USA, i Tyskland, i Italien, för att inte tala om på norra Borneo.

Till Sverige nådde inte smittan förrän 1967, det var då vi fick "Sagan om Ringen" i pocketutgåva.

1968 grundades Tolkien-sällskapet i Göteborg och sen följde Stockholm, Örebro och Uppsala. De existerar än, det är bara att bli medlem.

Fast kanske inte så bara, vill man bli medlem så gäller det att ha läst sin Tolkien noga. Det räcker inte med att veta att Frodo var en tapper hob och att Bilbo, så hette han som bar ringen först och som försvann från den stor-
festen, var hans farbror. Då blir man hunnit till
då har man som jag bara läst de första tvåhundra sidorna.

Vid inträdesproven ska man kunna besvara frågor som: Vilket monster kämpade Gandalf mot i Morias gruvor? Vems dotter var Elnor den fagra? Vad hette Gollums kusin?

En fråga lyder: Vad var Sting? Det trodde jag inte man behövde läsa "Sagan om Ringen" för att veta.

En hyfsad Tolkienkännare har mer än 600 namn att hålla reda på, dessutom bör han kunna något alviska. För att underlätta språkstudierna i fortsättningsen håller Stockholms Tolkien-sällskap på att sammanställa ett lexikon på alviska. På två år har man hunnit till bokstaven p. Och det är vackert så. Svenska Akademier har snart hållit på ett sekel med sin ordbok och inte kommit längre än till s som i skräpig.

Klarar du de hårda inträdesproven tilldelas du ett namn ur "Sagan om Ringen" samt uppmanas att under möten klä dig och uppträda som den figuren. Är du riktigt flitig upphöjs du från allmog till riddare med rätt att bära gyllene löv och kedja på din mantel.

På pingstaften gyllnade det av gyllene löv och kedje-
i solskenet på Norrmalmstorg i Stockholm. Stockholms, Örebros och Uppsalas Tolkien-sällskap hade karneval. Svärd rasslade, flöjter pep och sammetsmantlar svepte.

Genom Kungsträdgården gick tiotusentals och en något förvirrad allmänhet bröt då och då ut i applåder. Kungen skulle ju vara ute på eriksgata och man kunde aldrig veta hur långt han hunnit.

Stutmål var Bellmansstatyn på Djurgården och väl framme utbröt lärda tvistemål om alvernas seder och hobernas bruk. Samt om vem som läst "Sagan om Ringen" flest gånger.

Kycklingar packades upp, invånarna i Midgård missunnade sig inte av livets goda, vinglas höjdes och man utbrast i samfällt "eglerio" — hurra! För att avsluta med:

Nai Vardo eleni le siluva i tiennea — Farväl!
Eller exaktare: Må Eiberethas stjärnor lysa på din stig



Tom Bombadil, ur "Sagan om ringen", naturväsen i räd hatt och flöjtandes mitt i Stockholms city.



En bodel direkt från vår tids nyaste sagobok, "om ringen".



Foto:
JAN WIRÉN

Belladonna
Bilbo Baggins
till vardags
tina Rhodin

ÅKE OHLMARKS ON TOLKIENISTS:

"...it has become evident that the many Tolkien societies (thousands across all of America and half of Europe, a number also in Sweden) have degenerated into a sort of KU-KLUX-KLAN excersising open violence, the rawest of orgies, alcohol and narcotics abuse. There have been murders, constant cases of assualt, kidnappings and desecrating of churches and the sacraments".

"...in patterns recognised from the narcotics swamp, Italian mafioso...most of all American Cosa Nostra...Of the same kind is Tolkien Society and their foreign cohorts".

"Tolkieneering is more or less centrally directed from England and by the Tolkien family. /...as Christopher Tolkien/ has fled the taxman to France or it is usually said Monaco (all is secret and no definite facts are to be found) the movement is now lead by his more intelligent sister Priscilla Tolkien, assisted by Christopher's son Simon. It's not pennies this Mafia earns from the old mans fairy tale fantasies"

"He belongs to those waiting in a rathole, devious and hated sorts, forgotten the second after you've seen them. Rats will bite and their small yellow teeth may cause infections /...but/ he isn't the terrorist type except in flimsily written (hectographed) attempts to libel...like the slimy little Gollum in Tolkien's trashy books, a figure afraid of light who can be sneaky and could be dangerous if he wasn't so insignificant".

"...every moth slipping even deeper into the alcohol swamp...now mingling with riff-raff from the street, those who wouldn't even qualify to be in 'Friends if Evil' /...he was/ trying to break down the door and then stumbles to the bedside where he for hours boosts, lies, half vomits and cries for more booze".

"Was there some or someone behind the atrocities? How was it with mass murderer Jack the Ripper, who from 1886 ravaged London's East End".

language professor, but he was even more clever with writing books, books of fairy tales. So incredibly clever that he was called "the last fairy tale writer in the world". Lord of the Rings is the name of his trilogy. If you haven't read it, and many hesitate to go through over 1000 pages, in the beginning rather hard to go through, you may at least heard of it. LOTR is about Middle Earth. It is Tolkien's very own world, complete with its geography, languages, peoples. There lived the fat, small, curly hobbits which walk about with hairy feet, there lived the noble elves, there lived the terrible black riders and humans and spirits of the trees. He described them and their traditions in minute details, with an imagination and yarn-spinning which probably is incomparable. And people read it and there was a Tolkien wave in the USA, in Germany, in Italy, not to forget northern Borneo. This epidemic didn't reach Sweden until 1967, when we got LOTR in paperback. The Tolkien Society of Gothenburg was founded in 1968. I have covered that in a Swedish article. I knew all the founders. It was called The Tolkien Society of Sweden. And then followed Stockholm, Örebro, and Uppsala. They still exist, it's just to become a member. Or perhaps not just, because you must have read your Tolkien carefully if you want to become a member. It's not enough to know that Frodo was a brave hobbit, and Bilbo was the one who first had the ring and who disappeared from the big party. You'll be exposed, because they you have only read the 200 first pages. In the entrance test you must answer questions like: What monster did Gandalf fight against in the Mines of Moria? Who was the daughter of the beautiful Elanor? What's the name of Gollum's cousin? One question reads: What was Sting? I thought you didn't need to read LOTR to know the answer. /Newspaper Expressen has a wasp as symbol and the motto "It has sting!" / A decent Tolkienist has more than 600 names to keep track of and should know some Elfish. To make language studies easier in the future the Stockholm Tolkien Society is preparing a dictionary of Elfish. In two years they have reached the letter P. And that's fine. The Swedish Academy has worked with their dictionary for a century and hasn't reached further than S as in Scrumpy. If you pass the tough entry examination you are given a name from LOTR and are encouraged to dress like and behave as that figure. If you are diligent you are promoted from commoner to knighthood with the right to wear a golden leaf and a chain on cape. During Pentacost there was a glimmer of golden leaves and chains in the sunshine on Norrmalms Square in Stockholm. Stockholm's, Örebro's and Uppsala's Tolkien societies had their carnival. Swords rattled, flutes played and velvet capes waved. The march went through the Royal Gardens and a somewhat confused public sometimes broke out in applause. The king was out to meet people and you couldn't know if it was the real king. The goal was the Bellman statue on Djurgården and once there debates began about traditions of elves and hobbits. And about who had read LOTR most times. Chicken were unpacked, inhabitants of Middle Earth wouldn't miss any of the good in life, wine glasses were raised and they all cried "eglerio" - hurray! To finish with: Nai Vardo eleni le siluva I tienna - Goodbye! Or more exactly: May the stars of Elbereth shine on your path! /Captions: Should you remember him, Elrond - Martin Selander, his daughter Arwen - Nina Zamore and the wizard Gandalf himself - Rutger Fahlén. Pics to the right: A Hangman directly from the newest fairy tale, LOTR. Tom Bombadill, from LOTR, a creature of nature in read hat and playing the flute in central Stockholm. Belladonna and Bilbo Bagger /Rest of it cropped/)

Normally, it'd be difficult to count Tolkien groups as part of fandom - except for the early years. Both the Stockholm and Gothenburg societies were started by sf fans. It was only later many of them became almost obsessed with masquerading and imitating Middle Earth in every detail. However, I can guarantee they never turned into a criminal Cosa Nostra, or had parties of sex and narcotics in the woods... (I've been to some of them. The more exotic entertainment was missing, I'm afraid. Forodrim founder Anders Palm disappointingly exclaimed: "Why didn't they let me in on all this fun!")

This brings me to one of the strangest episodes in Swedish popular literature, the scandal around Tolkien and Black Magic. There are so many details in this story that I can only briefly touch upon some central events. The Royal Library covers some of it in a series about strange books, but doesn't go into all details, maybe not believing in the craziness of everything... Here's that through Google Translate:

<https://translate.google.com/translate?sl=auto&tl=en&u=https://www.kb.se/hitta-och-bestall/samlingsbloggen/blogginlägg/2019-08-21-tolkien-och-den-svarta-magin.html>

The original Swedish translation of LOTR was by one Åke Ohlmarks, an academic who had a rather big ego - as those tend to have - and a bonehead with thick bones and belly. His translation was



Åke Ohlmarks – big belly, big ego.

lousy, by dropping bits, misinterpreting the story, doing numerous mistakes, being too generous with rewriting, inserting his own stuff, and much more. The translation was so bad that Tolkien himself demanded a new translator for *Silmarillion*, and it became the fine sf critic and expert Roland Adlerberth (and LOTR itself has in recent years had a new translation by fan Erik Andersson). But before all this - it took time for Ohlmark's deeds to seep through - he was regarded as a respected Tolkien expert, for instance being on TV on a quiz challenge on the topic LOTR, courted by the local Tolkien society in their costumes.

But the facade began to crumble. I remember how the SFSF newsletter in 1977 ran several pages with the story of how Ohlmarks stole fan Ingvar Svensson's Tolkien dictionary! Svensson, known eg for his massive *Skandifandom* volumes in the 1960's, had spent several years doing a dictionary of names, language and terminology of Middle Earth. He sent the manuscript to the Swedish LOTR publisher, who unwisely let Ohlmarks see it - and he exploded! Someone trampling into his private domain! Unthinkable! Ohlmarks claimed he had a almost finished Tolkien dictionary himself...

Svensson got his manuscript back, full of Ohlmarks scribbles, and soon thereafter came the latter's "own" dictionary. Despite getting the bulk of things from Svensson, the newsletter noted that the Ohlmarks dictionary still contained *thousands* of errors! Sloppy copying.

But the final nail in the coffin for Ohlmarks & LOTR came one morning in the early 1980's. Ohlmarks had entertained a couple of guests, one Gandalf and a friend, from the Uppsala Tolkien Society. After they had left one night his alcoholic wife caused a fire while smoking in bed, which damaged a wing of the house they rented. Ohlmarks blamed the local Tolkien society for the fire and demanded that they paid for the damages, which they of course refused. It had noting to do with them. Ohlmarks claimed Gandalf & Co had "forced" his wife to drink, as if you have to force an alcoholic to drink. It's her own fault if she decided to smoke in bed and then dropped a cigarette or how it all exactly happened. To this should be added that Ohlmarks, often living beyond his means, was constantly chased by the taxman. Being in economic dire straits he probably thought it was a good idea to try to blackmail the Tolkien club to solve his money problems...

His book *Tolkien och den svarta magin* ("Tolkien and the Black magic", 1982) was his revenge. The fire and quarrel with Tolkienists started it, but steam pressure built from being rejected as Tolkien translator and the dictionary brawl.

It's the strangest and angriest books I've ever seen! And the whole affair reached the headlines of newspapers and even a debate in radio, where publisher, fan and co-founder of thre Stockholm Society Forodrim Jörgen Peterzen(RIP 2018) defended Tolkien, quite successfully too.



Funny book...

JRR and his son Christopher and publisher and all involved where in the book described as a world-wide Mafia of the Costa Nostra type, even killing people. (A kid much into playing Dungeons & Dragons had died, exact circumstances unclear at least for me. That D&D is something else than LOTR didn't matter.) SS was also mentioned. The Tolkien societies in especially Sweden where described as Satanists where the use of "black magic" probably was the least of their vices. They had the wildest possible sex and drug orgies in the woods. Human sacrifices weren't out of the question...

"The police must close down the Tolkien societies and take action against their orgies and black magic," he demanded.

If you take everything that has been said about eg the scientologists (BTW that's basically true, but it's another story) and turn up the volume to 11, that's what Ohlmarks said about poor JRR and the Tolkien societies.

"Many Biblical phrases comes to my mind when I now think about the decades I have wasted translating Tolkien's rubbish", he said.

It's a pity this legendary plane-crash book is only in Swedish. It's incredibly funny! An English

audience would probably appreciate a translation and have a very good laugh. See quotes on a previous page!

For those knowing Swedish fan David Nettle made a series of hilarious tweets about Ohlmark's unintentional humour masterpiece (search a bit down from here <https://twitter.com/davidnettle>). Personally, I'd also recommend anyone interested to get hold of his THX book - Ohlmarks defends a quack "doctor" - and his war memoirs *After me the Deluge*, where he dupes us about his career in Nazi-Germany 1939-45. The artist legend and writer Hans Alfredson identified Ohlmarks as a local quisling, in his fine alternate history book *The Pålsjö Woods Attack*. Åke Ohlmarks would be one to welcome the Nazis if they had tried to invade Sweden.

MAILING COMMENTS

Garth Spencer: I should try to find *The Last Centurion* by John Ringo - pandemic and global cooling! Cool. A book I otherwise recommend is *Fallen Angels* by Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle and Michael Flynn, in which the Greens are in power. They nag about global warming, have banned cars, planes etc - while glaciers grow over North America. Optimistic, technology-friendly sf fandom is an enemy, persecuted, small and works almost as an underground resistance movement. The Worldcon is held in a tent in the woods by a handful of fen... Very entertaining. It was available for free as a PDF from Tor Books earlier, an offer which now withdrawn. (But I know that if you look around a bit you can still find the free PDF.) Now sports: One mitigating thing, it is a harmless way of channelling unhealthy nationalism into something mostly harmless. I'm no fan of this primitive territorial programming called "nationalism", but some still have this urge to wave flags and chant - so give them sports! They can do it in the stadium and then go home and be free from the drive to come in conflict with guys from other turfs. Sports work as a steam valve. Also, think of sports as the original reality shows! People gather and perform tasks, the public watches and someone wins. Anyway, I am as I said, not very die hard. I just follow some soccer, hockey and skiing, int'l events, no clubs. (BTW, Sweden just lost in the Euro 2021 tournament with a goal by Ukraine the very last minute. Sheiße!)

Henry Grynsten: I agree that opera is passé. The followers are few. Each ticket to the Royal Opera in Stockholm must be subsidised by more than €200. The creativity is low (they mostly play 200 years old stuff), you don't hear what they sing and it is frankly boring. I understand that jazz has also been pushed a bit into the background, but that kind of music is more flexible and dynamic so it's still enjoyable. "Real" rock'n'roll is perhaps a bit on the same path, replaced by things like hiphop, rap...and machine-produced radio-list music, which I don't enjoy - I like stuff from the 60's and 70's. But there are two things I miss in your music analysis. 1) Music is about *melody*. A song you like, in whatever genre, must have a melody that goes in through the ears and rattles around among the brain cells and creates a feeling you like. And I've often wondered how did it all start, who was it that found out nothing captures a heart, like a melody can - well, whoever it was, I'm a fan! 2) The music genres have always been highly dependent on available technology. The opera singing style comes from that they didn't have microphones and amplifiers. Jazz with instruments like trumpet, clarinet and piano worked well on 78 rpm records with their clean, strong sound. Rock needed the electric guitar, invented in the 1940's. Expressive, elaborate music like Sgt Pepper's and Pink Floyd became possible with more advanced studio editing, the Moog and the LP. Rap and hiphop came with digital sampling, sequencers and even more advanced mixing and editing. The present scourge of braindead radio top-list music - even more boring than opera! - came with the explosion of local radio stations and computers making automatic play lists. As for literature, it is clearly less dependent on technology. A text is a text is a text, no matter if it is copied on parchment with a quill, printed by lead types, photo set for offset, written on a PC. But literature - but it is very dependent on what the *market* looks like. Newsstands on train stations and newsboys selling stuff on the streets gave us penny dreadfuls and dime novels. Cheaper processes for making paper together with the linotype and monotype gave us the pulps. Growing economy made people able to afford them, shorter working hours and no TV gave time to read them. The second world war gave us the paperback book, smaller

than the pulps in a format the soldier overseas could put in the pocket of the uniform. The pulps died with competition from TV, comic books and rock music, while the paperback survived because its format allowed novels, not having mostly short stories like the pulps, and that was more like the traditional book market, which it could connect to. We got the system of a book first being done as a more expensive hardbound for the traditional bookstores and after a while it came as a paperback for the stacks at the airport. BTW, the golden age of sf - apart from being 12! - was rather immediately just *after* World War two. I'm talking about the US, where there was a paper shortage during WWII and the number of sf mags was only 3 or 4 (plus some short-lived ones), compared to the early 1950's when there were perhaps 30-40 sf mags at one and the same time! And the influence of John W Campbell, while beginning in the late 1930s, lasted well into the 1950s, before he began with dianetics, dean drives etc. Galaxy and F&SF came. Also, the new technology from the war - jets, rockets, atomic power, computers, penicillin, new materials - didn't come into more general usage until after the war. I agree that the sf genre now is unfortunately withering and has been the last 2-3 decades. It is partly due to changing mentality, and partly due to increased competition from more TV, computer games, social media and all the other stuff on the Internet. Sf on TV and in movies grows fast. We also see cross-genre competition, as fantasy - a genre which often is sloppy and very unimaginative, methinks! - crime fiction and so called romance fiction have become more popular. Romance fiction has flown a bit under the radar, since its a guilty pleasure dominated by women readers, but it has become extremely popular. The change of mentality to more pessimism, conflict, conspiracies and polarisation has also been good for horror fiction, with increased popularity for Lovecraft, vampires, zombies and so on. The more pessimistic mentality is in my opinion extremely strange! Let's leave the (after all passing, temporary) corona pandemic for the time being - the time to assess that comes when it's over. Generally world is in a better shape than ever! It should be a time of optimism, not pessimism..The world economy has grown more than ever the last 30 years, the cold war ended (the present quarrel with Putin is a mild breeze compared to the US-Soviet confrontation) and bumps like 00's recessions never developed like the 1930's depression. The environment improves: urbanisation makes forests increase, DDT, freons, mercury, leaded petrol etc is banned, double hulls and GPS keeps oil spills down, there are more water purification plants built. And don't worry about climate, which varies with the sun's magnetic field. The number of military conflicts has been going down, with fewer victims, despite Syria and Afghanistan. We just get the wrong impression from more war reporting, due to the explosion of TV news which always tend to emphasise drama. Internet brings people more together, we live longer, healthier and better fed, which is most noticeable in the third world, while not so much in the developed world which is already on a - temporary? - health plateau. And more would be mentioned. The background for the *unreasonable and illogical* pessimism and the polemic and polarisation is the 1968 generation, when socialists and red sympathisers demanded "a new world order" (=communism). But when they were denied this they and the children they raised in the same belief - with the help of postmodernism and other stupidities taking over universities - still continued to whine. The increased globalisation has also met a reaction in the form of what I call neo-nationalism, which gives the left a target and increases the volume of whining. We see neo-nationalism in eg Hungary, Poland, in the UK as Brexit, in the US through one Mr Trump, in Sweden as the Sweden Democrats (hovering around 20% in polls), and so on. The neo-nationalists are just as good at whining. With whining left and right echoing everywhere, we can't hear all the good news about how the world is improving! (A certain virus is just a bump that will pass.) This affects the sf genre too, basically an optimistic literary genre which is pushed towards more pessimism, so called "identity politics" and things like that. In sf we conquer space, disease, poverty, war (except war with aliens), science and technology opens new possibilities, we let robots work for us - there's hardly any limit to the progress. But optimistic literature doesn't fit with the inexplicably pessimistic times. Further: the notion that more city life from strong urbanisation also effects cultural shifts is certainly valid. In cities we live more cramped, with

more opportunities and choices, in a higher tempo, having more interactions, more sensory stimulus, and so on - that certainly affects how we approach culture and art. A final comment: I disagree with the claim that technological development is slowing down. The Internet, computers and mobile phones daily show it's not the case. I consider myself well-versed in computers and such, having used it daily for more than 35 years, but today things happen so fast it's hard even for me to grasp it. We have lots happening in VR, AI, quantum computing, robotics and more. And consider medicine: the human DNA has been mapped, we can probably clone mammoths soon, we treat cancer better and better, we created not one but several corona vaccines in less than a year, and much more. And in astronomy, space and physics, we can see the edge of the universe, we've send probes to Pluto, several rovers move on Mars, we track gravity waves, find the most sneaky particles with huge accelerators, SpaceX builds the biggest rockets yet - reusable, aiming for Mars in the end... No, science and technology isn't at all slowing down. Unfortunately, its increased speed make some feel dazzled and unsure, and it becomes just another reason for whining...

John Thiel: You seem to have been very late with computers, getting one in 1996 but not really using them until 2001... I had my first tiny computer in 1981 - the Sinclair ZX-81 with 16K memory (expanded from 1K), useless for all practical things. I got a PC with 512K memory in 1985, and it immediately proved very useful. Word processing was wonderful and I could even gut stencils with a daisy wheel or matrix printer (and from 1987 making very professional looking stuff with DTP and a laser). Around 1988 I got a modem and began using BBS:es, which had an early sort of "amateur Internet" called Fidonet, and from 2000 I was on the real Internet. As for WOOF, I have contributed to a couple of them, but I don't think you need to "be invited". They probably take anything as long as it isn't complete rubbish or very offensive. You just need to know the deadline and who to contact.

William McCabe: Yeah, I agree that Britain doesn't take the Eurovision too seriously. We know there's a lot of good music coming from there - virtually all my favourite 1970's rock band are British, many of the so called prog bands (note: over here Swedish "progg" music was something different). That Brits don't give half a French fry about Eurovision is a clear a sign of euro scepticism and Brexit.
(No N'APA MCs, since there's no new mailing since last from there.)



LON

What you get crossing a spider with an anteater, according to Lars "LON" Olsson.

Roscoe saves! But Willis scores on the rebound...