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St. Urho's Day 2009

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Whole-numbered OPUNTIAs are sercon, x.1 issues are reviewzines, x.2 issues are indexes, x.3 issues are apazines, and x.5 issues are perzines.

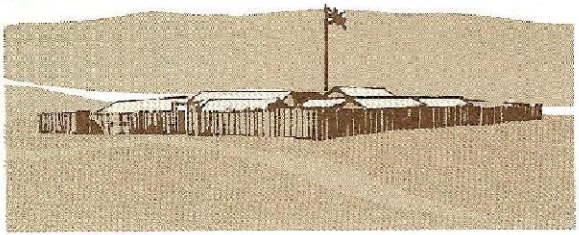
YEEHAW! ETCETERA, ETCETERA

by Dale Speirs

Icon, Brand, Myth: The Calgary Stampede edited by Max Foran (2008, trade paperback) is a set of essays on various aspects of the world's largest rodeo. The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede averages 1.1 million paid visitors over ten days in early July each year. It began as a one-time event in 1912, then gradually developed into the premiere event of the rodeo world. The modern Stampede is a mixture of agricultural and livestock displays that reflect reality, rodeo events which are part reality but mostly myth, the midway rides (pure fantasy), and the food booths (pure everything your doctor warns you against). I go every year and admire the livestock as an old farm boy, secure in the knowledge that I won't be the one who has to muck out the stalls.

Calgary was founded on September 9, 1875, when "F" Troop of the North West Mounted Police forded the Bow River and built a fort at the junction of the Elbow River. By 1886, the settlement was big enough to begin hosting an annual agricultural exhibition. In 1912, four wealthy cattlemen, nostalgic for the rapidly fading days of open rangeland, sponsored a rodeo to demonstrate the cowboy way of life to a population that was urban or farming fenced croplands. The Big Four, as they are now known, didn't want a faked-up Wild West show as was common in the USA; they wanted to show people how it really was.

Calgary 1875-1975



STAMPEDE POST OFFICE
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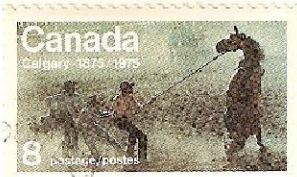
CALGARY ALBERTA



Day of Issue Canada Post Office Jour d'émission Postes canadiennes

By the late 1940s, all the original pioneers were dead and gone, and the Calgary Stampede shifted towards celebrating a Hollywood-style Wild West that never existed even in the USA, much less the Canadian prairies. The agricultural Exhibition maintained its authenticity, but a decade or so ago began to realize that it couldn't assume the visitors knew anything about agriculture. It used to be that almost all visitors were either from a farm background or had family members who were, but today the majority of Calgarians have had no connection to farming for several generations. The exhibits therefore shifted to explaining how food is produced and distributed, to an audience presumed to know nothing of where beef or milk comes from, or the difference between a steer and a bull.

The Stampede is run by a non-profit society organized like a large business corporation but whose executive serve as unpaid volunteers. The annual two weeks of the rodeo are the highlight of its year, but the grounds are busy all year round with sports events (junior league hockey in the old Corral Arena, NHL in the new Saddledome), touring rock concerts (Saddledome), a casino (Big Four Building), trade shows (Roundup Centre and Big Four Building), and livestock shows (Agricultural Building and Roundup Centre). The City of Calgary has two alderman on the board of directors and owns the land. The interests of the two have always been considered one and the same, and the City provides much financial and material support.

What makes the Calgary Stampede one of the most distinctive festivals in the world is the popular support and ancillary activities throughout the city. Everyone dresses western for the two weeks, even the immigrants fresh off the boat from China or Pakistan. Parade Day starts the Stampede on the second Friday of July, and about 300,000 people crowd into the downtown core to view it. Parade Day is a half-holiday in Calgary, and it is widely understood in the business community that no important meetings should be scheduled during the Stampede. Bankers who normally dress in pinstripe will be seen hobbling down the sidewalks in jeans and too-tight dude cowboy boots. Secretaries put on denim micro-miniskirts that Britney Spears would hesitate to wear as being too revealing. Junior executives yeehaw at random for no apparent reason (but not during the weekly board meeting; there is a limit to these things after all).

Every shopping plaza and large business sponsors a free pancake breakfast or barbeque out in the parking lot. It is possible to eat free for two weeks without spending a dime on groceries. There are some snobs who put their noses in the air and sneer at the Stampede; some even ostentatiously leave town on vacation to avoid the crowds. That only proves that some mothers have 'em; the rest of us take the opportunity to break out from the dull routine that surrounds us the rest of the year.

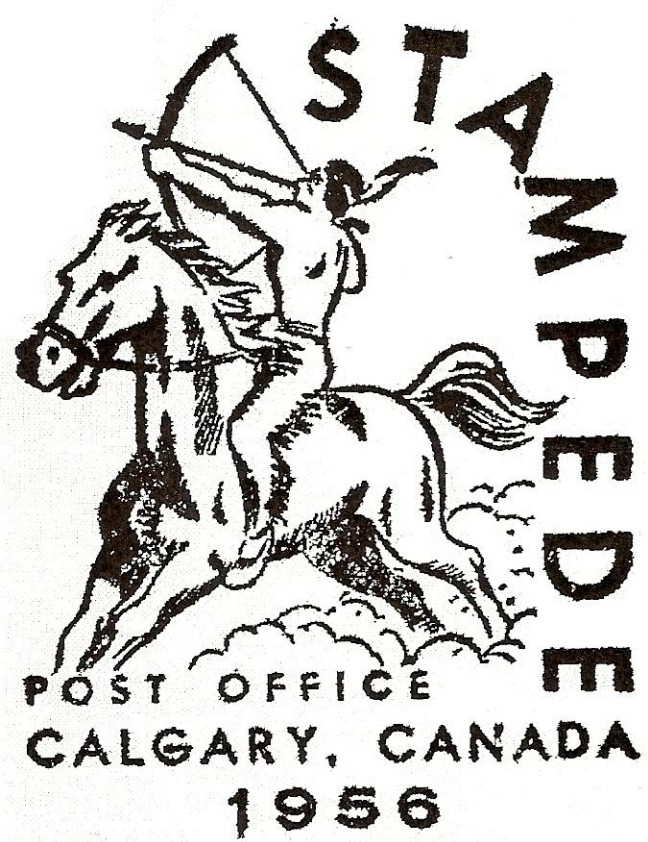
"Making Tradition: The Calgary Stampede, 1912 - 1939" by Donald Wetherell is the first essay in this anthology, and leads off by discussing the formative years of the Stampede, from its beginning as a one-shot event to its solidification as an annual rodeo. In his analysis, Wetherell applies Eric Hobsbawm's idea of the invented tradition, developed when Hobsbawm noticed that many supposedly ancient European traditions, festivals, and rituals were actually quite recent in origin. The Stampede was first held in 1912, again in 1919, and annually since 1923 after it merged with the Agricultural Exhibition. By the late 1920s, it was accepted by Calgarians as a remnant of true history, even though ranching in the Calgary area was only important in the last two decades of the 1800s, after which Calgary became a mercantile city supplying the farmers who had fenced in the open range.

During that era of change, informal rural sporting events such as horse races and bucking contests gradually adopted elements of visiting Wild West shows such as fancy roping, trick riding, and dressing in elaborate costumes. The Wild West shows, invented by Buffalo Bill Cody in 1882, were not rodeos but vaudeville shows, and the two should not be confused. The 1912 and 1919 Stampedes triggered the formation of other rodeos throughout Alberta, which served to legitimize rodeos, even though Alberta was a farming province, not a ranching province.

The 1912 Stampede could have been better organized, most agreed, but gathering war clouds put an end to further rodeos until the Victory Stampede of 1919. That event had 57,000 paid admissions but still managed to lose money. Agricultural exhibitions, though boring and with lower attendances, were subsidized by the federal and provincial governments as educational enterprises. Throughout Alberta, exhibitions and rodeos began merging for mutual benefit, and the 1923 Calgary merger was typical. By the late 1920s, amateur rodeo contestants could afford to become full-time professionals, as the frequency, regularity, and cash prizes made it possible to earn a living on the rodeo circuit.

As Hobsbawm had noted with European invented traditions, the Stampede was invented by the local elite to justify their claims as founders. The Big Four had a part in settling southern Alberta, but their prominence was exaggerated. There were others before them, or who had greater importance, but those ones are relegated to dusty history books that few read.

"The Indians And The Stampede" by Hugh Dempsey deals with the relationship between the aboriginal tribes surrounding Calgary and the annual events. The three main tribes here are the Tsuu T'ina, the Siksika, and the Nakoda. The federal government complained that the Stampede was a bad influence on the tribes, but everyone ignored the killjoys.



Government agents did their best to keep the natives on their Reserves, but the Mounties saw no reason to stop them from going into town, and Calgarians were happy to receive them as part of the Stampede colour. The feuding continued until 1932, when the last of the objectors retired. Since then it is taken for granted that the Indian Village will be an integral part of the Stampede, and that many of the natives would compete in the rodeo. The Village camp was allowed to charge admission to see the tipis, and were supplied with food and stabling. Over the years there were constant demands for more money, but overall the tribes have been pleased to participate and show off their historical culture. The Stampede is also considered an opportunity for the natives to meet together with old friends from other Reserves.

"Calgary's Parading Culture Before 1912" by Lorry Felske looks at the ancestors of the Stampede parade. Felske notes that parades tie together diverse communities who ordinarily wouldn't associate informally. White middle-class suburbanites mingle as spectators with Chinatown residents and newly-arrived Muslim immigrants still learning about Cowtown. Prior to the Stampede, the Victoria Day parade (extinct for decades) was the most important public spectacle in Calgary. There were frequent parades for visiting royalty, Labour Day, July 1st (Canada's national day), sports victories, and any other excuse for a party, including, in 1908, a July 4th parade put on by American expatriates.

Quite frequently the parades included the local native tribes in all their finery, despite protests from Indian Agents trying to confine them to Reserves and make them assimilate.

Although the Stampede is now held in July, the 1912 Stampede was during the first week in September, so its parade was combined with the Labour Day parade. This led to a rather unusual mix of trade unions marching with Mounties (traditional strike breakers), native horsemen, and streetcars (because Calgary Transit refused to suspend service for the parade, and motormen kept cutting across the parade route). The Sheet Metal Workers Union members wore Stetsons made of tin with copper bands along the brim.

Felske makes the point that in the era before radio and television, parades were an important type of mass media. They were big, frequent, and involved many Calgarians working together to organize them. They always had a theme to communicate, whether it was "Remember the Good Old Days", "Solidarity Forever!", or "We won!" (a war or sports tournament). Today, the Stampede parade is the only major parade left in Calgary. There are smaller parades such as the Gay Pride march, the Dashmesh parade (Sikh), or the Santa Claus parade, but none of these are anywhere near the size of the Stampede parade, which lasts three hours.

"Midway To Respectability" by Fiona Angus looks at one of the major aspects of the Stampede, the carnival rides that are the profitable part of the event, yet pay no respect to the Old West and get less respect back in turn. Midways began with the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, and were/are considered a necessary evil to attract the public. The Mounties and Revenue Canada have always been suspicious of the carnival operators because they dealt in large sums of cash. This culminated in massive raids and arrests in 1975 which broke the back of the Royal American Shows, the "A" circuit carnival operator in western Canada. Since then, Conklin Shows has had the contract. Accountants find it impossible to audit carnival booth operators. Rodeos and Revenue Canada have a tacit agreement with midway operators that each side will estimate the income and split the difference.

The midway has changed over the decades. Originally it was freak and girlie shows, short-programme vaudeville performances, and gambling. Radio, movies, and television eliminated the entertainment aspects, and now the emphasis is on rides and non-card gambling. Carnivals have a small core of permanent staff. They used to hire locals for set-up and operation, but Calgary was always a tough place to hire locals, except during the Great Depression or the National Energy Policy era. These days, most midway employees are young white South Africans brought in on temporary permits.

"More Than Partners" by Max Foran is a look at the symbiotic relationship between the municipal government and the Stampede management. The City of Calgary owns the land on which the Stampede operates, about 250 hectares adjacent to the downtown core, which would be worth billions if sold to developers. City officials sit on the Stampede board of directors as if it were a City department, and the volunteer directors are the top petro-executives and businessmen of Calgary. Everyone recognizes that the Stampede, as Calgary's top tourist attraction, is too important to the city's economy for any arm's length management to be allowed to run it. The City also provides services in kind, such as police, fire, and ambulance, traffic control, extended hours of public transit, street decorations, and so forth.

That is not to say that everything has always been wild roses (Alberta's official floral emblem) between the two sides. Aldermen and citizens sometimes get huffy about the Stampede board being elitist and arbitrary, because the businessmen are used to making quick decisions and acting on the spot without consultation. There have been ongoing disputes about land expansion. The original fairgrounds have grown outward and are currently in the process of swallowing up an entire residential neighbourhood, much to the chagrin of yuppie developers who wanted to gentrify it.

"Riding Broncs And Taming Contradictions" by Tamara Seiler is written in academese, the kind where you have to read each sentence twice to understand it. She is a big-picture critic, starting off with the fact that North America is divided into three nations by east-west lines, but its geography is obviously north-south. This does has a practical effect, because Calgary has more in common with Denver than Toronto, and Denver more in common with Calgary than Manhattan. Geography does affect cultural outlook, and Seiler has obviously read Joel Garreau's famous book THE NINE NATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA.

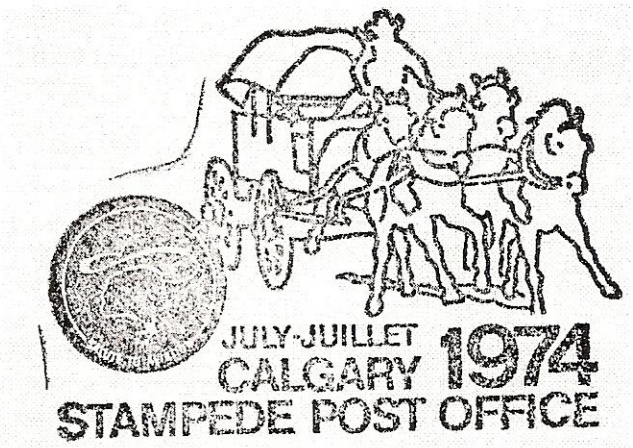
Cowboys, as in rootin', tootin', shootin' yeehawers, are more accepted by Americans as part of their culture than by Canadians. Seiler then ties this in with the greater tendency of Americans to individualism and Canadians to law and order. The cowboy is a symbol of Americans and the Mountie is the symbol of Canucks. Seiler then meanders about quoting other academics on the history of cowboys, before concluding that the Stampede cowboy is "*a symbolic resource, a tool of resistance for Calgarians*". I never realized that all those times I attended the Stampede I was resisting something, instead of just going to the fair for a fun time. As Freud remarked, sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. She finishes up with various other psychological analyses wrapped up in turgid prose.


"THE GREATEST OUTDOOR SHOW ON EARTH"
CALGARY STAMPEDE
JULY 10-15 1961
CALGARY CANADA
STAMPEDE POST OFFICE
EXHIBITION POST OFFICE JUL 13 61 CALGARY ALBERTA
CANADA
ARTHUR MEIGHEN
CANADA
5c
E. PAULINE JOHNSON
COLOMBO PLAN
LE PLAN DE
5c
CANADA
POSTAGE POSTES
DEVELOPPEMENT DU NORD
NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT
5c
CANADA
JUL 13 61
Mr. W. Sultan,
2308 - 14.A. Street S.W.
Calgary. Alberta.
CALGARY EXHIBITION & STAMPEDE, JULY 10 - 15, 1961
CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA

"A Spurring Soul" by Glen Mikkelsen discusses the individual events of the rodeo, which have changed considerably since 1912. Although the first recorded rodeo was in 1864, in Prescott, Arizona, there was no governing body, no standardized rules, and no agreement on what events belonged in a rodeo. Some events are outright fakes. Steer wrestling was invented by Bill Pickett, a Wild West show performer, and was never done on a ranch as part of the job. Wild cow milking is no longer part of the Stampede; anytime a range cow had to be milked (to feed a dogie, or orphaned calf) she would have been put in a squeeze chute.

Bronco riding was a legitimate ranch activity, done to break a horse to the saddle. Horses have been bred for centuries to be docile, so rodeos sparked a breeding campaign for the opposite. The Stampede owns a ranch for the sole purpose of breeding broncos. Rodeos pay a bonus to the breeders of the wildest rides, both broncos and bulls, at their events, so not only does the cowboy have a chance of making money, so does the breeder.

Rodeo events often have long gaps as animals are brought in and the next contestant gets ready. Infield acts are used to keep the crowd amused and rodeo clowns often improvise. The most important job of the rodeo clown is to distract an angry bull or bronco from a fallen cowboy until the outriders can herd it out of the infield. Rodeos are rough for the cowboys and occasionally for the animals. Animal abuse has always been a concern, and while rodeos have improved in that respect, there will still be incidents. Calf roping is now called tie-down roping, but it was seldom if ever done on the ranch. I like the rodeo in general, but speaking as a farm boy, I'd like to see calf roping banned. Some events have already been dropped by rodeos, mainly to speed up the show. The audience has changed over the years, to an urban generation that considers a 10-minute YouTube video to be too long and boring. In response, rodeos have eliminated marginal events and sped up the pace of others.



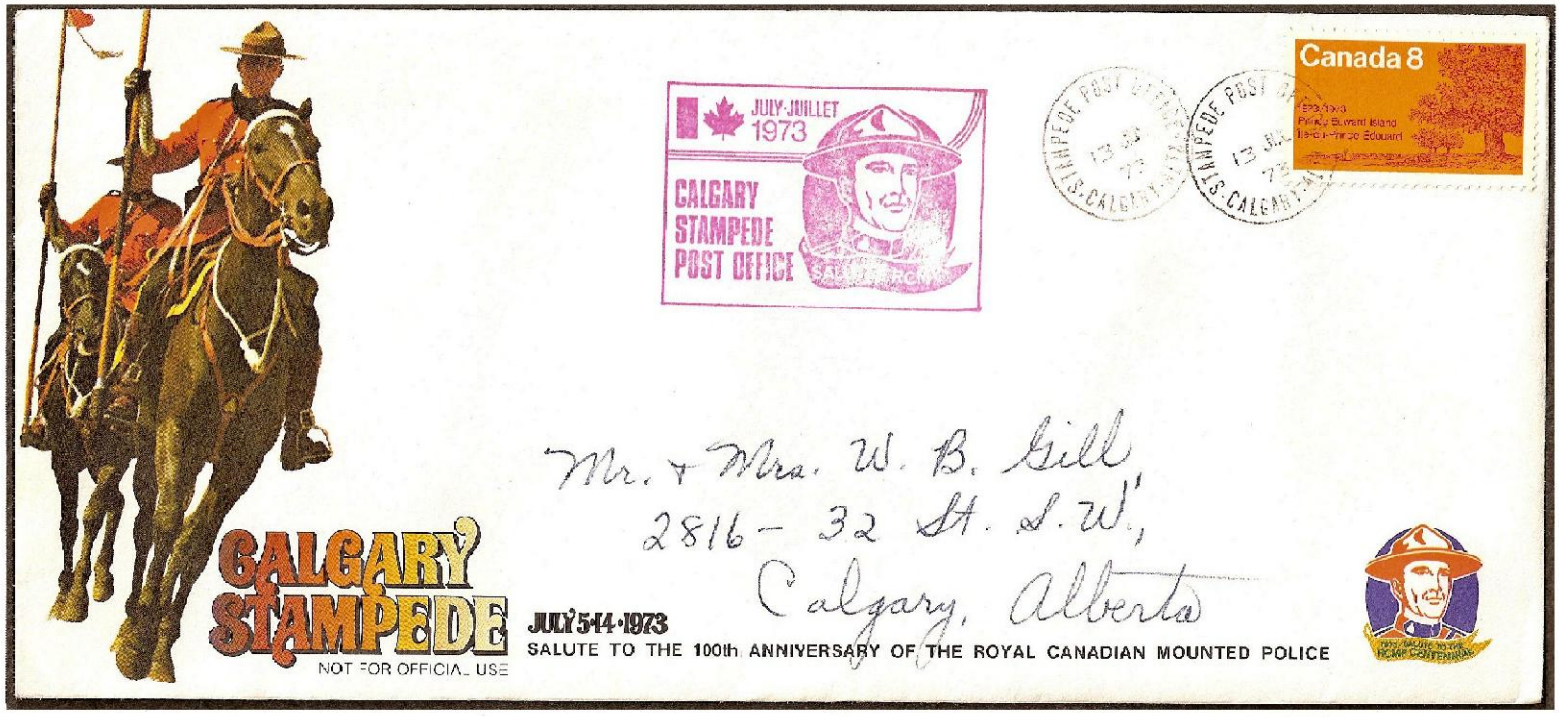
"The Half A Mile Of Heaven's Gate" by Aritha van Hirk discusses the chuckwagon races. The chuckwagon was invented in 1866 by Charles Goodnight (Texas) specifically for use on cattle drives. The first chuckwagon races as a formal rodeo event anywhere in North America were held at the 1923 Calgary Stampede, and were a crowd pleaser. Originally the chuckwagons were straight off the ranch, but modern racing chuckwagons are lightweight and built for the purpose, not just adapted from any old wagon. Rules have steadily become more stringent to reduce collisions with their attendant injuries and fatalities to both drivers and horses.

"Cowtown It Ain't" by Frits Pannekoek considers the fact that outside the Stampede grounds there are few public sculptures and monuments to the rodeo. Public statuary in Calgary honours pioneer settlers, Mounties, suffragists, and soldiers, but you will look long and far to find any bronze cowboy. Even the Stampede grounds did not get their first rodeo-related sculpture until 1980. The committees that decide on public art are more interested in keeping up with whatever was fashionable in Toronto last year.

"A Wonderful Picture" by Brian Rusted looks at smaller art, as opposed to public monuments, the kind you hang on walls or put on the mantelpiece. The Stampede has one of the largest juried annual art shows in Canada, but because it is western art, it is dismissed by the fashionable art critics. Like mail art, it doesn't fit into what I call pretentious drivelism, the idea that something is not art unless it has been approved as such by the gallery snobs. The technical quality of the landscape paintings and small bronze sculptures at the Stampede art show is as good as or better than any art gallery anywhere. There are no black velvet paintings or earnest but terrible drawings like the Mr. Spocks that one sees at SF conventions.

Rusted points out that the vitality and quality of western art disrupts the academic theories of how art history should be narrated, so the critics ignore it. Western art is a multi-million dollar business, with a dozen or so well-funded museums, glossy commercial magazines, books, and professional associations. The Stampede art show was for decades part of the arts and crafts show, but by the early 1980s it had separated as the Western Art Show, and now takes up an entire building.

"The Social Construction Of The Canadian Cowboy" by Robert and Tamara Seiler looks at Stampede publicity posters. Poster art has always been very big at the Stampede, and collecting the annual posters is popular among Calgarians. The Seilers populate this essay with phrases such as "discursive practices" and treat posters as "popular cultural artifacts". The essay begins with a history of Wild West shows, of which there were many copying Buffalo Bill Cody's show. Cody died in 1917 and all the Wild West shows did not long survive him. An alumnus of the Wild



The Mounties were established in 1873 and founded Calgary in 1875.

West shows was Guy Weadick, a trick roper who later founded the Calgary Stampede in 1912 when he convinced the Big Four businessmen to fund his idea of a rodeo. Rodeos took over where Wild West shows left off. Finally getting to the publicity posters, the Seilers consider the earliest posters up to 1923, when cowboys shared equal billing with biplanes, automobiles, and other cutting edge technology. Over the years, the cowboy gradually came to dominate the poster art, crowding out usurpers.

EPHEMERAL BIBELOTS

by Frederick Winthrop Faxon

[Reprinted from the BULLETIN OF BIBLIOGRAPHY 3:72-73, April 1903.]

The small, artistically printed periodicals variously called chap-books, ephemerals, bibelots, brownie magazines, fadazines, magazettes, or freak magazines, owe their origin probably to the success of the CHAP-BOOK, a little semi-monthly magazine which was born in Cambridge on May 15, 1894, and which was at once in such great demand that all the early numbers were soon out of print, and were in demand by collectors at from 20 to 50 times the original issue price of five cents a copy. All sorts of "little magazines" were soon on the news-stands, competing for a part of the CHAP-BOOK's favor. They were, with few exceptions, easily distinguishable by their appearance as well as by their names, which were apparently carefully chosen to indicate the ephemeral character of the publication.

Before 1894 there were a few similar periodicals, such as THE MAHOGANY TREE (1892), which is considered by some collectors the beginning of this class. It was a quarto, and in that was quite at variance with the flood of bibelots that was soon to spread over the United States. During 1896 and 1897 there were many competitors in the field, and as many were the sizes and shapes of the various periodicals.

Several could keep their own size but a few months, so we find a single periodical having three and sometimes four forms during its short life. The rage for these freak magazines seems to have created the short-story periodicals, which while in no sense like the chap-books, except in the strange names they adopted, are included as a true part of the ephemerals of the period. They had not the deckle-edge, hand-made paper and beautiful typography of the chap-books, but were, as a rule, quite the opposite in their dress. The father of this menagerie was probably the BLACK CAT of October 1895, still apparently possessing all of his nine lives. The OWL, WHITE ELEPHANT, WHITE RABBIT, GRAY GOOSE, and other birds and beasts soon appeared.

The motive of publication of the genuine chap-books is hard to discover. They sprang up in the most out-of-the-way spots, and died young in most cases. Of all the first generation we still have with us only the LITTLE JOURNEYS (December 1894), now in its second form, BIBELOT (January 1895), PHILISTINE (June 1895), and the PHILOSOPHER (January 1897), now in its third size.

Many of these bibelots seem to have resulted from the desire of ambitious unknown writers to reach a supposedly large waiting public, which could not be reached through the established magazines, either because the author could not get his manuscript accepted, or because the readers he wished were not among the subscribers of the older monthlies and quarterlies. This is but our humble guess as to cause of birth, but lack of support or unwillingness on the part of the editor to be the only support caused the untimely death of the majority. One editor, who issued two volumes, has confided to the compiler that he made $75 on Volume One and lost $300 on Volume Two. Why did he not kill his child at the end of Volume One! He says a complete set is worth $50 now.

In 1898 the race had almost all died off, but early in 1900 signs of a revival were manifest, and though no longer sought by collectors as curiosities, many new chap-books were started, most of them being short-lived. Hardly anyone now collects these publications, and unless the names and the dates of their births and deaths are somewhere recorded, no future collector will ever be able to obtain accurate information concerning this large, somewhat useless, but very interesting class of periodicals. ... In many cases, it has been impossible to draw the line between "fads" and regular periodicals.

[Editor's note: The rest of this article was a checklist of hundreds of zines published during this fad period, far too many to include in OPUNTIA. There seem to be obvious analogies with the punk zine era of the 1970s to 1990s, which showed similar patterns of growth and death. A comparison between the two would make for a good graduate thesis.]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
[Editor's remarks in square brackets.]

FROM: Lloyd Penney 2009-02-18
1706 - 24 Eva Road
Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2

Al least zines don't seem to be dying in the doom and gloom way some thought. Most e-zines keep the zine format, at least. Besides, how do you loc a blog? It is forever changing, so might as well join in the discussion. A letter would be nothing different than what others contribute.

[I'm not against blogs per se, and in fact I contribute regularly to some, such as theoildrum.com (as DaleFromCalgary). Blogs are not a substitute for zines; they substitute for phone calls or chatty letters.]

FROM: Jason Rodgers 2009-02-15
Box 1683
Nashua, New Hampshire 03060

[Re: the rationale of print zine decline] The folks who did it to be hip would rather spend their cash in other areas, especially since zines are not the apex of hip as they were during the zine explosion. Another interesting consideration; how much does the average person spend monthly on an Internet connection and cellphone? How much does an average zinester or mail artist spend on printing and postage? I have no statistics. I will venture to guess that printing and postage is less or at least equal.

[OPUNTIA comes out roughly monthly, at a cost of $40 for printing 100 copies, and $70 for postage and envelopes. Neither of my computers are connected to the Internet for security reasons (I do all my e-mail with the university library computers), I have never owned a television set so no cable fees, I got rid of my landline in 1998, and my cellphone, with only voicemail as an option, costs $40 per month. I don't drink or smoke, and don't attend out-of-town conventions, so all the money I save on that I can put to the Papernet. I note that a prominent critic of paper zines, who lives in Las Vegas, says the Papernet is too expensive but he always seems to have money for partying, the Internet, and traveling to conventions.]

I Also Heard From: Anna Banana, Henry Welch, Ned Brooks, Phlox Icona, Mike Dickau, Heath Row, Joseph Major, Peter Netmail

ZINE LISTINGS

by Dale Speirs

[The Usual means $3 cash ($5 overseas), trade for your zine, or letter of comment on a previous issue. Americans: please don't send cheques for small amounts to Canada or overseas (the bank fee to cash them is usually more than the amount) or mint USA stamps (which are not valid for postage outside USA). US$ banknotes are acceptable around the world. SF means science fiction. An apazine is a zine for an amateur press association distro, a perzine is a personal zine, sercon is serious-constructive, a genzine is a general zine]

Hedge Trimmings V2#3 (The Usual from Heath Row, 101 Russell Street, #4-R, Brooklyn, New York 11222) Apazine with an article about companies who supply mis-matched or single shoes for people who can't wear an ordinary pair, and assorted comments on other subjects.

Media Junky #9 (The Usual from Jason Rodgers, Box 1683, Nashua, New Hampshire 03060) Reviewzine that concentrates mostly on avant garde art zines and underground publications. Includes the amusing one about an anarchist trying unsuccessfully to have his writings copyrighted.

BCSFAzine #429 ($3 from British Columbia Science Fiction Association, c/o Garth Spencer, Box 74122, Vancouver, British Columbia V5V 3P0) SF clubzine with assorted Internet clips and listings, and letters of comment.

The Fossil #339 (US$15 per year from The Fossils, c/o Tom Parson, 157 South Logan, Denver, Colorado 80209) Always with solid articles on the history of zinedom. This issue discusses two sons of American presidents, Jesse Grant and Tad Lincoln, who, while not zinesters per se, were involved in their school newspapers.

Musea #167 (The Usual from Tom Hendricks, 4000 Hawthorne #5, Dallas, Texas 75219) Checklist of the editor's 100 favourite songs and videos from My Space and You Tube.

EOD LETTER #9 (The Usual from Ken Faig Jr, 2311 Swainwood Drive, Glenview, Illinois 60025-2741) Devoted to H.P. Lovecraft, this issue starting off with reviews of recent collected-works editions of HPL. From there, an extended discussion of the Lovecraft copyrights, one of the most convoluted messes in the literary world. The general conclusion of most people today is that regardless of who originally owned or stole Lovecraft's copyrights, they are now in the public domain.

Plokta #39.5 (The Usual from Alison Scott, 24 St. Mary Road, Walthamstow, London E17 9RG, England) Not-so-serious advice on how to survive the Panic of 2008, discussion of fantasy author Diana Wynne Jones, and letters of comment.

Alexiad V8#1 (The Usual from Lisa and Joseph Major, 1409 Christy Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40204-2040) Genzine with book reviews, horse news, and lots of letters of comment. Fortunately they were in an area that didn't lose power during the January ice storm that crippled most of their state.

Vanamonde #773 to #777 (The Usual from John Hertz, 236 South Coronado Street #409, Los Angeles, California 90057) Single-sheet weekly apazine with commentary on various subjects and convention reports.

SEEN IN THE LITERATURE
noticed by Dale Speirs

Botha, R. (2008) **On musilanguage/"Hmmmmm" as an evolutionary precursor to language.** LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION 29:61-76

"It has been inferred that language and music had a common precursor, referred to by Steven Brown as "musilanguage" and by Steven Mithen as "Hmmmmm". The present article examines in some depth Brown's musilanguage model and Mithen's "Hmmmmm" theory as these apply to the origin and evolution of language. It does so from the perspectives of the various ways in which (i) the putative similarities between language and music are construed, (ii) some differences between language and music are accounted for, (iii) the nature of the shared precursor of language and music is portrayed, (iv) the evolution of language out of that precursor is accounted for, and (v) some core inferences are drawn. Considered from these perspectives, the musilanguage model and "Hmmmmm" theory cannot be accepted in their respective current articulations."

Basu, S., et al (2009) **Recordkeeping alters economic history by promoting reciprocity.** PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES USA 106:1009-1014

"Recordkeeping improves memory of past interactions in a complex exchange environment, which promotes reputation formation and decision coordination. Economies with recordkeeping exhibit a beneficially altered economic history where the risks of exchanging with strangers are substantially lessened. We offer insights on this research by scientifically demonstrating that reciprocity can be facilitated by information storage external to the brain. This is consistent with the archaeological record, which suggests that prehistoric transaction records and the invention of writing for recordkeeping were linked to increased complexity in human interaction."