

# OPUNTIA

## 57.3

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**OPUNTIA** is published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. It is available for \$3 cash for a one-time sample copy, trade for your zine, or letter of comment. Americans: please don't send cheques for small amounts to Canada as the bank fee to cash them is usually more than the amount. US\$ banknotes are acceptable in Canada at par value; what we gain on the exchange rate we lose on the higher postage rate to USA. Do not send mint USA stamps as they are not valid for postage outside USA and I don't collect them.

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

### WHAT IS FAPA?

This issue is for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. (Details from Robert Lichtman, Box 30, Glen Ellen, California 95442) For those of you receiving this issue who do not know what an apa is, please read on.

Modern zine publishing as we know it today began in the middle 1800s as cheap, home-use printing presses became available to the general public. Zinesters developed a distro method called the amateur press association (apa) where members sent x number of copies of their zine to a central mailer (also known as the official editor). The zines are collated into bundles, and each member gets back one bundle of everyone's zines. There is an annual fee to cover postage. Apas have a minimum level of activity required, such as publishing 8 pages a year. It must be emphasized that apas are not for passive subscribers; you must commit to the minimum activity level or you will be booted out. FAPA has been going for more than 65 years; the oldest apa is the National A.P.A., founded 1876.

x.3 OPUNTIA's are for FAPA. In addition to articles, there will be mailing comments on other apazines in the last FAPA bundle. I usually quote the remark I am commenting on, so hopefully an outsider can still read the comments with interest.

[Editor's remarks in square brackets]

FROM: Lloyd Penney 2005-04-29  
 1706 - 24 Eva Road  
 Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2

As others see us. The way the press reacts, and indeed the public reacts, anyone that immerses themselves in any hobby or interest is seen as weird, obsessed, or even mentally abnormal. I saw on television some coverage of the big Star Wars convention recently held in Indianapolis, and the television crews will pester people in this group until they find someone willing to describe themselves as a freak, geek, or nerd.

[My favourite, or should I say least favourite, example of this happened here in Calgary a number of years ago when a local newspaper interviewed a self-described genius Trekkie who said he was going to be a neurosurgeon. Just looking at his frenetic grin, I knew he would have difficulty holding down a job as a video store clerk but I guessed wrong; I saw him clerking in a convenience store several years later. Since the press are looking for a good visual, they will always pick the overweight Klingon to be the representative of the convention, not the dignified author who reminds you of your grandfather.]

FROM: Kris Miuinger 2005-03-05  
 Calle Obispo 4 bajo  
 Plaseucia 10600, Caceres, Spain

I'm curious about these apas, but as far as I know there doesn't exist a perzine apa that our zine EXTRANJERO would fit into. I have enough work already with zine correspondence without doing an apa.

[Actually, the idea of an apa is to reduce the workload by only having to mail a bundle of your zines to one person, who will sort and distribute them. You can also include your correspondence in your zine as part of what apahackers refer to as mailing comments. There are still lots of apas around for every style. I know there is a Web ring for them; the easiest way is to Google the phrase "amateur press association".]

**I ALSO HEARD FROM:** Phlox Icona, John Hertz, Anna Banana, Ficus, Chester Cuthbert, AGB International (no personal name given, apparently a naive zine publisher who wants to be the next ROLLING STONE), KRin Pender-Gunn, Ned Brooks

**FAPA CLEARCUT AWARD** (for most pages published in a mailing) goes to Dale Speirs for 32 pages (16 full-size plus 32 half-size) in FAPA #271.

FAPA #271 received in Calgary on June 2, 2005.

### **MAILING COMMENTS ON FAPA #271**

**Fanalysis #32** Re: recent documentary movies. I never did get around to seeing FAHRENHEIT 9/11, although I saw the trailer at the movie theatre. I particularly enjoyed the clip in which Michael Moore offers to help patriotic Congressmen enlist their children in the armed forces so they can serve in Iraq. A Moore film I did see was CANADIAN BACON, which poked fun at the stereotypical views Americans and Canadians have of each other, such as every police officer in Canada being a Mountie in dress scarlet or every American casually armed with automatic weapons. I didn't see SUPERSIZE ME either, but did read several criticisms of Morgan Spurlock whose weight gain while eating nothing but McDonalds food had as much to do with failure to take any exercise at all.

*"Thanksgiving, the most distinctly American holiday other than July Fourth ... " Thanksgiving goes back to Europe in many modes, and the Plymouth Thanksgiving wasn't even the first in*

the USA, as the Spanish explorers also celebrated it. Canada has Thanksgiving in October (our November holiday is Remembrance Day). The earliest recorded Thanksgiving in Canada was celebrated by Martin Frobisher in Newfoundland in 1578, and Québec had it as a holiday from the 1600s. It was made an official holiday by the federal House of Commons in 1879.

**Ben's Beat #80** You are the Joseph Major of play reviews!

**Ride The Lightning** *"Sometimes I prefer reviewing old science fiction to the exclusion of merely dwelling on newly-published stuff."* That is my philosophy for reviewing books in OPUNTIA, to discuss older books that deserve renewed attention or new small-press books that will otherwise pass unnoticed. I got the idea from Ned Brooks' zine IT GOES ON THE SHELF. I do read bestsellers but I don't think the world needs yet another review of the latest Discworld novel.

*"Short term increases in oil prices (which themselves are suspicious considering both Cheney and Bush have considerable financial interest in the oil industry) are unrelated to invading a country for America's long-term economic benefits."* Nothing suspicious about oil price increases; China is rapidly industrializing and making the same mistakes that every other industrial power did. Oil prices have gone up because worldwide

demand has gone up. I doubt that Cheney and Bush are more than millionaires, but even supposing they are billionaires, they are just bit players in the trillions of dollars of the petroleum industry.

The problem in trying to wean people out of their SUVs is that oil is still cheaper today after inflation than it was in 1974. Oil needs to get up to \$90 a barrel just to match the price of three decades ago. Anyone who can afford a big SUV or Hummer isn't going to worry if gas hits \$1 per litre (as at May 2005, Calgary pump price is about 80 cents a litre). Calgary rush hour traffic looks like an SUV assembly line.

Re: your query about the apa Point of Divergence, devoted to alternative history. The Official Editor is Jim Rittenhouse, and the easiest way to learn about POD is to go to his Website at: [www.marmotgraphics.com](http://www.marmotgraphics.com) and click on the appropriate link. There is another reason to visit his Website as well. He and his wife Susan adopted a baby girl from China several years ago and named her Meredith Grace. A couple of years later, they discovered by accident that Meredith had a twin sister who was adopted by an Alabama couple, who, in an incredible coincidence, named their girl Meredith Ellen! The story was written up in the June 2005 issue of GOOD HOUSEKEEPING. This will be gone from the news agents by the time you read this, but Jim has it all written up on his Website.

Re: Alberta's booming economy because of the Athabasca tar sands. *"And I hope you are smart enough not to waste it on greedy consumer countries who, once addicted to your oil, will use any flimsy excuse to invade your country and totally destabilize it."* You can't destabilize a country which has real language police; not just a figure of speech, but actual bureaucrats who enforce the language laws and make American affirmative-action laws look like playing in the sandbox. They once banned a blind francophone man from taking an English-immersion course because his guide dog only understood French commands.

If the USA were to invade Canada, they would find out the hard way that Québec is not to be trifled with. Any grunt who left his Humvee unattended for a moment in Montréal would return to find it stripped down to the chassis. The intruding army would not fight any battles but the party bagmen of both the governing Liberals and the opposition parties would quickly clean every dollar out of the U.S. Army budget by selling supplies to them and then triple-billing through multiple companies for goods never supplied. Haliburton are a ma-and-pa business compared to Canadian politicians.

Think I'm exaggerating? Do a search at Google.ca (not .com, and select only pages from Canada) with the terms "Adscam", "Gomery inquiry", "Paul Martin", and "Belinda Stronach". This

will give you the details of how the Liberal party diverted \$100 million of taxpayer money into their coffers, and not only survived the resulting vote of non-confidence in the House of Commons but actually panicked Toronto voters into voting for them in the last federal election.

**In A Commentary Orbit** “ ... *it should be easy to invent some kind of medical record keeping system that would go with the individual rather than stay with a particular medical delivery system.*” Some military forces use this system by turning dog-tags into flash-memory chips. There are high-end pet and livestock ear tag or skin implant chips that do it. In Canada (Alberta, at least), if you move to a new GP, he will have you fill in a form authorizing transfer of records. The Alberta government has set up a centralized pharmaceutical database so that pharmacists can see if a patient is shopping for prescriptions at multiple doctors.

**The Annex #20** Re: your prose poem “Philately North Of The Border”. It has the stamp of authenticity.

**Fish Wrap Pre-Intelligencer** You were wondering about the pronunciation of my surname. It is “spires”. I don’t really care how it is pronounced because that is ephemeral, but do assert that it be spelt correctly as Speirs, with an ei, not ie. *Litera scripta manet.*

Re: your remark to me about the “*units you hold in a royalty trust*”. This is not a royalty trust as sold on the stock market, where people buy units and receive income from them. My oil royalties come from a family trust called the Estate of August Koski (who was my great-grandfather). Before World War One, the only mineral rights the government kept were coal and precious metals, since petroleum had little value. Oil was discovered in Alberta in 1947, two years before Koski died, and he was smart enough to separate the mineral rights from the land title. The farm passed out of the family in the 1980s when Uncle Ernie died, but the Estate of August Koski still holds the mineral rights. (Land owners are required by law to allow oil companies access to their land for drilling, in exchange for which they get surface rights payments.) In Canada, a land title or mineral right cannot be divided more than twenty ways, and the descendants of August Koski passed that number decades ago. As a result, the oil royalties (6% of the oil pumped off what used to be the family homestead) are paid by the oil companies to the Estate. We then have an accountancy divide up the amounts according to what share each is entitled to, and after they deduct their monthly fee, they mail us our cheques. They also include photocopies of the original oil company cheques and a spreadsheet showing who got what, so we all know what is going on.

Koski had 11 children, one of whom was my grandmother Emma. Each child therefore inherited

(after their mother Anna Koski died in 1951) a one-eleventh share of the income of the Estate. Some of the children had no kids of their own so they passed their fraction on to a favourite nephew or niece. Others bred like rabbits, so in due time their kids inherited, say,  $1/9$  of  $1/11$ . Emma had four kids, one of whom was my mother Betty. When Emma died, my mother therefore inherited a  $1/4$  of  $1/11$  share. Betty also inherited a full  $1/11$  share from an aunt who never had children. My mother had two sons. When she died, Neil and I each got (and this is how it appears on the monthly statement)  $1/2(1/11+(1/4*1/11))$ . The reason that the accountant doesn't reduce these fractions to a common denominator is that they show exactly how the royalties have been divided over time, plus the denominator doesn't have to be continually revised for everyone else when a new descendant joins the clan. Neil and I have an algebraic expression that isn't too complicated, but a few of the fifth generation descendants have a fraction that takes up a full line.

As a result, some of the fifth generation get about \$50 a month (the exact amount varies each month with the price of oil), most get about \$500, my brother and I get about \$1,500, and cousin Kenny, who inherited a  $2/11$  share, gets about \$6,000 a month. This is the gross amount. We not only have to pay personal income tax on it, but both the federal and provincial governments levy a royalty tax, so we end up losing half of it. But on the other hand, it is found money. What makes us wonder about it all is

that the oil field has been pumping since 1953, and who knows when it will finally run out.

**Sweet Jane #43** *"But how come in the comix when people get hurt, there's never any pain, no suffering?"* I've always wondered about this in action adventure movies. The hero is blown out a second-story window by a huge fireball, hits an awning, tears through it, and rolls to the ground off a box with a conveniently angled lid. He then gets up and continues chasing the villain. In some movies, he'll wince and limp for a few minutes, but then later that night he has no trouble humping the ingenue in the missionary position. (If it were me, I'd ask her to do it female-superior.) He will have what appear to be third-degree burns on his face from the fireball, but scrubs himself clean in the shower before doing it with the girl, as if a burn was like getting your hands dirty. My favourite scene, rare in the movies but which I notice because I prune trees for a living, is where the hero falls down through a tree, breaking branches along the fall, which presumably slows him down enough for a safe landing. In the arbouricultural trade, our term for such a person is "quadriplegic".

**Alphabet Soup #46** Re: Los Angeles police changing some of their organizational names because they made bad acronyms. The City of Calgary's information service had to have its name changed in the early 1990s from Advice, Information, and Direction Service because people kept phoning them and asking

how to get treatment for a certain viral disease. Where I work, our computer system that tracks job orders and manpower originally started life as the Parks Maintenance System.

*“I find it strange that the government’s new food pyramid recommends I eat about twice as much as I currently do eat.”* The first time I went on a serious diet, I followed the Canada Food Guide, and began gaining a kilogramme a week.

**For Fapa** *“Reading seems something that may wither away gradually, as universal literacy ... becomes less need. In fandom we take in a very biased sample, in a world where most homes don’t contain books.”* Too true. I have been in many houses where there was a television set on each floor but not a single book. People think me strange because I do not have a television set but do have a two-room library plus bookcases lining the living room. On the other hand, universal literacy has always been rare throughout history, and we are reverting to the status ante.

Re: being plump and pale as a status symbol in the past, and nowadays being tanned and thin as the new status symbol. Evolution selected humans to be fat to survive famine, but nowadays for the western world that is irrelevant. I have an outdoor job but always wear long sleeves and when I am off work I never tan myself. I used to, but about eight years ago suddenly

began developing a variety of blood spots, brown warts, and liver spots. I didn’t need to see a doctor to know what was happening, and ever since then have kept myself fish-belly white, which stopped the growths.

**Feline Mewsings #20** Ed Meskys wrote to you: *“A few years ago, the actor who did Archie on DUFFY’S TAVERN lost his sight and was a guest at the competing blind organization’s convention, and I heard his talk on a tape of the con.”* That didn’t seem right to me so I checked John Dunning’s 822-page encyclopedia about old radio shows, ON THE AIR. Ed Gardner, who played Archie, died on 1963-08-17; nothing in the book about blindness.

**Voice Of The Habu** Re: Shakespeare and Dickens ruined by force feeding to high school students. Many people have suggested, half seriously, that pornography be taught in schools the same way that Shakespeare is. This would permanently turn off students and an entire criminal industry would be killed. I can imagine some of the exams (presumably written only; no practical exam) would have questions like: “Name the different types of sexual intercourse and list their advantages and disadvantages.” or “Explain why the face-to-face position is called the missionary position. Compare and contrast with the doggy position.”. Monty Python did a sketch about this, where John Cleese is a schoolmaster who lays his wife out across his desk and then

humps her in front of the class while lecturing about the technique to a bunch of bored schoolboys. He has to stop in the middle to reprimand a student for throwing spitballs at another.

**Lofgeornost #79** Re: the book THE JEWISH GAUCHOS OF THE PAMPAS. This reminds me of a Jackie Mason routine where he talked about Jewish occupations, and said there never was a Jewish cowboy in the Old West. *"Who ever heard of a cowboy crying out in despair: "The cattle are stampeding! Oy vey iz mir!"*"

Re: hoping to see people using the Jewish centre library you are rebuilding. I belong to a couple of hobby clubs that have had a similar problem with lack of use of their libraries in the past. The problem was solved when new librarians took over, set everything on an organized basis as you are doing, and then began heavily publicizing them. One useful technique is to bring books to meetings that are related to the topic of discussion and announcing they can be borrowed then and there.

**Edgar's Journal #3** Impressive collage cover! Were all 70 copies identical or did you use a different collage for each? Being a philatelist, I naturally noticed the ersatz envelope on the cover, and looked closely at it. The Iceland stamp is postmarked Isle of Man, so it must be a paquebot mail. (Paquebot mail is ship mail delivered at a foreign port with stamps of the ship's nationality.)

## April Showers

Re: wet weather in California causing record wildflower blooms. I saw an article that this year hundreds of extinct waterfalls in California have been re-activated by the unusually heavy snowpack of last winter. They are expected to last only a short while before drying up. This report caught my eye because I "collect" waterfalls when I am hiking in the Rockies adjacent to Calgary.

*"Does the Canadian ban on retirement on the basis of age extend to jobs with safety issues involved?"* The law says that employers cannot forcefully retire employees at age 65 but do have the right to impose tests of ability to perform the job. This law is not an issue in Canada because 99.99% of employees are only too happy to take their pension and run. The rest seldom stay more than a few additional years. The reason Prime Minister Paul Martin was supportive of it recently (although it was passed into law years ago when he was still Minister of Finance) is because he didn't become Prime Minister until he was 65.

**No Exit** Re: the expense of Prince Charles' wedding. His mum visited Calgary a few weeks later as part of a tour of Alberta and Saskatchewan on the occasion of their centennials this year. Her 3-hour visit worked out to a cost of \$80,000 per hour to the City of Calgary. She actually visited a museum two blocks from my house but I didn't bother to go over and see her.



Having said that, I am glad that Chuck and Camilla finally found true happiness after three decades. Those who criticize them should realize what it is like to live in the glare of television cameras.

Re: only 28 people voting for the Nova fanzine awards. Sounds much the same as the Aurora awards in Canada, where Best Fanzine went to a Web site, and for many years previous was won by a Star Trek clubzine.

**Synapse** *"I look forward to seeing Alberta's \$20-a-barrel oil in the US market."* More like \$60 at current prices. China's national petroleum company just bought a major chunk of one of the Athabasca tar sands projects and expects to have 20,000 barrels of oil per day exported to them. This was their first purchase and everyone agrees it won't be the last. Although there will always be some oil flowing south of the border, some American analysts are worried that most of it will instead be going across the Pacific.

*"One of the good guys on THE WEST WING said the ethanol idea was a fraud. At any rate, cropping loses topsoil by erosion."* Ethanol gas is sold in Canada by the Mohawk and Husky service stations, and is used in various tropical countries. Canadian farmers (I don't know the figures for Americans) have almost entirely converted to no-till grain farming. As a result, scientists studying climate change have had to revise their data because the

Canadian prairies are now a carbon sink, not a carbon source. For the first time in a century, Canadian farms are increasing their topsoil, not mining it. No-till farming is where next year's crop is seeded directly into the stubble of last year's crop. Weed control is done by herbicides, but because fresh weed seeds are not being brought up by cultivation, the weediness of fields is actually declining. Grain field weeds are disturbance colonizers, which is why they do so well in tilled fields, but after several years of no-till, they have difficulty surviving.

*"What is the chief executive of a province called?"* There is no such thing. The head of government of a Canadian province is a Premier, who sits in the legislature as an elected member. No one elects a Premier or Prime Minister directly; the party leader of the party that got the most seats automatically becomes Premier. The head of state of a province is the Lieutenant-Governor, who is appointed by the Prime Minister of Canada on the advice of the Premier. There is no Governor; the Lieutenant-Governor is subordinate to the Governor-General of Canada, who is the head of state for the federal government and represents the Queen of Canada in her absence.

*"Now you can show up my ignorance by explaining how the intranet is different from the Internet and the World Wide Web."* You shouldn't feed obvious lines like that to the rest of us. An intranet (not "the intranet") is an internal

computer network of an organization not available to outsiders, such as a payroll system. The World Wide Web is a network of files viewed by a graphical user interface such as Mozilla or Internet Explorer. The Internet (always capitalized because it is a proper name) is the sum total of all computer networks, privately owned or government, which are linked together and can communicate with each other.

*“Why must they use misleading avoidances like fanfic.”* Because they have no conception whatsoever of printed paper zines, nor do they have any interest in learning the history of zines and fandom. It is like talking to sci-fi movie fans who have no idea that there are volunteer-run conventions where people are actively involved in the SF hobby instead of just buying collectibles and paying \$50 extra for preferred seating. I have talked with some anime fans who had no idea what a zine is, causing me to muse about the proverb about how there are none so blind as they who have eyes but do not see.

Manga are Japanese graphic novels, basically comic books in trade paperback format.

Re: the JOURNAL OF ASTROBIOLOGY having a Web domain called ‘bladerunner’. I presume this is just the name of the Internet service provider contracted to run the Web site.

*“To state that the books could be sold and the money used elsewhere in the library would defeat the purpose of preserving the stuff.”* The idea is that if the library doesn’t want it, they can sell it to a collector who will treasure it more than the library ever would. Otherwise the library will just junk the stuff, as has been known to happen. -10-

*“I think Oilberta should share its good luck with the rest of Canada. ... So why doesn’t the federal government make Alberta share?”* Actually Alberta and a couple of other ‘have’ provinces such as Ontario and British Columbia already subsidize the other provinces through the federal equalization programme, which taxes people on their income and then redistributes the money back to the provinces on a per-capita basis. Alberta and Ontario currently pay out more in federal taxes than they get back, while the Maritimes and Québec are in the reverse situation, the former because they are poor folk and the latter because the Liberals are trying to bribe them to stay in Confederation. During the last oil boom (1979 to 1982) the federal government looted \$50 billion from Alberta with its National Energy Programme, which required Alberta to supply oil to Ontario and Québec at below market prices while still paying for manufactured goods from Ontario at higher prices than free trade would have supplied. This is why Alberta supports NAFTA; for more than a century, Ontario manufacturers were protected from foreign competitors by high tariffs.

*"All Prohibition ever did was make people drink like fish."* Fish actually drink little or nothing. They absorb water through their skin. The water they constantly gulp is flushed out through their gills to extract the oxygen in it. And, nitpicking like Speer does, it wasn't water that the speakeasies were serving.

## SEEN IN THE LITERATURE

noticed by Dale Speirs

Ol'khovtov, A.Y. (2003) **Geophysical circumstances of the 1908 Tunguska event in Siberia, Russia.** EARTH, MOON, AND PLANETS 93:163-173

*"On the morning of June 30, 1908, a remarkable natural phenomenon took place in the region to the north and northwest of Lake Baikal in Russia, which is now usually known as the Tunguska event. Despite the fact that a dozen explanations or more have been put forward to explain this event, its origin is still questionable. In this work geophysical circumstances of the Tunguska event are investigated. The research reveals that the*

*event took place during a strong upsurge of tectonic activity in the Tunguska event region, and there were some peculiarities in tectonic activity even on larger scales. Also, the event occurred during a change from a long period of good weather to a bad one in the region. The Tunguska epicenter is right in the middle of the ancient volcanic crater, which after its discovery in 1972 got the name Kulikovskii. The Tunguska event occurred in the 'bundle' (intersection area) of several powerful tectonic faults in the region."*

*"It is important to note that on June 30 the appearance of a rather large solar protuberance was discovered. We also suspect a powerful solar proton event in late June 1908. Interestingly, the famous "bright nights" phenomenon associated with Tunguska commenced before June 30 in reality. Statistical analysis of witness's accounts has revealed that Tunguska event was accompanied by various meteorological phenomena, including strong wind (windstorms), haze, fog, temperature changes, thunderstorms, and whirlwinds. In other words the Tunguska event indeed took place during a period of strong meteorological peculiarity, associated with sharp weather worsening."*

Speirs: The traditional explanation for Tunguska is that it was a bolide impact, probably a comet. What Ol'khovtov is saying is that it was a coincidence of an earthquake, aurora borealis, and severe windstorms from weather fronts colliding. -11-

Gomes, R., et al (2005) **Origin of the cataclysmic Late Heavy Bombardment period of the terrestrial planets.** NATURE 435:466-469

*“The petrology record on the Moon suggests that a cataclysmic spike in the cratering rate occurred about 700 million years after the planets formed. This event is known as the Late Heavy Bombardment (LHB). Here we propose that the LHB was triggered by the rapid migration of the giant planets, which occurred after a long quiescent period. During this burst of migration, the planetesimal disk outside the orbits of the planets was destabilized, causing a sudden massive delivery of planetesimals to the inner Solar System. The asteroid belt was also strongly perturbed, with these objects supplying a significant fraction of the LHB impactors.”*

Hipple, J.D., et al (2005) **Development in the upper Mississippi basin: 10 years after the great flood of 1993.** LANDSCAPE AND URBAN PLANNING 72:313-323

*“Flooding in the upper Mississippi River basin during the summer of 1993 caused between US\$12 and 16 billion worth of damage. Since 1993, millions of dollars of new developments have poured into the flood-impacted areas contrary to the recommendations of Interagency Floodplain Management Review Committee, among*

*others. Tracking development has been difficult.* -12-  
*A diverse set of regulations and land use controls have caused varying amounts of development in the upper Mississippi River basin, with Missouri leading the way with over 17.31 km<sup>2</sup> of new development”*

Speirs: Against stupidity, the gods contend in vain. Southern Alberta is no better; we had a once-in-200-year flood in June 2005 and there isn't even a hint anywhere that it would be cheaper to move to higher ground in the long run instead of rebuilding every few decades.

Pfeiffer, T., et al (2005) **Evolution of cooperation by generalized reciprocity.** PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LONDON 272B:1115-1120

*“The evolution of cooperation by direct reciprocity requires that individuals recognize their present partner and remember the outcome of their last encounter with that specific partner. Direct reciprocity thus requires advanced cognitive abilities. Here, we demonstrate that if individuals repeatedly interact within small groups with different partners in a two-person Prisoner's Dilemma, cooperation can emerge and also be maintained in the absence of such cognitive abilities. It is sufficient for an individual to base their decision of whether or not to cooperate on*

*the outcome of their last encounter, even if it was with a different partner.”*

Speirs: I got to thinking about this in terms of the Papernet and the Internet. Since zinedom developed in the late 1800s, zinesters have been accustomed to the gift economy, that is, trading their zine for someone else's or for a letter of comment. This fits the theory of direct reciprocity; you remember how your trade with an individual went and use it to decide if you will do a future transaction. No response or trade means no next issue. On the Internet it is well known that e-zines do not bring responses and there is no direct reciprocity.

That doesn't mean there is no reciprocity on the Internet, but rather that it takes different forms than with the Papernet. Moderated discussion groups and blogs work better than the traditional zine format on-line. Unmoderated groups are quickly swamped by spammers and trolls who have no interest in reciprocity, and thus those groups are abandoned by people who expect it.

Wilson, D.P. (2005) **Additional law enforcement as a deterrent to criminal behaviour: Empirical evidence from the National Hockey League.** JOURNAL OF SOCIO-ECONOMICS 34:319-330

This study examined the 1998-2000 NHL hockey games and found a significant reduction in major penalties but not so much for petty offences. Increase in harshness of penalties also led to a reduction. Wilson then compared with police enforcement and found that more constables on the street will increase deterrent to felony offences more than for misdemeanors.

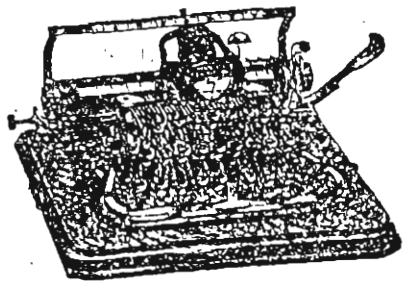
White, Crow (2005) **Hunters ring dinner bell for ravens: Experimental evidence of a unique foraging strategy.** ECOLOGY 86:1057-1060

This study showed that ravens in the wild will fly towards gunshot sounds, and feast on animal gut piles and other leavings of hunters. Not only that, ravens will only fly towards gunshots coming from within forested habitats, and not elsewhere. This study is fascinating in itself, but the topper is that the author's name is Crow White! Another proof of nomenclative determinism.

## TYPEWRITER ADS

Page 14 ad is from THE TORONTO WORLD, 1906-04-28, page 14. The page 16 ad is from HARPER'S WEEKLY, 1896-02-22, page 188

Interchangeable type, seventy different styles and all languages on the one machine. The type can be changed in a moment, a very simple operation.



Clergymen, authors, linguists, travelers and students should see this machine. Send for a catalogue or call at our showrooms.

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**Latest Model American Olivers, each \$75,  
Monarch \$95. L. G. Smith \$90**

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Also large stock of rebuilt machines, all makes, from \$15 up. Send for price list

## The Dominion Typewriter Exchange

Head Office, Dominion Building, 72 Victoria Street,

**TORONTO, ONTARIO,**

**We Sell All Makes of Typewriters.**

## THE WRECK OF THE "CITY OF MEDICINE HAT"

by Dale Speirs

Saskatchewan is not a place that comes to mind when shipwrecks are being discussed, seeing that it is in the heart of the western Canadian prairies. A shipwreck out west would normally mean a fisherman fell out of his rowboat when he leaned over too far while casting.

At the CALTAPEX 2004 stamp show, I was going through a dealer's stock when I came across a real-photo postcard showing a sternwheeler lying on its side in the Saskatchewan River, jammed up against a bridge pier. The caption of the photo read "The Wreck of the City of Medicine Hat, June 7, 1908. The greatest Marine Disaster in the History of Saskatoon". I suspect that even a century later it still is.

The University of Calgary Library doesn't have any Saskatoon newspapers, but does have a run of Regina newspapers on microfilm. (Regina is the capital of Saskatchewan, south of Saskatoon, on the Trans-Canada Highway.) I found a report of the wreck, strangely given second billing to a Methodist conference in Regina [1].

The sternwheeler, commanded by Captain Ross (no first name given), displaced 250 tons. On this voyage from Medicine Hat,

Alberta, to Winnipeg, Manitoba, it was carrying 8 crew and 4 passengers. The ship left Medicine Hat on a pleasure cruise on the afternoon of June 6 down the river which was in full spring flood. At Saskatoon, the river was two metres above normal level. The ship could not pass under the bridges of the city, so it hove to and the crew unshipped the funnel.

The "City of Medicine Hat" then successfully passed under several bridges. Just before the final bridge, the sternwheeler hit a telephone wire sagging over the river. The wire was tangled into the steering gear. The captain immediately called for engines full astern, but the flood current was too strong to back up the ship. It was swept into a pier and sank onto its port side. Everyone on board scrambled up onto the exposed side and thence to the deck of the bridge. A salvage attempt failed and the wreck broke apart.

The steamboat trade was even then declining as the railroads advanced across the prairies. A few still exist today for the tourist trade; Winnipeg has several.

### Reference.

[1] Anonymous (1908-06-08) Methodist conference in full swing; Exciting shipwreck at Saskatoon. REGINA LEADER, pages 1, 8

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