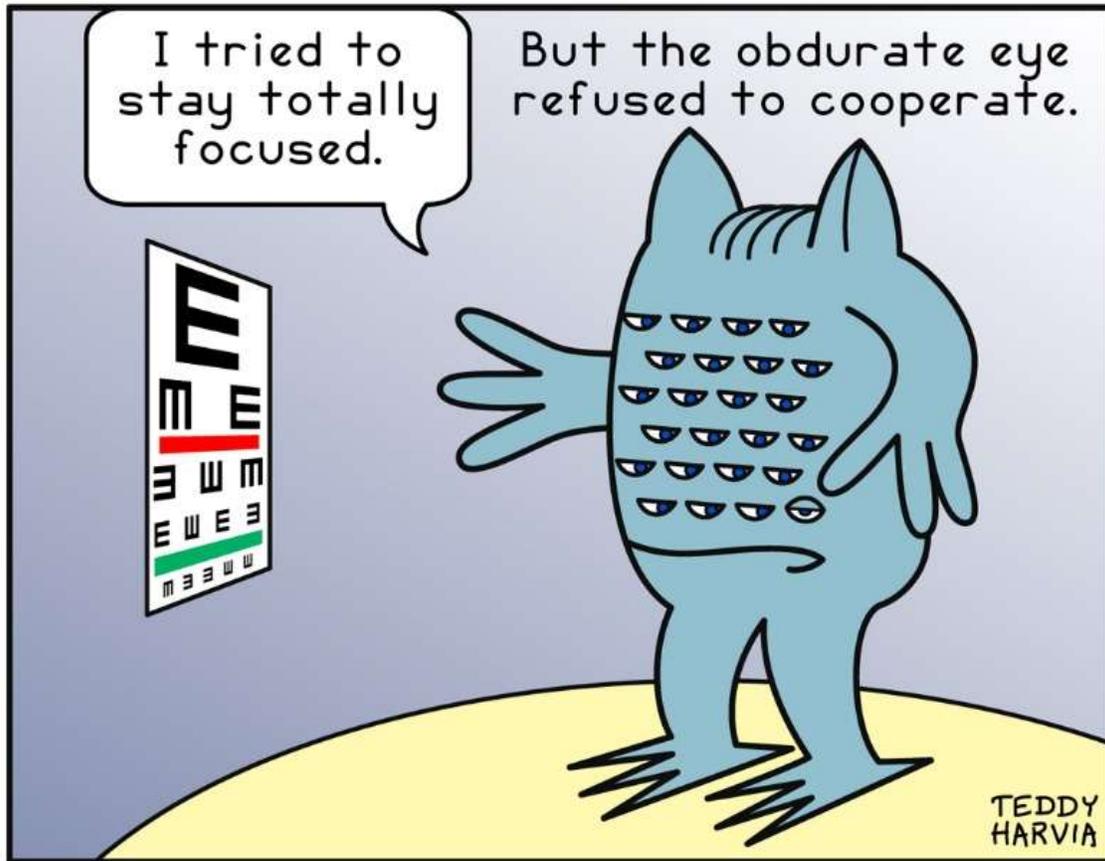


THE OBDURATE EYE #4

December 2018



Masthead

Welcome to *The Obdurate Eye* #4, dated December 2018, a personalzine distributed by Garth Spencer at garth.van.spencer@gmail.com. (I can also be reached at 4240 Perry Street, Vancouver, BC, CANADA V5N 3X5.) This zine is available for contributions in the form of articles, letters, illustrations, or other zines in trade.

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Art Credits

S. Fox.....	p. 13
Teddy Harvia.....	cover, p. 4
D. Marshall.....	pp. 7, 11
Tara Wayne.....	p. 9
Clip art.....	pp. 1,14



Slowly and Painfully Working out the Painfully Obvious

I'm finishing up this zine on New Year's Eve, rather than a month or more earlier. Statutory holidays never moved me much, which took a long time to realize. When it came time for Christmas, to take just one example, it was obligatory to get dressed up and visit relatives, or have them visit us, and overeat and do ritual present-giving and generally be uncomfortable, and be seen, and not be heard. These days, it is just amazing that the Great Day takes only one day, given all the buildup. When it came time for Remembrance Day, it was obligatory to get dressed up and stand around in freezing miserable weather for incomprehensible ceremonies that lasted longer than you could hold it in. It was surprising then, and still surprises me how seldom anyone actually spells out what "lest we forget" means. (I had to have it spelled out for me when I was a kid.) When it comes to New Year's ... well, I spent it at home with the cat.

Am I emotionally disturbed or something? I mean, that I don't get the spirit of these statutory holidays?

#

This year, not knowing what people wanted or needed and not having much disposable income anyway, I settled once again for writing something original and sending it out as a Christmas gift to everyone. One year, imitating my brother Syd, I distributed something I called *The Nice Letter*. Later, I distributed a story collection masquerading as an SF magazine, called *Boring Mundane Stories*. (not a lot of feedback that time.)

This Christmas, I distributed *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Life Skills for Dummies* (1st ed.)

Like a number of other subjects, the subject of the *Idiot's Guide* – the things we all ought to know by now, but very often, they went without saying – had been obsessing me for a few years; but if you saw my last several fanzines, you know

all about it. (And don't get me started on conrunning, or mathematical sociology, or the Great Belgian Conspiracy Theory, either.) For a number of historical reasons that are ultimately unimportant, I have never been free of the sense that there were things I was supposed to do with life, and forgot to do; things I was supposed to know, that everyone knew but me. The *Idiot's Guide* is supposed to work this out of my system. (The way that articles on conrunning or mathematical sociology or the Great Belgian Conspiracy Theory were supposed to work those obsessions out of my system.)

As expected, launching an actual edition of the *Idiot's Guide* left out a lot of material, it didn't paint an adequate picture of standard prescribed mainstream culture for any time or place, and mostly descended into deadpan humour. In future editions I can try to address these flaws.

If this amateurish work accomplishes anything, it can give the reader a clue that there never was one authorized Standard Received Anglo Culture, which is one of the lies my family taught me. It implies that whatever SRAC you get is probably foreign and out of date, for the time and place you live in. Future editions can develop the implication that any SRAC is chock-full of folk beliefs and traditions that are nonsensical, when they aren't outright toxic.

Tell me, do all ethnic groups and regional/occupational subcultures have the same belief in a Standard Received Culture, and the same level of unexamined nonsense and toxic traditions attributed to it?

#

eAPA, the general-interest Amateur Publication Association which I edit, is usually offered to members with a monthly email sending them the unique password to a zip file, for each mailing archived at eFanzines.com. The exception is in October, when eAPA is archived in "clear" and nobody needs a password. This fall, as usual, I included a general article explaining APAs, and this somehow inspired me to start listing current APAs.

Of course, like many of my projects, this mission enlarged itself. If you're coming late to this series of fanzines, last issue amounted to a first draft of a regional fandom guide. Maybe that's another gift publication I can eventually distribute.

#

In a simultaneous effort to straighten out my own life, I found myself doing a lot of housekeeping during the holidays, and finally making up an index of my files, both digital and hardcopy. This is the first time I have succeeded in making a nearly complete list of all the documents I made, or want to create; at last I can start prioritizing them, and allocating time to them.

Of course I found that most of my time goes to the least important and productive enterprises, like indexing and double-checking address lists and whatnot. You know all about this, right?

You may be surprised that a man in his 60s is still clarifying his priorities, which you might expect of a twenty-something, or even a mature teenager. Looking back, it appears that I was petrified of thinking about the future. Everything terrified me. Now, I'm not braver, so much as burned out on terror of the future.

#

All of the foregoing reminded me of another venture that has been gathering dust, a website posted at the local Freenet. I started my personal website in a fit of enthusiasm for elementary HTML editing, as a sort of archive for my writings once I got them out of my system, and then let it languish. But I may now have more to post on it now than simple exercises in ego; maybe, some items useful to others.

Can I get the lead out, learn WordPress or at least brush up on HTML format, and rehabilitate the site into usable form?

#

One of the surprising Facebook posts that looks predictable, in retrospect, was someone's declaration that it was time to make all the apologies we owed to everyone for events in the year past. I admit that I don't think I have anything to apologize for, not in the past year.

But in previous years, I think I deserve as many apologies as I should make, for social gaffes of an awkward, intimate nature. Growing up, if that's what it was, meant regularly apologizing for my words and my acts and my very existence, to the parents I depended on for survival; so a few decades after leaving home I gave it up. Living with a woman eventually meant regularly apologizing for anything I did or everything I am, to the woman I depended on for love, or at least for shreds of self-respect; so after several tries, I gave up on relationships. I am now pondering whether I was just doing something wrong all along? Like, depending on someone else, at least emotionally? Maybe I just needed to meet a better class of women?



Overqualified (T. Harvia)

Letters

Lyn McConchie, November 3, 2018

You wrote: *((What I enjoy (in an amoral way) is the irony that people in industrialized countries are so worried about protecting their little darlings, at the same time their governments are dismantling protections for the disabled, the elderly, the disadvantaged and the poor. Doublethink much?))*

Fortunately, that isn't happening in New Zealand. Here, a slowly increasing number of the population are pensioners. Not luddite, dim, huddle-alone ones either. No, kiwi pensioners took to the Internet with enthusiasm years ago. They (a large proportion anyway) belong to one of the ubiquitous Nation-wide chapters of Grey Power and nag politicians into new laws, benefits, grants, etc. for pensioners. (Helped by our Deputy PM who *[missing]* one of us.) The disabled too have a country-wide organisation, the DPA (Disabled Persons Assembly), do anything too egregious and they'll assemble in *all* directions and any politician in the area will rapidly retreat. A solid proportion of 'poor' and/or 'disadvantaged' fit into those categories and are covered. There are disadvantages to being a small country, but one of the major advantages is that it gives us a far better chance to combine and make ourselves heard. And we do, and when that happens smart politicians here listen - because they've learned that the deaf ones aren't returned.

(On more personal news, my 44th book appeared in Australia a couple of months ago - from Altair Press. This was *Coals & Ash*, a post-apocalypse book set in Australia, the second (after *Vestiges of Flames*) of what is intended to be a very loose 4-book set. (Barring Acts of Ghod I will write the other 2 next year.) I also sold nine stories this year to the on-line mag *Altered Reality*, all or most of

which are now out, while I have five more books contracted, and proofed for publication. Wheeze, gasp pant. and as I'm also writing (and selling) Sherlock Holmes book pastiches, between the two genres I'm very happily busy. Not to mention that next month it's lambing and Christmas. Now if only the howling gale we've had since 3am would *stop*, I'd be a totally happy bunny!

Lloyd Penney, penneys@bell.net, November 10, 2018

I am moving ahead with great alacrity. Already, here I am with a loc on *The Obdurate Eye* #3. All this falling behind I did wasn't good for my stress levels, anyway. Canada Post can rotate all it likes, and I don't mean anything about strikes.

"Fandom Classic" ... that certainly suits because more and more, the fandom I remember is mostly gone. I think some local friends may think we've gafiated, but we've just moved into other activities after our long career in conrunning. The last ten years, we've had fun with steampunk, and the last seven or so, we've been vendors, and we've always got to go where the fun is. Fandom has been quite Balkanized for many years, with one interest not knowing anyone in another interest. We always tried to have some passing knowledge of what was happening in other fandoms, and told them that while we might not share their interest, we certainly understand why you have it, and even that level of understanding got us some good friends. The fact that over the years, we helped with executive elections with a Dr. Who group, and consuites with the local filkers, also helped.

Lyn McConchie's loc reminds us all that while common sense has different values with different cultures and upbringings, we are also reminded that for too many people, common sense isn't very common at all. Many punks, Goths and metalheads came from Mormon and JW backgrounds? Perhaps the more restrictive your upbringing, the more likely you will burst your chains when you are older and do something weird and wonderful like, I don't know, be a science fiction fan? A fellow vendor friend broke away from a very restrictive family to spend some time in burlesque before becoming a horror fan.

My loc ... yes, the naysayers may count for nothing, but there is not much encouragement to do things like host the Canvention and the Auroras when all you hear is criticism and disgust. Your best efforts are often not good enough. I would like to see both of these back in Toronto, preferably at an Ad Astra, but I suspect the current committee, few of whom I know, wouldn't be aware of either, let alone be willing to put up with the challenge of trying to satisfy a hostile CanSF fandom.

((There is no Canadian SF fandom, but several fandoms. The object is not to satisfy anyone; that is an exercise in futility.))

I spent some years in APAs many years ago, and creating APAzines for a small audience got me a taste for writing for a (not much) larger audience of a fanzine.

I spent some years in APAPlexy in Ottawa...they have been around for a long time, and if their issue number looks large, remember that their first issue, IIRC, was number -100. I know Duncan MacGregor is a member, don't know who is the current OE or CM. I was the CM for WOOF for one year, and had one idiot grab most of the issues, and hand them out to random Worldcon members, who had no idea what to do with them. Also I was the CM for one year of The Final Frontier, a Trek APA.

I miss nominating for the Hugos and Auroras, but then, I am no longer a consumer of new SF literature, and I don't attend the sponsoring conventions. Therefore, I am not a competent nominator or voter. I will let younger consumers participate.

(Martin Hunger and Christina Carr) ... It will be good to see them here again, but they will have to start all over again. Whether they create shows like a Renfaire again, or simply participate in whatever fandom is left here, remains to be seen, but it will be good to see them here again.

There are many conventions out there, a lot of competition for the less common fannish buck. Many of them are run by large, impersonal international corporations, and some are run by local hucksters who run small events in small towns scattered everywhere. A few are run by local fans, but they are more likely to fold due to lack of con funds, or as has happened in Toronto lately (SFContario and Fan Events Forum being the latest two), the committee has been overwhelmed by deaths in the family, personal issues and crises, and time crunches. I have also seen articles that predict that the fan-run model of conventions will die soon, and only the big corporations will have the deep pockets to bring in lots of guests. That will be a big portion of our world gone. The idea of a conrunners' guide was always a good one, but many con committees did things differently through the experience of different fans, dealing with the laws of different jurisdictions, and the demands of different fans with different interests.

The list of fanzines 2018 ... There's a couple of titles I haven't seen before, but that's okay. I have enough on my plate right now. Bob Hole has only one zine right now, called *Ayatochtli* and *Bunyip*. I am pleased that there are still people who care to produce a zine for others to read, but more and more those big conventions mentioned earlier promote a fandom composed mostly of passive consumers. The active participants of fandom today may be the last generation of such. I pray I am wrong.

I am thinking of divesting myself of my fanzine collection in order to be more mobile, in case we have to move. We're thinking of it, and may have to do it. Twenty-five or more boxes of fanzines might just slow us down, and we may also have to move into a smaller apartment, too. The only person I can think of who might be willing to take it is Murray Moore.

Ah, you have *Amazing Stories* in the Writers' Markets list. Editor-in-Chief Ira Nayman is a friend, and while I have long ago lost any idea of becoming a

published pro SF writer, I thought my experience as a proofreader and copy editor might be a help to him, so I offered my services, and he said he might take me up on it. Well, he did, and I proofed and edited the second issue, which is currently at the printers. With luck, my name will appear on the masthead, and having contributed at least a little bit to the revival of this hallowed SF magazine gives me a bit of goshwow, something I haven't had in a long time. I like it. And, I suspect I will volunteer to Ira again.

Right now, I am composing this in the waiting room of our local car dealership while we get the winter tires put on the car. Our timing is impeccable; we had our first snow fall of the season this very morning. It's an unpleasant taste of what's to come. Thanks to my tablet and my portable Bluetooth keyboard, I've got lots to do while I wait. Thanks for this issue, and see you with the next one.



Presentations (D. Marshall)

The Faneds

Taral Wayne

I was recently asked about R. Graeme Cameron's short-lived awards for Canadian fanzine activity, the "Fanacs." First of all, I thought it was not a good choice of name, because in a way it was TOO GOOD. Why should a minor award have a much better name than the FAANs? Anyway, Graeme launched the awards and funded them (as far as they were funded at all), and he got to name them.

The first year of the award was kicked off in 2011, and represented the year before. Graeme mandated that they would be presented at the VCon (in Vancouver) in the late Fall, and I cannot say what the turnout was like. There were only a handful of categories -- Best Fanzine, Best Fanwriter, Best Fanartist, Best Letter Hack and a Hall of Fame added later. Unfortunately, the winners were required to print out a copy of their award for themselves, rather than receiving it by mail. I thought that was not a good idea, and could not have saved much more than about \$20 for the entire operating expenses for the award every year, but it surely diminished the impact for anyone receiving it.

At first, only Canadian fans and fanac were included, but during the last two years the nominations were opened to Americans. For one thing, there was never much Canadian fanzine activity (in the old sense), and Graeme decided that the award needed a wider field of options.

The big expense for RGC was the one-time fee to have me create a piece of art to be used as a "certificate" for the winners every year. Unfortunately, Graeme's affairs grew rather messy after 2015, and the 2014 awards were the last. Since the subject came up, I decided to do a little house-cleaning of my file folders, and can post a list of each year's winners, should anyone be curious.

A final note: I made a small, but not quite imperceptible change in the art every year, so that no two years' winners had exactly the same "certificate." As you can see, the choices were eccentric – make no mistake about it, RGC picked them. He chose them to reflect his own perception of Canadian fan history, and how it ought to be seen. As I recall, there was only a ballot for 2013 and 2014. Other than the lists of winners to follow, there isn't much more to be said.



Winners:

2010: Best Fanartist – Taral Wayne. Best Fan Writer – Garth Spencer. Best Fanzine – *Warp* (Cathy Palmer-Lister). Best Letters – Lloyd Penny. Lifetime Achievement – "The Unknown Faned."

2011: Best Fanartist – Scott Patri. Best Fanwriter – Taral Wayne. Best Fanzine – *Swill* (Neil Jamieson Williams). Best Letters – Michael John Bertrand. Hall of Fame – Nils Helmer Frome.

2012: Best Fanartist – Taral Wayne. Best Fan Writer – R. Graeme Cameron. Best Fanzine – *Space Cadet* (R. Graeme Cameron.) Best Letters – Lloyd Penny. Hall of Fame – Leslie A. Croutch.

2013: Best Fanartist – Brad Foster. Best Fanwriter – Taral Wayne. Best Fanzine – *Broken Toys* (Taral Wayne). Best Letters – Brad Foster. Hall of Fame – Fred Hurter Jr.

2014: Best Fanartist – Taral Wayne. Best Fanwriter – Dave Speirs. Best Fanzine – *BCSFazine* (Felicity Walker.) Best Letters – Lloyd Penney. Hall of Fame – Joseph "Beak" Taylor.

Post Script

by R. Graeme Cameron

As I recall, the first awards were by personal fiat in order to get things started. They were just my personal awards after all. But then I opened up things up with a ballot and strove against fannish apathy to obtain voters. That I won

twice in the third year was entirely the result of the open ballot. But, alas, damn few fans voted. On the theory that the majority of readers of Canadian zines were foreigners, I opened up the ballot the last two years to readers of Canadian zines worldwide.

Such was my enthusiasm that I paid to have Eric Chu design a trophy figure, which was then sculpted by Lawrence Prime. Unfortunately, I could never find anyone or any method to replicate it. The idea had been that winners would get both Taral's magnificent certificate and the trophy (a space-suited figure with arm raised blasting off into space with the aid of a rocket pack shaped like an ink pen).

In the end my life went to hell in a hand-basket before I found a way to make the trophies. My subsequent fanac has pretty much dried up for reasons I needn't go into.

On the other hand, I have happily settled into the role of the editor and Publisher of Polar Borealis, a semi-professional magazine available free online. At long last I finally have a hobby which produces results and gives me a sense of accomplishment.

So, the "Fanacs" no longer exist. It was a fun experiment while it lasted, but I have moved on to better things ... better for me, at least!



Robot Man (D. Marshall)

More Materials to Contribute to a Fandom Guide

I am still looking for material on:

- **Awards**
- **Blogs/Vlogs**
- **Comics**
- **Costuming/Cosplay**
- **Fanhistory**
- **Fanzines (beyond eFanzines.com)**
- **Filksong and Filksinging**
- **Gaming / Game Design**
- **Webbing**

APAs:

“Glad to see someone doing this. It would be cool if you included a little history of each apae — most of the extant ones are quite old. *Fancylopedia* 3 has bits.”

(Leah Zeldes, November 3, 2018)

APA50 - Daniel Kresh at apa50officialgargoyle@gmail.com

APA-L, a weekly APA from OE Marty Cantor, 11825 Gilmore St., No. 105, North Hollywood, CA 91606, U.S.A., martyhoohah@sbcglobal.net. (John Hertz, November 14, 2018)

Apaplexy, based in Ottawa, Canada. The Central Mailer is currently Sheila Brown. ([Elizabeth Holden](#), November 3, 2018, and Duncan MacGregor) – contact information requested!

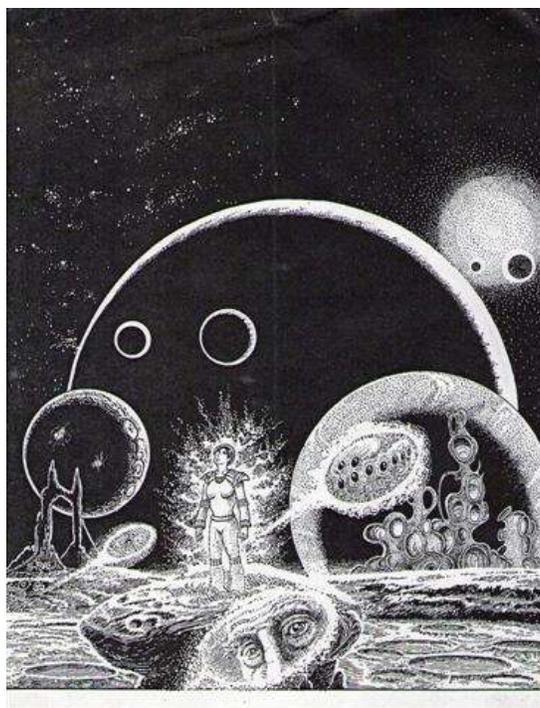
FLAP - D. Gary Grady (Gary@DGaryGrady.com) is OE of FLAP (Fannish Little Amateur Press), which “currently has 15 individuals/couples as members. It's currently a quarterly” ([Joel Zakem](#)). (Also: [Leah A. Zeldes](#), Richard HE Smith)

Interlac “is the first and still running APA dedicated to the Legion of Super-Heroes. We do not have a required subject for zines, and function as a general comics and fannish APA that frequently returns to the subject of the Legion. Mailings are bimonthly on even months: Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, and Dec. We accept hardcopy contributions and collate a physical mailing. Membership is limited to 50 roster slots. Currently 19 members and no waiting list. Applicants for membership must send the leader \$10 to open an account which is used to cover outgoing postage and the general expenses of production. Average size of mailings is 100 + pages. Minimum activity is 4 pages every three mailings (six months). Central mailer is Eric Schultheis: protytwo@gmail.com. Send contributions to 2124 Kittredge St. PMB-J, Berkeley CA 94704.” (Eric Schultheis, December 9, 2018)

LASFAPA - a monthly APA from OE Marty Cantor, 11825 Gilmore St., No. 105, North Hollywood, CA 91606, U.S.A., martyhoohah@sbcglobal.net. (John Hertz, November 14, 2018)

MilwAPA “is a Milwaukee-based regional*, general interest apa with an emphasis on science-fiction fandom. Minac is one page of new material every other month. (*Our current members are all located in southeastern Wisconsin. We have had members from out of state in the past, although they have usually had a Milwaukee connection.) Postal dues are coverage of first-class postage for mailing distys, so about \$3.00 per month. Contact is me, Gregory Rihn, 4718 W Cleveland Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53219, ggrihn@yahoo.com.” (Gregory Rihn, December 9, 2018)

StippleAPA – ask Jeanne Mealy (jmealy-in-mn@comcast.net) who is strongly involved.



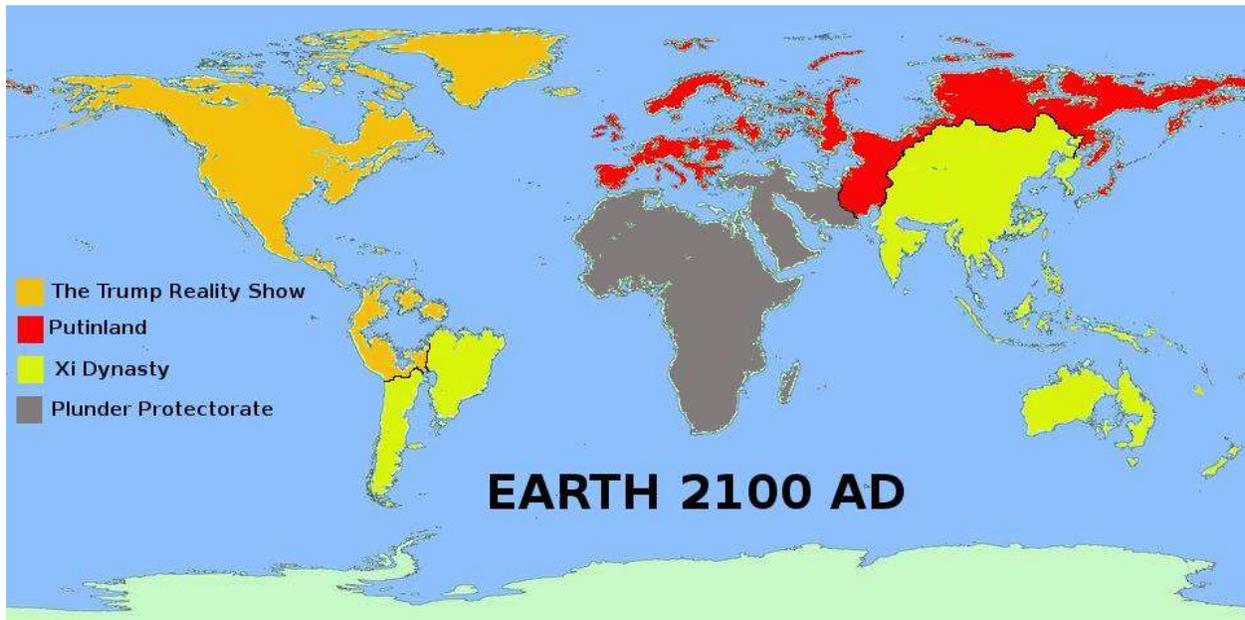
S. Fox

Season's Gripings

Taral Wayne (Dec. 21/18)

Now t'is the season when all you Christmas Haters come out, spewing your party-pooing bile on my harmless feast of nostalgia. I know who you are! You spoilers of the holiday spirit, you despisers of seasonal songs, you denouncers of gift shopping, you traducers of tradition, who respect neither boozy Santas nor left-over turkey. Don't confuse the issue – this has nothing to do with the disputed concept of a god king who ritually dies to redeem mankind's sins. None of that metaphysical stuff is my concern, no more than someone else's belief in Ba'al or Anubis. Christmas, my Christmas, is a secular affair, and attempts to rubbish my Christmas using faulty logic will be met with the contumely that it deserves. I will not allow the one to be conflated with the other without a protest from me. Having clarified the issue of the real Christmas, we may discard the provincial religious observances of unfortunate, earnest believers. Christmas to me is far too important to waste on murky events in the Middle East that may or may not have happened, and rest on highly dubious authority. Without Christmas, and the True Meaning of the Holiday, I would be lost! Without it, there is nothing at all between Hallowe'en and Easter to stave off five months of ennui and desperation!

And don't even get me started on Easter!



Some Fanzines

received in December 2018

Archive #3, An e-zine by Arthur D. Hlavaty, available from hlavaty@panix.com, <https://supergee.dreamwidth.org/>, or <http://www.maroney.org/hlavaty/>. Collecting historical excerpts of Arthur Hlavaty's classic smartassery, ranging from the source of his title "The Diagonal Relationship" (from a C.M. Kornbluth story), through Hlavaty's joke religions that sound chillingly like today's militant socialist or redneck cults, to the "peace dividend" that should have resulted when the Soviet Union fell. My kind of belly laughs.

Askance #45, Edited & published by John Purcell, 3744 Marielene Circle, College Station, TX 77845-3926 USA; askance73@gmail.com. John and Valerie do Europe on their TAFF trip; Armadillocon 40 with 2018 TAFF winner Johan Anglemark; Ian Millsted on Cambridge's responsibility for 20th-century science fiction and fantasy; and above all, a mention of *Parodies Lost & Parodies Regained*, a PDF compilation of filksong and poetry, from a gentleman named Sam Long. Sounds like great fun!

BCSFazine #532, from Felicity Walker (the editor), at felicity4711@gmail.com or Apartment 601, Manhattan Tower, 6611 Cooney Road, Richmond, BC, CANADA V6Y 4C5 (new address). For reasons that escape me although Felicity explained them a couple of times, *BCSFazine* is numbered about 14 months behind its actual production date, so much of the news is, um, "olds". The main

distinction this issue is a review of the latest VCON (Vancouver's general-interest SF convention in the fall).

CyberCozen November 2018, Leybl Botwinik ed., The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy, <http://www.sf-f.org.il>. Media SF news, with Web links; reviews of SF movies and series; and news of an upcoming anthology release.

FANAC Update 7, November 18, 2018. Joe Siclari's update on the FANAC.org Fan History project. Email fanac@fanac.org. I really must talk to Siclari about the pile of Canadian fanhistory I have accumulated.

MT Void #2043, November 30, 2018, edited by Mark Leeper, mleeper@optonline.net, and Evelyn Leeper, eleeper@optonline.net; from the Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society. Lots of ideas! And text! And Letters! And no pictures. Not all of us need pictures.

Origin 10, December 2018, the official publication of the N3F History and Research Bureau. Edited and published by John Thiel, 30 North 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904. Contact *Origin* at kinethiel@mymetronet.net or at street address. More fanhistorians!

The Ottawa SF Statement #477, December 2018, Grant Duff ed., editor@ottawasfs.ca. Monthly newsletter of the Ottawa SF Society. A bit thinner than in previous years, featuring some upcoming astronomical events, recent and upcoming movies, and a calendar of upcoming conventions in the region.

Tightbeam #291, December 2018, an occasional N3F publication. Editors: George Phillies, phillies@4liberty.net, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, and Jon Swartz, jon_swartz@hotmail.com. Reviews of anime, novels, short fiction, and films, relieved with fan art.