

SWILD



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SWILL

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Editorial Of Fanzines, Archives, and Other Things...

James William Neilson

I had planned a rather brief editorial this time around, as the Special Feature in this issue is rather lengthy, centred around this being the twentieth issue of SWILL, and stuff like that. But then, Issue #40 of Fanstuff came out and I decided to devote this editorial to the issues raised in the first half of Fanstuff #40.

First of all I want to thank Arnie for his definition of SF fandom that appears on page 2. This is a brilliant lexiconic model that I really like; it has been created by a well respected member of Traditional fandom and it is non-judgemental. Here it is verbatim...

There's More Than One Kind of Fan

"Fan" is the most treacherous word in Trufandom's dictionary. Its multiple meanings, depending on the context, makes it a guaranteed fire-starter.

Even in our own subculture, relatively few fans puzzle over definitions. Non-fanzine fans are even less likely to have any interest.

The pertinent definitions:

- Definition 1: An enthusiast. Science Fiction and Fantasy are now part of mainstream popular culture. Just about everyone likes it in some form and approximately 80 million Americans identify themselves as "fans."

- Definition 2: A participant in Fandom. There are roughly 250,000 people who engage in some form of activity within the context of Fandom.

- Definition 3: A member of the subculture that is a direct, lineal descendant of the Fandom pioneered by such as Ackerman, Tucker and Speer. Robert Lichtman, the Sage of Fandom, calls this definition "us." Much briefer, true, but liable to more confusion.

They're all "fans," allowing for the context, but they aren't the same. Even if lexiconography is not your favorite pastime, the definitions should prove useful when reading the rest of this stuff.

Definition 3 fans are also known as Traditional fans, Trufans, etc. The majority of people involved in publishing fanzines are Definition 3 fans, though there are Definition 2 fans who are also involved in fanzine publishing, and I would speculate that there are also a scant few Definition 1 fans who may publish fanzines -- though, this activity would tend, if they persist in fanzine publishing, to transform them into either Definition 2 or Definition 3 fandom. There is also a cline or continuum of diversity within the Definitions; high levels of diversity within Definition 1 and Definition 2 and lower levels of diversity within Definition 3. That is expected as Definition 3 defines the sub-subculture of fandom that shares a traditional set of cultural norms and values, with some regional differences.

As for myself, I would place myself as being for the most part a Definition 2 fandom (Graeme would agree with this, though Taral and Lichtman would not), who has also spent about half of my fannish life as a Definition 1 fan. When I am active as a Definition 2 fan, I usually exhibit moderate to high fanac -- during my highest level of activity out in Vancouver, I pubbed fanzines, edited a clubzine, was a member of a sf fan club, did con organising work, panels, and was involved in the Ether Patrol -- (at present I would say low to medium-low fanac), and when I

tire of that, I GAFIate and become a Definition 1 fan. As I have stated previously, I am more a FIJAGDH-guy than a FIAWOL-guy. Perhaps, if my spouse was a Definition 2 fan, that might be different, but she is most certainly a Definition 1 fan. However, I have never been a Definition 3 fan; nor, do I think that I ever will be...

My fanzines are not and never shall be Definite 3 fan fanzines. Within the context of Definition 3 fandom, I am not, nor have I been in the past, fannish enough and I have never demonstrated the traits of a faan. Bottom-line, as stated previously as well, as a fan, my focus has always been upon the genre, and the ideas and concepts raised by the genre. I have never, as a fan, had a primary emphasis upon fandom itself. For example, as a fan, I always viewed faan fiction as boring and a waste of time. I don't read it, ever, as entertainment -- I only read it at present, wearing my academic hat, as part of my research (Sorry folks, it is still not my cup of tea). All of that said, there is nothing wrong (in my opinion) with Definition 2 fan fanzines -- though, I am certain that a zine like SWILL does not warm any hearts within Definition 3 fandom.

Onward...

I had some private email conversations with Graeme after he sent out his Open Letter. In short, I thought it was a great idea and made available what little I still possessed to contribute to the archive. The Open Letter raises many issues, but I would never say that "they've broken" Graeme. I would say that Graeme wrote the letter to vent and to promote the archive. He is not broken, after all, he is now a fandom columnist for Amazing Stories (a far more prestigious gig than being a columnist for SWILL; I really do understand Graeme and support your decision).

Graeme is frustrated in his, and others, lack of success in promoting fanzines to Definition 2 fans. I was on a panel last year with Christopher J. Garcia and Taral about fanzines at SFContario (a literary fan convention) and there was only an audience of maybe eighteen people (not counting Lester Rainsford). If that is a the draw at a con that still attracts some Definition 3 fans, then I am not surprised that the panel

outnumbered the audience at a convention like V-Con. So, how do you promote fanzines? My thoughts are that you don't promote them as being one-and-the-same as Definition 3 fandom (face it, pubbing zines is such cultural meme to Definition 3 fandom, that once someone becomes a member of Definition 3 they will pub or contribute to fanzines). You promote fanzines by placing emphasis on it being unique, time-bound (issues as opposed to continuous), flexible (due to being time-bound you can have one theme this issue and a different, or no theme the next), and fun. A fanzine doesn't have to be a Definition 3 fan activity and it doesn't have to be fannish, but you do have to enjoy publishing your own zine.

Fanzine publishing is less immediate than a blog or a tweet, even for online zines (like this one). The younger the fan the more they are used to immediate responses to their activities -- minutes to hours. They find an interaction rate of days way too slow and would balk at an interaction rate measured in weeks or months. The majority of those under 30 are going to opt for social media oriented modes of interaction for their fanac (unless they are Definition 3 fans, but even here, they would maintain the traditional ways and also engage in the modern ways as well). Both Graeme and Arnie place emphasis on show-not-tell, but with different solutions.

Arnie suggests a hands-on approach that involves participation. In other words, a group activity at a club meeting/party to produce a one-shot, or perhaps a workshop at a 3-day convention that produces an apa-like one-shot. This is a good strategy for "(t)here's nothing like seeing Your Words in Print to spark up interest." I would also recommend using current technology in these activities. While a mimeograph and electric typewriter could attract interest, most of that interest will be for the archaic technology, not for fan publishing. Anyway, however you do it, hands-on participation is a way to attract interest.

Graeme has suggested an expanded fanzine archive that is online. This rather makes sense as a Graeme suggestion, he is one of the preminent fan historians of Canadian fandom and the keeper of the archives of BC fandom. However, I disagree with Arnie; Graeme's suggestion does have merit. For me to visit any archive

in person, it would have to be a major collection, well organised, and contain rare volumes that are only found in this archive. As the goal is to attract fans and interest them in fanzines, making the contents of the archive more accessible is a way to spark interest. It is a more passive solution to the hands-on approach, but it is a solution -- you at least now know that fanzines exist and that they take many forms and styles. Knowing something exists can be a spark to interest and participation. Bill Burns' efanazines site does the same thing, by making current fanzines more accessible and also providing an archive/links to archives.

I also disagree with Arnie that "Graeme Went Wrong". The Canadian Science Fiction Fanzine Archive is an ambitious project that he describes in very excited tones in the Open Letter -- he is in this document preaching to the converted and requesting support and scanned content for the endeavour. Graeme and I have not discussed this in any detail, so it is my opinion only, that it is a passive form of promotion for fanzines. It isn't wrong, it is a source of information, a source of information that may attract some people to consider publishing a fanzine. However, what it really needs is a how to page; show the uninitiated that it is just as easy today to pub a fanzine as it is to pub a fanblog (and far easier to maintain, SWILL had a blog for six months, but it turned out to be too much effort -- pubbing the zine only took up less time). Rather than right or wrong, both approaches -- hands-on show-and-tell and archives of what's-been-done and how-to-do-it-yourself -- are valid. I would also add that Graeme's column on Amazing Stories may also serve to attract increased interest in fanzines.

However, there will not be any renaissance in fanzines or a return to the good old days of 1973 or earlier; fanzines are now a niche within SF fandom rather than being central to it.

Another thing I want to discuss is the lament, mild but there, that Graeme has focused on Canadian fanzine fandom and a Canadian fanzine archive. While there are issues that cross the border entirely or regionally, there are some differences too (and that border is not as non-existent as many Americans claim it to be). Graeme's goal is to create an online archive of Canadian fanzines

and Canadian fan history because, he is a Canadian. Anyway, if there is going to be an archive of Canadian fanzines, who better than a Canadian that is a historian of Canadian fandom. I wouldn't expect the Australians or the Austrians or the French or the Americans to create a definitive archive of Canadian fanzines and fan history. Obviously, it would be best if every national fandom created their own archives that were all linked via an international umbrella site, but you have to start somewhere and if there is going to be a Canadian fanzine archive, it should be compiled by Canadians.

And last, and in my mind, least... The issue of promoting or not promoting Definition 3 fandom, aka traditional fandom, aka Trufen. Obviously, as the editor of SWILL, I agree with Arnie that Definition 3 fandom should not be promoted -- though my reasons for this are, also obviously, different than his. Now, I am just going by my region (southern Ontario) here in Canada -- though I frequently tar and feather all Definition 3 fen everywhere with the same brush (this is SWILL after all) -- but based on what I have experienced over the years in my region of Canada, Definition 3 fandom perhaps deserves to die out and join the choir invisible. Definition 3 fandom cannot grow, because it is exclusive, judgemental, etcetera -- it was that way in the mid-1970s when I was in my teens and it appears to still be the same today. They definitely need to dump the old "fakefan" shit if they want to have any hope of attracting new blood and from what I've seen, they aren't all too interested in bringing in new members. Definition 3 fandom, in my region, is its own worst enemy and a potential albatross for attracting interest in fanzines.

Graeme, discusses (thoroughly and deservedly tolchocks in a SWILL-like fashion) the shortcomings of Definition 3 -- traditional fandom (self-appointed trufandom) -- in Space Cadet #23. He says:

Trufandom has long been described as "the least welcoming fandom."

In all my years of promoting trufandom and seeking converts I have been repeatedly rebuffed by SF fen who adamantly refuse to listen to my pitch; some because their previous experience and contact with trufen have soured them on traditional fandom forever, but in most cases because the one thing they know about us is our reputation, and that alone condemns us.

Collectively we have the reputation of being the biggest assholes on the planet...

Here's why:

All too often our message comes across as:

"Hi there! I see you are into costuming / gaming / comics / filking / model making / convention running / SF movies / SF TV shows / SF novels / SF art / SF whatever... What a dumb piece of shit you are. So passive. So shallow. So stupid. So mundane masquerading as a fan. Why don't you stop being a shithead and become a REAL fan? We're the ONLY fans in the Solar System. THE ONLY LEGITIMATE FANS. Join us. Or be condemned to Hell forever."

And he does go on beautifully thereafter. Graeme and I are largely in strong agreement on these issues. Our only point of difference is that I think that the traditional fen of Toronto have taken exclusivity and assholery to the level of a high art form. Though, that could just be because they are Torontonians, who view Toronto as the centre of the universe (which is incorrect, that point is located on the site of the Albion Hotel in Guelph, Ontario) and the rest of us Canadians are mere peasants from the provinces (isn't that correct, Lester?). Graeme tends to see this as a near universal trait in amongst traditional fen with no major regional differences.

While Arnie may consider me to be a Definition 2 fan (and Taral and Lichtman would classify me as a Definition 1 fan -- at best) Graeme may consider me to be a Definition 3 fan (in some small degree).

And thus, it is revealed at last and the mystery solved... I am a Definition 3 fan, therefore I am a trufan, and thus a supreme asshole and a fuckhead; hence, the publication of SWILL.¹

¹ This would also mean that I must suffer from self-loathing of my wretched trufan fuckheadedness...

Special Feature: The (Nearly) Definitive History of SWILL

James William Neilson

The History

The origins of SWILL lie in a surreal, last minute, idle prank. It was October of 1980 and I was attending York University in Toronto. My old high school friend, Lester Rainsford, was also at York. Another friend of ours from secondary school, Andrew Hoyt, was studying at the University of Ottawa. So, since I had been to Maplecon in Ottawa the year before -- some other friends and I had entered the masquerade as droogs from A Clockwork Orange and won best group costume -- and had a good time; I thought that Lester and Andrew might enjoy attending the convention. Both were science fiction readers, but had never attended a convention nor had shown any interest in fandom.

When Lester found out that this was going to be a science fiction and comic book convention, he initially had cold feet about attending. He said that we should do something about the comic book fans. We bounced around some ideas, but none of them stuck. Then, I showed Lester a "Boycott Chicago in '82" flyer, and he said that we should distribute a boycott flyer at Maplecon III. I told him that that would be pointless, since anybody who would read the flyer would already be attending the convention. His reply was, "Exactly." And thus, days before the convention, Lester and I bashed out the boycott flyer on my aging manual typewriter. The flyer was offensive, outrageously politically incorrect by present standards, with intentional poor grammar, typos, misspellings, and strikeouts. We printed 500 copies and headed off to Ottawa.

At the convention, Andrew and Lester quickly became bored. They found the panels to be dull or stupid, the dealers' room to be overpriced and a waste of time, and the art show to be laughable.

By Saturday morning they were pretending to be sociology graduate students from the University of Toronto gathering initial research on deviant subcultures -- comic book fandom being highly deviant and science fiction fandom simply deviant. Then Andrew noticed that the boycott flyer was creating a stir.

Initially, we were putting out the flyers in piles of twenty. These disappeared quickly, so we started putting them out in piles of ten. These vanished even faster. Andrew and Lester noticed that every time some of the boycott flyers were set out, someone wearing a special coloured badge -- I forget the colour, but it was the colour that indicated that the person was part of the convention committee -- would spirit away the entire pile. And so began a game of cat and mouse.

We started putting out flyers in piles of five, then one. The convention committee eventually stationed somebody to watch the table. Tape was borrowed from the front desk and the flyers were put up in several places on the convention floor and in some of the panel rooms. Now there was some poor sod patrolling the entire convention floor searching for our boycott flyers. We split the remaining flyers and distributed them in various places; underneath other flyers, on the hotel literature and tourist info table, in two locations within the hotel bar, and at various room parties.

When Lester and I got back to Toronto, we discussed putting together a one-shot fanzine for the Worldcon next year in Denver that would be a whole zine of material like the Maplecon Slandersheet. This one-shot was given the provisional title of Up Fandom. November and December came and went as did the semester. Up Fandom sat on the back burner as September 1981 was still far far away. I toyed with the idea of putting out a perzine and Lester perfected his score on Missile Command. After Christmas, we both returned to uni and I attended the monthly Toronto fan gathering/party in January.

It was at this event that I learned that the local powers that be -- the Big Name Fans of Toronto -- were looking for who was responsible for the boycott flyer. It appeared that the Ottawa fan organisation that hosted Maplecon was very upset about the

flyer and that they held OSFiC responsible (well, we did sign the flyer as "The Ontario Science Fiction Club, the motherfuckers"). The Ottawa Science Fiction Society was up in arms, they had threatened (or so it had been rumoured) to sue OSFiC for damages, and other crazy stuff. The Toronto BNFs who hosted this monthly gathering took all of this very seriously. At the January gathering the BNFs were interrogating anyone who had attended Maplecon III in an attempt to find out who did this. Of course, I claimed that I saw nothing, knew nothing, etc. and my old droogs -- who attended the con as Nostromo crew (I think) -- who knew that I was responsible, said nothing.

The next day when I reported this to Lester; who found it to be hilarious. It was insane that OSFS could actually believe that OSFiC actually wrote the Maplecon Slandersheet and even more ridiculous that, even if OSFiC did write it, that OSFS would believe that OSFiC would be stupid enough to sign their name to the flyer. And so, the germ of SWILL was born.

Our first thought was to ramp up the timeframe for Up Fandom so that an ish would be ready in time for the February gathering. But then, I decided that this was just going to be a one-shot to out ourselves for the Maplecon Slandersheet and to give a big one-finger salute to the Toronto BNFs; why waste the zine name Up Fandom?² And so, we named it SWILL. It was eight pages in length (okay, six pages if you don't include the front and back covers) and we printed off maybe 20 copies of the zine (the first print run was on photocopier which was a tad expensive) and 30 copies of the slandersheet, which I brought to the February fan gathering.

Where, the shit hit the fan, so to speak. All the BNFs were very, very angry with me. But they didn't actually say anything to me -- that was how they displayed their displeasure, by no longer speaking to me. Whatever I heard was second or third hand at best. In part, the BNFs of Toronto were relieved to some extent. I wasn't not in the centre of the Toronto fan community and certainly not a traditional fan -- the only fanzines I had pubbed contained mostly original amateur fiction (and one even

² As it would turn out, there never was an Up Fandom zine.

contained some Trek fan fiction) -- and I also associated with known reprobates (such as the droogs) who were card-carrying mediafen (my droogs did actually also read SF literature, but were very interested in media SF - two of them did end up working in the industry). Nevertheless, the faanish members of the Toronto community now declared me an "evil one" -- they were angry, they disapproved, they would no longer talk to me, but they didn't ban me from attending future monthly gatherings.

So, I enlisted the facilities of a friend in Guelph who had an electrostenciler and a mimeograph to print a second run of issue #1 and the remaining Ontario issues of SWILL; mimeograph was cheaper and gave SWILL that grunge look that so befitted it. And, based upon the BNF reaction, we decided to do a second issue of SWILL.

Issues #1 through #4 were printed in Ontario and came out regularly one a month for February through May. Then two things happened: I moved to Vancouver and there was a Canada Post strike. I moved to Vancouver in late May, arriving there just in time for V-Con with a bundle of SWILLs. By the time I had fully settled in and sent out the call, by mail, to get Lester and Andrew to write some material for the next issue, there was only one or two weeks left before Canada Post went on strike on June 30th. The strike lasted until August 10th and so, there was no SWILL published.

Before moving to Vancouver, the plan was that there would be a SWILL East and a SWILL West; Lester (as Arne Hannover) would edit SWILL East and I would edit SWILL West. Both SWILLs would share some content -- my editorials would be reprinted as a column in SWILL East and Lester's column in SWILL West would be the editorial in SWILL East. Looking back, this was a rather French organisational design that probably would have failed in execution. And then, there was the postal strike and BeSwill.

Steve Vano (Stephano) had already begun publication of his own version of SWILL, BeSwill in April and by the time I left the province there was a new issue every week. BeSwill really had a very different tone to SWILL. Yes, it was obnoxious; yes, it was crude; however, it really was not a SF fanzine in any way shape

or form. That is because, at the time, Steve really wasn't much of a science fiction genre consumer; he was more of a gamer. So in reading BeSwill one notices this, that there is a distinct lack of knowledge of the genre that the zine is supposedly critical of and even less knowledge regarding fandom. BeSwill continued during the summer of 1981 and disappeared in the autumn of that year.

In late August, I published a Worldcon Special Edition of SWILL (which it would appear that I designated as whole number 5) that we will now refer to as SWILL #4.5 and was a very short issue; just a front cover, a back cover, an editorial, and a reprint of The American Weigh. I don't know how many copies I printed, but I probably made at least 100 that I brought to Denver along with copies of SWILL #1 through #4. I do recall that people were uncertain as to what to make of this fanzine in the Fanzine room at the Worldcon. With hope, someone out there still has a copy of the Wordcon Special Edition -- and if they do, would you please scan me a pdf...

In late September I published SWILL #5 and in late November (maybe early December) I published SWILL #6. Both Lester and Andrew were getting too busy to supply me with regular material. The major reason for SWILL -- ticking off the Toronto BNFs -- had faded as I no longer lived in Toronto. There were actually people who liked SWILL in Vancouver and I was getting more and more involved in the anti-arms race peace movement and the anarchist community to spend time on SWILL. The drive and the desire had faded. As of February 1982, SWILL was no more.

In 1984 I published three issues of a fanzine called Daughter of Swill, Mother of Scum. This magazine had some of the same spirit that was in Swill, but it was also quite different. Each issue was an essay on a single topic; one on fandom and fascism, one on the science fiction of winnable nuclear war, and one on the lack of alien aliens in science fiction. These were distributed to a select group of friends. Of these three issues, the one on science fiction aliens was the best. Again, no known copies of this zine -- however, if you are reading this and do own a copy, please scan it and send me the pdf.

In 1991, I wrote the fanzine Scum. It had a series of essays in it on various topics about the genre and one on fandom. Some reprints of old SWILL columns, such as Lester Rainsford's rant against Libertarian Party science fiction, The Average SF Fan article, and others... Also, there was some material that had been written for SWILL by Hoyt and Rainsford, but never published. I wrote Scum, but I never printed it off and sent it out. It and all the SWILL related things went into a box in the basement, where it would languish until a persistent, but undetected, basement leak in that area reduced the SWILL box and some of my wife's boxes of collected cooking magazines into a mass of black mould that had to be properly disposed of.

In 2001, Swill Online was published as a website (still there at http://members.tripod.com/swill_2001/). I had hoped that Lester and Hoyt would write something for the website, but they didn't. Swill Online has been designated as SWILL #7. Swill Online made the first use of the pudmonkey font as the official SWILL font (no longer supported on the original tripod site). About 20 copies of SWILL #7 were printed and set out on the fan table at Ad Astra 2001. These print copies also contained a back cover that was a boycott Ad Astra 2001 flyer. Unfortunately, a copy of that flyer is no longer in my possession, but it had a similar tone to the Maplecon Slandersheet.

In 2011, I revived SWILL as a fanzine. This is our thirteenth issue since the revival began. SWILL won the 2011 Elron Award for Worst Fanzine and it won the 2011 Faned Award for Best Fanzine. SWILL continues to be published...

SWILL Contributors

Neil Jamieson-Williams (Neil Williams)
James William Neilson
Neil Williams
Vladimir Schnerd
unsigned

Lester Rainsford
Illy Litrato
P. I. Leninski
V. I. Lenininsky
Alicia Longspear
Scrotum the Unbathed
Arne Hannover

Andrew Hoyt
Tim Parker
Count Eric von Schicklegruber III
David White
Reginold Planetage

Steve Vano
Stephano
J.R.
Ruby Beroach

Pete Roberts
A Science Fiction fan
G. O. Dowright
Private Parts

J. S. Goobly
Neil Williams & Lester Rainsford

Reverend B. Jeramiha Jones
Neil Williams & Lester Rainsford

Scrotum the Unwashed
a York University English Literature Professor

Rainbow and Kurt Kohl
themselves

SWILL Issues

February 1981 SWILL #1

Cover Art: Neil Jamieson-Williams this was a badly drawn self caricature of Neil holding a bottle of beer in his left hand and a cigarette, while giving "the finger" with his right (the

"stubby" beer bottle is not well drawn and the perspective is off so it actually looks like a pill bottle). Neil is wearing a T-shirt that says, UP FANDOM - the originally planned zine title for this intended one-shot. Title composed of punk-style newspaper headline cut-out letters. Editorial by Neil; article by Neil called MediaFen Suck; Pissing on a Pile of Old Amazings by Lester Rainsford; Fun and Games (Thrash the Trekkie) written by Scrotum the Unbathed and reviewed by Neil and Steve Vano; a reprint of the Maplecon Slandersheet; some fake LoCs; and the back cover - same as the front cover.

March 1981 SWILL #2

Cover Art: Neil Jamieson-Williams and Lester Rainsford - depicts three piles of shit, the one in the foreground labelled "Fandom" with lots of flies circling around it (preferred by more flies than other forms of shit). Editorial by Reverend B. Jeramiha Jones on smut in SF and SF fandom; an article by Jamieson-Williams on Fen Art; Pissing on a Pile of Old Amazings attacks cigarette smoking and the discipline of Chemistry; article by J. S. Goobly titled The Average SF Fan (the infamous fat fan article); article by Jamieson-Williams titled They Space Tribbles, Don't They advocating the death of OSFiC; the very first Stephano My Fame strip; P. I. Leninski The American Weigh: Or, A Gram of Brains is Worth a Pound of Shit which attacks Libertarian Party SF, Libertarian Party SF Fandom, and some of the determinist claims made by the political philosophy of the Libertarian Party; actual real LoCs - only one is semi-fake which is a SWILL writer to writer response; back cover that proclaims that Physics Rules OK.

April 1981 SWILL #3

Cover Art: Kevin Davies - depicts Darth Vader in the Death Star trash compactor reading SWILL #2. Title is also by Davies and would become the standard SWILL masthead. Editorial by Jamieson-Williams on Del Rey Books advocating a boycott for the following reasons: classic reprints are overpriced, new authors are insipid, but most of all for the "self-destruct book" - Del Rey (at the time and least for the books shipped to Canada) was using a substandard adhesive for binding its paperbacks so that

the pages would fall out as you read the book. Pissing on a Pile of Old Amazings (Rainsford) discusses the lack of original ideas in science fiction. Articles by Alicia Longspear, G. O. Dowright, Count Eric von Schicklegruber III, and Illy Litrato. Endnote editorial about the purpose of Swill - Jamieson-Williams denies that the purpose is to be nasty and obnoxious for the sake of being nasty and obnoxious - is to offer critique to both science fiction & science fiction fandom, albeit in a manner that is often nasty and obnoxious but not without humour. Back cover by Rainsford that is part of a SWILL contest.

May 1981 SWILL #4

Cover Art: Jamieson-Williams - "No Name" cover based upon Loblaws No Name house brand of the time: 1 SWILL 12 GRAMS NEW. Editorial by Jamieson-Williams on the disconnect between the future imagined by SF fans of the 1930s and 1940s and the world of 1981 (no World Union, no abolition of war, no fair redistribution of resources, no real conquest of space). Pissing on a Pile of Old Amazings (Rainsford) discussed the TTC and cycling in the Caledon Hills. Hoyt as himself bemoans the fact that the science fiction section is filled with Star Trek and Star Wars and other television and movie tie-ins but little real SF. Science or Fiction by Steve Vano. Twinkle Twinkle Little Laser by Count Eric von Schicklegruber III defends the discipline of chemistry as being as important as and more relevant to the average person than physics. Review articles by Stephano and Illy Litrato, Marginal Phun by J.R., LoCs, and an Endnote by Jamieson-Williams. In the Endnote there is the announcement that there would be a Swill East and Swill West - Jamieson-Williams was moving to Vancouver. Arne Hanover (Rainsford) was to head up Swill East while Jamieson-Williams would edit Swill. Back cover by Jamieson-Williams

August 1981 SWILL #4.5 WORLDCON SPECIAL EDITION

Cover Art: unknown (would have used the Davies masthead and may have been a reprint of the issue #3 cover art). Editorial by Jamieson-Williams that argued that the Worldcon should be called the Americancon - the convention had a mostly US focus with few international fans attending. Furthermore, at the time, only a

single Worldcon had taken place in a non-English speaking country. I also viciously trashed the Baltimore in '83 bid as I was a supporter of the Australian bid. Reprint of The American Weigh: A Gram of Brains is Worth a Pound of Shit. Most of this print run was distributed at the 1981 Worldcon in Denver and the remainder in Vancouver. Again, I have no copy of this issue and I am going entirely on collective recall.

September 1981 SWILL #5

Cover Art: Vaughan Fraser - shows an alien sitting on a toilet, every sheet of toilet tissue is labelled Swill. Editorial by Jamieson-Williams Viva, Maplecon that illuminates the relationship between Maplecon and SWILL -- Maplecon III being the catalyst for SWILL - and some of the early history of SWILL (this editorial was a primary source for the early history discussed in this article). Jamieson-Williams also does extend an olive branch of sorts to Maplecon 4 as they are no longer also a comic con and have returned to being a SF fan convention. There is a column by White thrashing tween and teen fans (most of whom are mediafen), a column by Hoyt on Star Wars, a book review column by Reginold Planetage about a fictitious book. Some LoCs from Ruby Beroach, a new cartoon by Jamieson-Williams (Star Captain Bruce), an endnote (sort of) titled After the "Worldcon" that takes back the nasty things said about the Baltimore bid (which actually won) and restates that the rest of his argument remains sound and stands. The back cover is a reprint of Maplecon Slandersheet.

November 1981 SWILL #6

Cover Art: Unknown. No copies of this issue remain, so this is all recall - as good as that is. I know that I brought some home with me for Christmas and gave a copy of this issue to Kevin Davies at a party and I remember that he wanted me to stop using the SWILL "masthead" that he created for the SWILL #3 cover and to stop crediting him in the zine (Kevin was starting to get some decent contract work as a SF & F artist and no longer wanted any association with a zine such as SWILL). Kevin also criticised my own strips - Star Captain Bruce - as being shit. I know that the issue he was talking about wasn't issue #5 as there were at least two Star Captain Bruce strips in the issue. As for what the rest

of the content was in this issue; I have no recall. This was the final issue of the original SWILL.

February 2001 SWILL #7 Swill Online

For the twentieth anniversary of SWILL I created a website called Swill Online. Cover Art: by Jamieson-Williams (a cut and paste photoshopped image of a voodoo doll wearing a propeller beanie with R.I.P. written on it and a knife through the heart labelled "Fandom"). An editorial by Jamieson-Williams on why create Swill Online - to tease fandom. The State of the Genre states that it is very healthy thank you very much so stop whining and complaining. Is There Anything Unique About Fandom argues that there isn't. A Brief History of Swill is a partially correct and partially erroneous as it was written entirely on recall sans any primary source documents. In the Endnote Jamieson-Williams states that the site would be updated irregularly over the year and hoped that some of the old SWILL columnists and contributors would send in some material. They didn't and thus the site was never updated.

SWILL @ 30 SWILL #8 through #12 2011/2012

When I revived SWILL as an online fanzine, my original plan was that it would be a continuous issue, and that new content would just be added to the zine in almost a blog-like fashion. But after the launch of the fanzine and February I started to receive some LoCs and thus the only update to the very original issue #8 was a new column Flogging a Dead Trekkie where I ditched the original concept and went back to the traditional fanzine format of individual issues. Cover Art: A man in a chemical suit wearing a bowler hat sitting on the steps leading into some sort of containment area, with an umbrella tucked under his left arm and an open 650 ml bottle of beer in his hand. I used tweaked the original picture to make the man look more droog-like and make the umbrella sort-of look like a willy wacker and performed further modification on the photo. This cover art was then colourised for each season. Lester Rainsford rejoined SWILL for issue #11.

SWILL #13 through #17 2012/2013

The SWILL @ 30 masthead is dropped and replaced with the original masthead from issue #1. Cover Art: Jamieson-Williams as Anti-fan (who oddly enough looks kind of like Guy Fawkes) holding a lit 19th Century spherical bomb. Again distorted for each issue to indicate the season.

SWILL #18 through #22 2013/2014

Original Issue #1 masthead remains. Cover Art: the original cover art of Sirius #1 with Jamieson-Williams face photoshopped in. Again, with modification representing each season. Back cover is a photo of Jamieson-Williams in 1980 giving his old pal Fritz a mild tolchoc; with minor distortion effects for each issue.

And that, to date, is the (nearly) definitive history of SWILL.

Thrashing Trufen: Traditional Fan "Exchange Behaviour"

James William Neilson

Traditional fan when they gather, in small groups at literary SF cons, senior's centres, and long-term care facilities, wax near poetic about the "exchange culture" or the "exchange behaviour" of traditional fandom. Then, they either launch into nostalgia about the "good, old days" or into diatribe about how this subcultural trait is lost on the sloth-brained "fakefans" (everyone who is not them) of today. So what was this "exchange behaviour" anyway?

Well, I cannot really speak of this from experience -- I'm too young; believe it or not. I do vaguely recall from my teens when I went down to Toronto to attend OSFiC meetings that it appeared to be something like this... A segment of the literary fan community, almost all, if not all, of the members being involved in fanzines, who formed a close-knit sub-community. Within that sub-community the members exchanged items of value or of fannish value; artwork created by members, writing created by members, books, labour, resources (mimeograph machines, stencils, etc.), expenses (collectively or co-operatively sharing the expenses of fanzine publishing, travel to and from conventions, crash space at conventions, etc.), and a system of general reciprocity (sharing costs of going out to dinner as a group, spotting members when they were short of funds, and other forms of trade and exchange). Kind of like a slum shack from the 1940s and 1950s without all the members living in the same place of residence. Within this sub-community, fans shared, traded, exchanged with little or no monetary transaction taking place.

This has, in the past (and maybe still today), resulted in traditional fans shitting on fans turned pro or semi-pro for now charging for their work that had once been freely exchanged. They would dis these people as being unfannish, say that they had never been true fans, just "fake fans" masquerading as fans, and so on. They would also engage in behaviour that could be classed as intellectual property theft (and was) that they would justify as being their fannish right as trufen to do. This activity didn't endear them to many writers and artists; Harlan Ellison

has been very vocal about this over the decades (but then, what hasn't he been very vocal about...).

Anyway, this exchange behaviour was very closely tied to fanzine publishing, local clubs being the foci of fan activity, and so on. With the decline of fanzines being central to SF fandom, beginning in the late 1990s, this has resulted in a decline of exchange behaviour in fandom. It really is only practiced within fanzine fandom, and only within the traditional fandom segment (albeit a large one) of fanzine fandom. That's because, in the old days, it was relatively expensive to produce a fanzine. There was the cost of the paper, the mimeograph stencils, the ink, the postage -- it was a commitment to publish a fanzine. You were making a commitment to the SF fan subculture and paying for it out of pocket. It costs nothing (provided that you are doing so electronically) to publish a fanzine today, other than your time and labour. That old level of commitment is absent as is the need to share the burden of costs. And hardly anyone still published fanzines. The traditional fan exchange behaviour is slowly dwindling toward extinction.

However, I am uncertain as to whether or not I will mourn its loss. Just as I don't mourn the loss of rotary dial phones, black and white CRT television, and 8-track tape... It is something from another time and that time has passed.

Pissing on a Pile of Old Amazings

...a modest column by Lester Kinsford

Newsflash! This just in! Swill is a menace! Watch out for Swill!@ Swill will follow you home. Swill will disparage your cat, kick your ass, and drink your beer. Swill dispatches its myriad Pudmonkey minions to harass and appall peaceful happy zine publishers. Swill is a bully!!!

Well, no. Swill is a zine, not google, and even google can't do that. "Bully" is a popular term these days, and like many popular terms it's grossly misused.

Swill is a punk zine-, okay? It's going to be obnoxious and in your face and generally have an attitude. Lester thinks that Swill should be politically incorrect, only not in the way the Baen's Bar posters are politically incorrect. Swill is politically incorrect in the correct way! Ha, take that!

Truth to tell, Lester is a little relieved that readers found Swill obnoxious enough to mischaracterize it as a bully. Lester has a fear that Swill is not obnoxious enough. That it's really white middle-class pseudo-punk work. That a real punk would spit in the face of Swill, probably transmitting a number of interesting and undesirable diseases. So being called a "bully" is okay in Lester's books.

Now, come here, give Lester your lunch, and bend over for your daily bare knuckle scalp ~~massakege~~ massage, kid.

Elsewhere and a few issues ago, Lloyd P. opined that he preferred the hard galaxy-smashing stuff of the '60s and '70s, and found ~~their~~ that tech "harder" than today's nanotech etc. Sorry Lloyd, that's bunk.

Not that today's nanotech is particularly hard, but the galaxy smashing stuff in the '60s was about as hard as the latest Metrcedeys Lackey book, which is not hard at all. Lester has been increasingly pondering some of the hidden un-hardness of the tech from those days (and in today's SF too, of course). To do galaxy-

Osmashing (or spanning) you need starships with FTL drive. Well, hello not-hard handwavium! Ciao, bolonium!

Here are a couple of things that have Lester going "hmm".

1. Energy and fuel. Even assuming that a true FTL drive is possible, how can it take so little fuel that it seems no more onerous to power an FTL starship than it is to drive your '67 Chev Bieseyne Biscayne to the new plaza with the shiny K-Mart? The answer is, the fuel and energy needs are blithely ignored, in the interests of writing a story where shipping mangoes from Procyon to Betelgeuse makes some kind of economic sense.

Lester has a story idea here. Suppose FTL travel was feasible, actually possible, but as the ship went to FTL ~~tax~~ travel, the drive gave off enough hard radiation to sterilize the system it was leaving? Kind of a nice gamma-ray burst. Maybe this has been written as a story, in which case Lester would place it in the early 1970-s when all was gloom and we suck.

2. Ever wonder why the USS Enterprise pulls out of orbit before going to warp drive? Why the average SF starship needs to "get out of the gravity well" before going to hyperspace? Why not depart from low orbit, or in fact from the comfort of your living room?

Imagine a story written in ~~1995~~ 1885 about the exciting world of air travel in the future. To fly from Toronto to London (England), everyone boards the magnificent airplane, which is of course a flying boat, in Toronto harbour. The airplane motors down the length of Lake Ontario on its lake drive, and down the St. Lawrence to somewhere close to Newfoundland. Finally the magnificent air driver are turned on, and the flying boat launches into the air. For, of course, airplanes can only fly over the ocean.

See what's been done there? Instead of beinb packed on a small metal tube for a short period of time, staring at the dismally slow progress shown on the tiny screen in front of you, there's a chance for intrigue and character, what with the grizzled air captain, the sinister and scheming first mate, and the veteran air flyer hand with the parrot on her shoulder.

The whole "got to get away from planets for a distance" does the same thing for interstellar travel. It's all bolonium, but bolonium that's handy for the story. You can have your grizzled space captain with the tan from a thousand ~~south-sea-ports~~ suns, the sinister and scheming first mate, and the veteran space hand with the parrot on her shoulder. Arr, now we be talking good pulp fiction!

Lester has the theory that this model of interstellar travel really was the result of World War II. The US campaign through the South Pacific took a lot of SF writers on a trip to exotic hard-to-reach locations, but not impossible-to-reach locations. Sturgeon's "Killdozer" is based directly on his war experience, and James Schmitz was down there during the war too. Lester considers this to be adequate proof of his theory.

On Lester's to be re-read pile is The Last Heathen which describes a quest to find clarify some mysterious history from the 1800s in the South Pacific. While the writing isn't Vancean, the characters and backgrounds could be from a picaresque Vance novel. And Jack Vance was in the merchant marine in World War II. QWQED.

Hey, punk puke, where's the Oreo cookies in your lunch? Ya holding out on Lester? C'mere! Now!! Give 'em over and Lester will only beat you up a bit.

Flogging a Dead Trekkie:

Violating the ~~Taboos~~ Norms of Science Fiction

Part 4 of 8 – Unaccepted Mores

James William Neilson

Malzberg's Taboos of Science Fiction or in my terminology, Norm Violations. These are story concepts and/or plots that if written -- if the norms are violated -- are unpublishable; no professional editor in the genre will touch these stories with a three-metre pole, and certainly would never, ever publish them.

NORM VIOLATION THREE: Unaccepted Mores

"Science fiction which implies that contemporary accepted mores of sexuality, socioeconomics, or familial patterning might be corrupting, dangerous, or destructive."

In other words, science fiction that is critical of our present socio-cultural norms and values; even worse, those norms and values that we have attached a strong ethical and/or moral perception upon.³ In other words, norm violations that actually may be societal taboos.

So what would be a violation of mores or taboos regarding sexuality in today's society? Depends on which society and what segment of that society. The old ones for our society, say back in 1980 when Malzberg wrote the 7 "taboos" of science fiction, would have been homosexuality, bisexuality, sadomasochism, bondage, and the like. These forms of sexual behaviour in

³ That's what makes them mores as opposed to just norms and values, and a culture's most strongly held mores are also known as taboos.

contemporary Western society are either accepted (e.g. homosexuality and bisexuality) or tolerated to some degree provided that those involved are consenting adults. Violations in this regard are still viewed as taboos within certain segments of Western society, but these segments do not represent the majority any longer. Present taboos would when there is not consent or when the sexual behaviour involves adults and minors (in particular involving adults and minors in a relationship that is incest). That said, keep in mind that some of the minority segments within Western society that still consider homosexuality and bisexuality to be a taboo may not have a prohibition regarding adults and minors (including incest) - fundamentalist Mormons for example. Also, the definition of incest is also cultural; there are seven different systems of determining kinship that are practiced world-wide (each with differing determinates of what is incest and what is not). Marrying your Mother's Brother's Daughter is considered incest in our system, but would be the ideal marriage partner (i.e. allowed and encouraged) in another. Bottom line; what is a sexual taboo today and can we make sweeping generalisations for humankind as to what is and is not a sexual taboo. If it is not considered normative by the majority in Western society, it can still be viewed as at least a more violation should it appear in a story.

Question is; would this be sufficient to make the story unsalable? Maybe, or maybe not - it all depends on how strong the violation is and the tastes of the particular editor. I would hazard the speculation that if the story is well written, doesn't violate any of the other norms of science fiction, and provides a rationale as to why the fictitious society/alien species practices the particular violate of accepted mores, that the story would find a home somewhere in today's market.

Similar for familial patterns in a SF story. A lot has changed since 1980, same-sex marriage, single parenting, blended families, and so on. Living common-law was still not viewed as being normal in 1980, though it was, for most, not a violation of accepted mores; today, it is normative in our society. However, some things have not changed - few advocate crèche-rearing of children and those who advocate this are considered to be in violation of society's mires. Nevertheless, if you can write a

great story and provide rationale as to why that society practices crèche-rearing of children, you can probably sell it.

One violation that has closed up from 1980 is violating socioeconomic mores; in particular any portrayal of a future society that is socialist or practices state socialism (e.g. the former Soviet Union). While the first two violations of accepted mores would have been a big problem in 1980, violating socioeconomic mores would have been an easier sell. After all, the alternative existed in the real world in the form of the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Republic of China. Writing stories where these forms of socioeconomics existed did not appear far-fetched or in violation (so long as the state socialists were the bad guys or if there was also societies that practiced capitalism). You would have been in violation of mores if you made the state socialists the good guys or if you used Marxist theory to demonstrate that the collapse of capitalism was inevitable. However, several US writers in the 1970s and up to the late 1980s were able to successfully violate this more in their fiction.

Since the Fall of the Soviet Union and the restructuring of China's economy to be mostly capitalist, any form of socialism is out in science fiction - in particular in the USA. The dominant view is that socialism, in any form, is a failed system that has been discredited and therefore has no place in any story set in the future; the use of socialism, especially state socialism, is viewed as a departure from realism and thus places the story on the borderland of fantasy, thus unsalable. This is different outside of the USA market to a greater or lesser degree. Essentially, the contemporary more is don't depict any type of socialist or anarchist society (unless it is an anarcho-capitalist society) if you want to sell your work in the American market.

However, you are permitted to write that secret societies, people operating in the black branches of government and/or industry, and so on are a menace or a threat in USA science fiction. Here, the good and wholesome free-enterprise capitalist system has been co-opted by a hidden elite and corrupted; so long as your hero(ine) intends to restore a nice, pure, democratic, free-

enterprise capitalist system at the end of your tale. Then, you are good to go.

It is still heretical in the American SF market to claim that our current Western capitalist economic system - that claims that it is possible to have infinite growth within a closed and finite system and which depends on that growth to sustain itself - is unsustainable. Fact of the matter is, that without change and without "magic box" fully mature nanotechnology and/or bioengineering and/or AI arriving at the eleventh hour over the next 50 years, our current economic system will collapse. It is already under severe strain - the 2008 Financial Meltdown and Great Recession is still an ongoing "hot potato" bumping about in the pinball machine of the global economy; the root causes of the Meltdown were not resolved or fixed, they just put on a band-aid.

As for my story? Well actually one could say that Norm Violation One Story also violates Norm Three; Taking Care of Business is currently still out at Market #2. FYI, Making Stones is now at Market #4. My actual story that is the Norm Violation Three Story is a parallel universe tale that is in the slushpile of Market #1 and has the title Back in the USSR. Oh, by the way, When I say Story X is out at Market #1, I mean Market #1 for that particular story (Their Market #1 could easily be Market #6 for a different story).

Note to prospective editors: Not that I think any of you actually read SWILL, but who knows. I just want to state that, to the best of my abilities, these pieces of fiction are being written with serious intent - this is not a lark (otherwise, I would have ground out some shit and sent all seven out at once). Till next time...

Scribbling on the Bog Walls

Letters of Comment

James William Neilson

As I write this, there is only a single LoC this time around (yet again, from the usual suspect). My comments are, of course, in glorious pudmonkey.

1706-24 Eva Rd.
Etobicoke, ON
M9C 2B2

October 17, 2013

Dear Jim:

Thank you for Swill 19, and time to respond to it. I know these don't come out very often, but I am catching up with the zines I have, and might soon be totally caught up as long as I can write one a day.

We are all consumers to one degree or another, but more and more, I see people writing about the actors they met, the autographs they got, and not much more. We are being conditioned to become passive consumers rather than active creators. It will be interesting to see what happens to that current under-30 segment of fandom creating their own geek culture conventions as time goes on. They create their own version of fandom, just as we did.

Time will indeed tell. All that is certain is that the version of fandom that the under-30s will create will be nothing like old traditional fandom.

As for fanzine fandom, they still demand a certain level of trufannishness, one I am slowly but surely realizing as subjective and somewhat irrelevant. I have lost some face in

their eyes as I look at other avenues of fandom, like steampunk, and even new fandoms, such as that being created around the popular Murdoch Mysteries show. (Already, MM fandom is starting to resemble the original Trek fandoms, as middle-aged fangirls squee over anything Yannick Bisson might say or do, and tell everyone what they'd like to physically do to him. Also, we have one member of this fandom who is making some of the cast and crew uncomfortable with her near-constant presence at shoots; we easily recognize her as the obsessed fan.)

The odd thing is that I really do believe that fanzines could have a larger niche within fandom; the biggest obstacle to fanzines is that most fans who aren't involved in fanzines viewed them (rightly or wrongly) as being one-and-the-same as being involved in traditional fandom. SWILL is not a traditional fandom sort of fanzine. And a fanzine doesn't have to be a traditional fandom sort of fanzine or buy into that sub-segment of the SF fan subculture. Now steampunk zines; I see that as a good fit to the sub-genre -- up to and including the printing of the zine on paper and mailing it out.

I never was a fanboy, and could never understand that behaviour that colours part of mediafandom. Then, as my wife (a stage actor) has noticed I don't usually remember the actors names in a film or television programme; just the character names, the plotline, arcs, and maybe the producers. I like media SF, but not to the point that I lift the actors, writers, etc to demi-god status.

I recognize myself in your description of the fannish fan, but as said above, I see it as increasingly irrelevant, especially as the seniors in this category reach their 70s and 80s. I hit a few BBSs in my time, and they were fun. Same with UseNet groups, and they have died out, I think. The same is happening with Yahoo! and Google Groups. I am looking a little further afield, and finding that there are a few steampunk zines, and I am trying my

best to respond to those zines, usually produced by people who are further into this interest than I am. Literary and fanzine fandoms indeed need to get over themselves and say they are no longer in the minority. The results of this year's Hugo awards made that abundantly clear.

I think you actually mean no longer in the majority; and they are not. Yes; though I have changed the definition set once again. However, this time I am fully drawing upon that of native knowledge on the part of Arnie and Graeme. This is what I am going to remain with, except that I will keep the category of genre consumer (there are many people out there that consumer SF & F regularly but do not identify themselves as fans) while realising that the line between a Definition 1 fan and a genre consumer can be very blurred. Definition 3 fans -- traditional fans -- is a really a niche fandom, and a small one at that. All Definition 3 fans are fannish (many of them are faannish) and there are many segments within Definition 2 fandom who are fannish, but not in the manner accepted by Definition 3 fans. Bottom line is that fandom changes over time...

I don't think SFContario wants to be a big convention, but if it does want to expand a little, it will have to find a bigger hotel. Toronto has lots of big hotels and little hotels, but not much in between.

I agree. I like this con a lot for its size and scope and hope that it can remain close to what it currently is.

My loc...my job hunt continues yet. I know how difficult it is for anyone over 50 to get work, but I didn't know it was this bad. I found out the province has made getting their general ID card easier to get, but it is still \$35, and must be renewed every five years.

Again, good luck in your quest...

I had thought that The Tcon Society would be staging Reversed Polarity, and then going on to other projects, but it doesn't look like it. Rumour has it it will simply shut down its operations. I hope that's wrong, I think a smaller event could work, and people are very much missing Polaris; there's a big gap on the July calendar, and I am surprised no one's tried to fill it yet.

I have heard the same rumour. I have taken TCON to task (mildly – as, in a way, I don't really care) in my Endnote. Now I realise that you do care, you two used to be involved in con-running for this convention, correct? For me, the con is of minor interest, as I am still a literary fan first and as said above, I don't get into all that actor worship, etc.

Time to wrap, it's close to lunch. Take it easy, and see you at SFContario 4. Thanks for the heads up at your party...

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

See you at SFContario :)

Endnote: Much Ado About Nothing

TCON

James William Neilson

According to rumour, Reversed Polarity will be the last convention organised by the TCON Promotional Society. They are simply going to roll over and die in response to increased competition from Fan Expo and the fragmentation of fandom. This is, of course, their choice to make; I just don't think it is a good one.

Their reasons are:

- Increased competition from FanExpo events that can pull in bigger name stars that TCON can afford to do
- Increased difficulty in bringing in convention volunteers to assist in running the convention
- Increased competition from small fan-run conventions -- many of these aimed at the younger SF & F audience
- Shift in fan attitudes toward fan-run media conventions

These are all reasons to reconsider what you have been doing and make changes; they are not reasons for voluntary euthanasia.

In this time, when there is a major transition going on in fandom, one of the options is to put on a smaller convention (not an uber-relaxicon like Polar Chill). There is definitely a market in Toronto for a smaller fan-run media SF convention. It is time to re-think the convention, to reach out to those younger fans with programming and events that they are interested in, to change the way things have always been done. A convention model that worked well a decade or more ago will need to be adjusted for the present.

But, maybe the TCON executive IS making the right decision. Perhaps they are not equipped to transform the way they do

conventions. And if they are unable or incapable of change, then now is indeed the time to call it a wrap and fade to black.

Pith Helmet and Propeller Beanie Tour

The face-to-face participant observation portion of the research project is starting to wind down (PO will continue via the internet, etc.). Here are the final tentative tour dates as they currently stand...

November 2013 SFCOntario 4 -- Toronto

August 2014 Loncon 3 -- London, UK

November 2014 SFCOntario 5 -- Toronto

