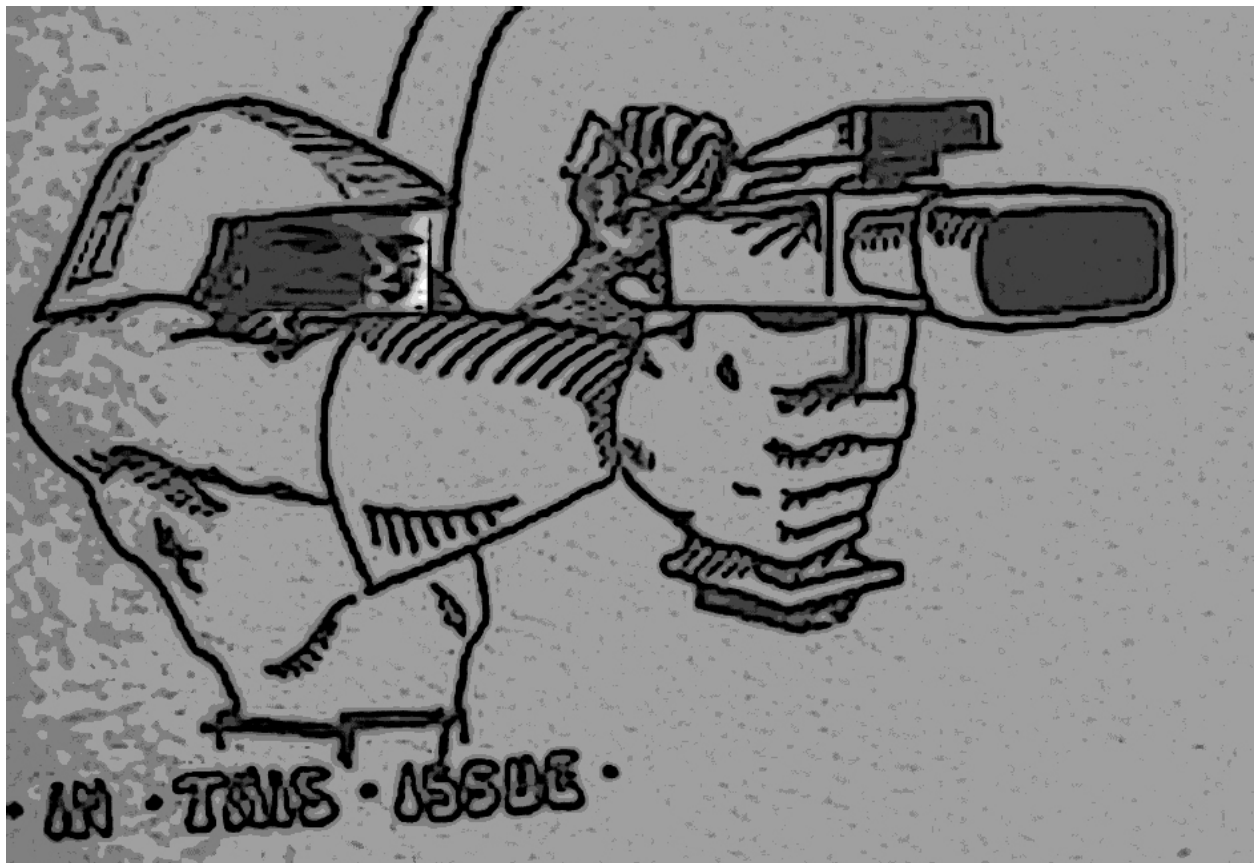


# SWILD



#18

Spring - 2013

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SWILL

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# Editorial: Well, Here We All Are...

James William Neilson

So, I'm late again -- the spring issue is coming out in late summer. As things are, I am currently overcommitted with many, many things. In this frenzy of activity, SWILL has had to be shifted to the back burner. For those who are interested, these are some of the things that I have been up to...

## Getting a Quebec Birth Certificate:

I was born in Quebec. Up until the late 1970's all I needed was my baptismal certificate, then I required and got an official birth certificate. Sometime in the late 1990's the Government of Quebec, concerned that Quebec birth certificates were easy to forge (they were more difficult to forge than those of the Province of Ontario), decreed that all birth certificates issued prior to X date had expired. I didn't realise this until years later when you now required a passport to travel to the United States and I discovered that my birth certificate was no longer valid. Obtaining a new one wasn't easy as the Government of Quebec had made it difficult for non-residents of the province. They have relaxed the regulations recently and I have just finished jumping through all the required hoops and I should receive a new Quebec birth certificate in a couple of weeks so that I can now get a Canadian passport. BTW, this has been the brief version of this story.

## Work:

Re-writing my major textbook. Originally this was to be just an update, but enough things are changing with technology (increased surveillance systems, 3D printing, etc.) that the last four chapters required a fully re-write. On top of that I am also adding in more pedagogical tools (i.e. more charts, graphics, boxes, glossaries, and study aids) to the new text; the manuscript is due to the publisher for early November.

Prepping courses for the coming year. This may seem simple, but you do have to really update videos, etc. as today's students consider any video over three years old as obsolete and so on. In addition, in our modern internet age, one has to come up with

new assignments to combat academic dishonesty (there are a few things that I don't like about Turnitin, so I don't use it).

Electronic learning is also taking up a lot of my time, most of which I am doing on my vacation time and weekends.

- Reason One, I don't have sufficient time to do this work when I am teaching.
- Reason Two, it takes far more time to develop this material than claimed by my employer's formula of 3 hours development time (research, writing, recording, post-production, and editing) for every hour of online content.
- Reason Three, if I do this work at work, my employer owns it outright (community college professors in Ontario have no intellectual property rights).

Add to that the fact that the approach of my employer, The Council (of Community Colleges), and the Ministry (of Training, Colleges, and Universities) to electronic learning is pedagogically unsound, but you have to do what you are ordered to anyway. In brief, this trio wants community college faculty to alter courses to improve student retention and student success (that means to "dumb it down" so that more students pass and graduate). So it takes more time to do the minimum of what you are required to do while still retaining course integrity and quality.

### **Writing:**

To date, I have written six short stories (two so far for my experiment in SWILL) averaging 3,500 words per tale. I have also been re-writing Only Fools and Knaves as a complete novel and that project is on track for its planned November release date. I am also writing an academic work that should be out in around the same time. Finally, I am working on a television script (not a top priority project). For major projects, I work best when I have multiple, very diverse projects on the go; when the muse leaves me or I block or stall on one, I shift over to one of the others. It seems to work for me...

### **Political Activism:**

I am involved in a local political group whose goal is to de-amalgamate the Town of Dundas from the City of Hamilton -- Dundas and other towns surrounding Hamilton were forcibly amalgamated into Hamilton, against the will of these municipalities, by the Province of Ontario twelve years ago. The province is about to

merge ward boundaries so that Dundas no longer has its own ward and any real voice on city council.

**Research:**

Transcribing fieldnotes, coding notes, etc. Finalising the Survey (oh, that early one was just an exploratory survey) for release this Fall. Literature searches and reading any new sources I encounter and making notes.

Nevertheless, I will endeavour to have the summer issue of SWILL out before it is actually autumn.

# Thrashing Trufen: Engines Victorious

James William Neilson

Over the past couple of years I have noticed a familiar panel topic at the conventions I have attended. This topic is usually phrased as: where has the hopeful future gone, why is the future darker, etc. In brief, where did the Trek-like better world for all, onward and upward with technology, all problems solvable, disappear to? I am going to be nice, sort of, and not even question how wonderful these happy happy futures really were (even Trek-land) and just answer the question as honestly as I can...

Realism happened.

There was a time, when I was young, that I didn't accept the notion of the corporate state or of corporate hegemony in science fiction as being realistic. Usually this occurred after some sort of plague, very limited nuclear war, famine, etc. that caused all of the governments of the major and middle powers to fail and thus the multinational corporations stepped in to fill the vacuum. I didn't buy into this scenario then. I couldn't see all the major powers of the world failing and I certainly didn't find it plausible that, should the government of the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China collapse, that it would be replaced by a corporate state. A military dictatorship, that was plausible, but not a takeover by capitalist corporations. I liked the innovation in the cyberpunk sub-genre, the low grade rebellion of the cyberspace hackers, but didn't accept the emergence of corporate hegemony. The governments wouldn't allow it... That's not going to play in the Soviet Union or China... These were simply cautionary tales of futures to be avoided.

Well, those futures are on the rise.

Actually, there were potential trends in our society back thirty or forty years ago towards these futures; if you noticed them (and no, I didn't notice them back then). Corporate tax used to provide the Government of Canada with close to 30 percent of its revenue as did personal income taxes fifty years ago; today

corporate tax accounts for 13% and personal income taxes 50% of the government's total revenue. But, this shift is not new; it had already presented itself in the 1970s - it has just become more favourable for the corporations since then. If you are in the middle class, your standard of living has declined. Compensation (salaries/wages) have progressed at below the rate of inflation, there are more users fees, more privatisation of government services, your federal tax has gone down slightly, but your provincial and municipal taxes have risen. You are worse than a mouse on an exercise wheel, running but not just going nowhere, you are falling behind. All of our new technology that was supposed to bring us more leisure time at the same rate of compensation - a shorter work week with no loss in pay - has brought the opposite; massive layoffs, downsizing, and longer hours worked (it has brought substantial cost savings and profits for the corporate powers). The slow erosion of democracy, the increased surveillance of the populace, and so on (I could continue this list, but I shall move on)...

The thing is, there has been no seizure of power by the corporate transnationals from our elected governments; governments have been slowly, increment by increment, permitting their power to be eroded away to the corporations and at an accelerated pace since the fall of the Soviet Union and the collapse of state socialism. And in this new world, creating a better world for all is not on the agenda. Onward and upward through technology is no longer viewed as the secular salvation that it used to be. New technology doesn't necessarily result in an improvement for society, in the short term and in the long term, though it usually does bring us short term advantages. Are all problems solvable? We are less confident that that is possible and any solutions we are certain will have consequences; there will be new problems. And at the root, the foundation, is the central problem of all modern economic systems (capitalist, mixed, or socialist) that is viewed as an externality and thus ignored; that economic theory claims that it is possible to have infinite growth within a closed system.

If you realistically look at the near future -- the next fifty years -- it looks grim. We will have new technology, but there

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<sup>1</sup> One thing about most American SF, and most American political thought; corporations are not pro-democracy. They are only pro-democracy when there is an alternative that has wide support like social democracy and state socialism. Otherwise, corporations hate democracy and they are NOT democratic organisations. It has been said that when you step through the door into your place of work, you have entered into a fascist organisation.

is no guarantee that there will be access to all citizens or to all people on the planet -- but our elites will get the benefits. Feudalism -- the notion that some people (of noble birth) were more fit to rule based on heredity -- lasted in one form or another for a few thousand years and was based upon unsubstantiated claims backed up by force of arms. What about a near future where our elites have genetically engineered their children (and maybe even themselves), enhanced themselves with nanotechnology and advanced cybernetics, so that they are actually superior to use unaugmented lumpen prol members of Homo sapiens sapiens? Will they want that power shared with the rest of us? No. If they can, via these enhancements, survive in the cesspit that they have made of the world, will they save the rest of us? No. These technologies are being researched, they will (in time) be developed, they will be expensive, and they will not be available to the average person.

There are solid reasons why the future looks darker today than it did in the past, that's because it is darker.



# Pissing on a Pile of Old Amazings:

...a modest column by Lester Kinsford

The vagaries of the production schedule of a Multiple Award Willing publication such which is Swill means you could be reading this in midsummer sipping chablis under a leavy tree. However as this is written, there is snow. Lots of it. "Up the wazoo" being the technical term. Also Besides which, it is cold, and not warm neither. Which brings us to one of Lester's first disillusions about science fiction, which is that it's always worth reading.

Actually in this case it was fantasy, a series which was popular and controversial way back when, the Thomas Covenant series by Donaldson. The controversy was about a rape scene, which Lester found neither controversioal nor discontroverial. What amazed Lester was a bit where Covenant plops into the 'land' and has to walk sixty miles. In fresh snow, 'cause it's cold. This was, to Lester, rather amazing, and he kept reading hoping to find out what the sectrif superpower of Covenant might be. You see, ~~Covenant is a leper~~ has leprosy: "damnit Jim I'm a leper not a protagonist" is his repeated whine. Lepers have poor circulation. To walk sizty miles in the snow is pretty amazoing. Oh yes, Covenant was barefoot. Ha! Must have superpowers!

However, as Leter plodded on (a slow reader, he is), there was no indication of any superpowers. ~~the series~~ The writing was slow, so that Lester started reading every other page and found that he wasn't missing out on any plot or description. Just before he gave up entirely, he was reading the first and last pages of each chapter only, and theat was sufficient to see that the weries was afflicted by the 'California syndrome" as Lester would put it.

The Californai syndrom is that ~~peep~~ writers do scenes in bad weather when they are basically clueless about what bad weather entails. "I successfolly drove myu car through the miserable fifty-degree [F of course, these are Californians] to the shoe

store five miles away [two exits of the freeway] therefore my character must be able to walk sixty miles in the snow barefoot, that's hardly any more exertion. They think. Add to that the logical need to make your Token Quest (i.e. quest for multiple Plot Tokens) more impressive than the other California writers' Token Questes, and pretty soon you have paraplegic cystic fibrosis sufferers, whoa are additionally in the last stages of bone cancer, making their way around a planet waist deep in liquid nitrogen. Uphill both ways.

Human beings are capable of some pretty amazing feats--read about the "Winter Journey" that Scott's expedition did (and these guys lived). They went for a multi-week plod over the Antarctic in winter, which is to say when it's black night and the temperature can be sixty below(F). And yes they suffered and yes they survived. There is no indication that any of them were lepers, though.

So when you the writer has the hero sitting on his horse, travelling for days in the rain because this is the plot point where the Evil Forces of the North (evil always comes from the north, there must be something in the water in Iqaluit) look like they are about to win, well here's what you do. Go to your local thrift second hand store, get a ratty woolen blanket. Wear a ratty wool sweater and wool pants, cotton is not recommended. So, now sit on a park bench through a rainy day. No food, no trip to Timmies for a cruller and a double double, just sit on the park bench. Lester does not know horses, but it's pretty reasonable to assume that being on horseback in the wet cold rain is going to be if anything worse than being on a park bench in the wet cold rain. (Unlike your '94 Camry, horses don't have roofs, or a defroster. And no place to plug in your ipod.) Okay, you lasted a day, so now sleep under the bench with whatever food you may have been able to scrounge up (raw squirrel or pigeon is likely). And repeat sitting on the bench the next day.

At this point, you can either say, 'yes, this is delightful, I am ready to take on All Evil in the World', which is what your hero has to do after this cold miserable journey, or you can say, 'gee, my hero has died of exposure' and figure out how to fill that plot hole.

Lester's decidedly nonscientific theory is that progress was so limited in the past, and historical figures did really odd and inexplicable things, because they were exhausted and muddled by an existence where there was no central heating nor freezers full of tasty microwaveable dinners nor mechanical contrivances that can whisk you across town, province, or country in a matter of hours or days in complete comfort except when the restrooms haven't been cleaned recently. Therefore, if your fantasy (or science fiction) character has some tremendous journey ~~er~~ to make, against vast odds, at the end of it your protag will need a long rest and recovery; your protag will not go on to develop relativity and ninja-slow-motion swordfight the evil legions into the ground. When you're tired and cold and hungry and wet and dirty all the time, Advancing the Cause of Humanity and Vanquishing the Ancient Evils is a pretty low priority in your mind.

Maybe California writers should model their Quests on the experience of finding a parking spot at the mall on Black Friday. There would be some realism at last.

By the way, Lester never did finish the first Covenant series, never mind the rest. He does wish that the lesson of "you don't have to finish reading this tripe" had been learned when he tackled the Sword of Shannara, a book which he read in its entirety despite realising by at least the halfway point that this was one of the worst books ever written. (Lester was unfamiliar with the trends in Piers Anthony's work, and for the most part is mercifully ignorant of this and late Heinlein as well. So Shannara as a first hand experience was indeed one of the worst books ever written.)

So here's the challenge: an action series describing the travails of our hero who can't even find parking close to the most obscure mall entrance, and then has to find and ~~procure~~ procure This Season's most Sought After Toy. Please keep it under three five seven volumes, and for god's sake don't die before finishing. Thanks, and reserve a space on your shelf for the inevitable Hugo!

# Flogging a Dead Trekkie:

## Violating the ~~Taboos~~ Norms of Science Fiction

### Part 2 of 8 – Dystopian Despair

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 ONE: Dystopian Despair

"Bleak, dystopian, depressing material which implies that the present cultural fix is insane or transient and will self-destruct . . . that the very ethos and materials of the society...will bring it down."

Yuck; who wants to read that shit? Dark, bleak, hopeless tales that focus on society undertaking slow-motion suicide via a melange one litre of head-in-the-sand ignoring of problems, 500 grams of apathy, and 250 ml of no concern for the future as it travels along the road to self destruction. It provides an unpleasant answer to the question of the meaning of life -- either that it is pointless and without merit, or simply without meaning, period.

Now, I read a fair bit of this sort of story back in the seventies when New Wave was still an active sub-genre in SF. Of course, for most of that decade I was in my teens and adolescent angst tends to attract to this type of dark and moody style of fiction. And, for the younger readers, not all New Wave was

about Dystopian Despair. Also, there was a larger cultural trend going on during that decade the golden age of the disaster film, which also included post-apocalyptic plotlines. That meant that SF writers, even those with no connexion to New Wave, joined in the carnival of disaster and despair. But there is a major departure between disaster/post-apocalyptic fiction and society engaged in self destruction fiction; in the former, the cause can be external and out of human hands, while for the later, it is always our own fault.<sup>2</sup>

The whole style of story, the bleak tale of societal self destruction, has merit. It can be cautionary and serve as a warning or wake-up call, at very least it can serve to illustrate just how fragile civilisation is and just how dependant we are upon our technology. Nevertheless, I do not recommend a steady diet of this type of SF because, it IS depressing. At the same time, there should always be some of it present, just as a reminder.

Because, guess what; we have problems, lots of them. And they are all nastily complex, interwoven, real, and deadly (to civilisation if not to the species as a whole) with no simple, easy solution at hand.<sup>3</sup> To solve these problems (and we're going to have to solve them) is going to be difficult, will require sacrifices, will involve economic disruptions, will necessitate co-operation, and will probably require a reduction to or the elimination of nation-state sovereignty in the course of implementation. And this is why we prefer to ignore these problems until such time when it is impossible to do so rationally. Some say, and I agree, that that time has already arrived. However, one has to be a forward-thinking person to have that perspective. Within a global civilisation that defines

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<sup>2</sup> The former also carries the meme in American SF that all the bad things happen to non-Americans -- the Commies, the Europeans, the Asians, the Africans, the Central and South Americans -- the major damage and death tolls by the hundred million happen elsewhere (sure, Washington, New York, and LA may be destroyed but the rest of the US of A abides). With the subtext that the right people have been culled and that the right people, that is the Americans, have survived and that now the world can be a much better place.

<sup>3</sup> Overpopulation, habitat destruction (including deforestation, soil degradation, overharvesting, and invasive species introduction), pollution, increased inequality, resource depletion, and anthropogenic climate and biosphere change.

long range thinking within the context of a 3 to 5 year business plan or the next quarter, the dominant worldview is that none of these problems are PROBLEMS THAT MUST BE SOLVED, yet. We are still waiting for the CRISIS that makes it a certainty, even to the dense and those most committed to avoiding reality, that this is a crisis and something must be done about it. In the meantime, we are speeding toward tomorrow at 150 kph with the edge of a 200 metre drop straight ahead of us; there is uncertainty regarding how far in the distance that cliff edge is, as well as the quality of our brakes and our steering column, but we're flooring it, regardless.

Why is this type of story a norm violation? Because it raises a real issues. Because it makes us think about the new unthinkables.<sup>4</sup> Because it makes us question; perhaps everything. Because it makes us see responsibility and consequence for our actions. Because it is unsettling and makes the reader uncomfortable.

Far better to give the reader a tale where the rationalistic, damn the red-tape protagonist, through a mix of common sense and the scientific method, identifies the simple solution that had eluded the politicians, bureaucrats, and their experts, and saves the day. But, don't call it science fiction; give it the proper label of fantasy (okay, I'll allow calling it science fantasy).

As for my story? What, you thought I'd print it here; well that would bollocks the experiment... Norm Violation One Story is a slightly satirical dark comedy of our own extinction by our own hand -- sort of, we actually delegate it. This story is currently out for consideration at Market #1 and I will report on its progress next time.

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<sup>4</sup> The old unthinkable was global thermonuclear war -- still a possibility, but it now has company.

# Scribbling on the Bog Wall: Letters of Comment

James William Neilson

As I write this, there is only a single LoC this time around. My comments are, of course, in glorious pudmonkey.

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May 25, 2013

Dear Neil:

I think I got notification on the latest issue of Swill, no. 17, and I checked my records...I didn't know that issue 16 had come out, so here's some comments on both.

16...I would think that by now, even some Americans who would put themselves on the far right of the political spectrum would roll their eyes at some of the purely stupid and ignorant remarks that come out of the mouths of some politicians. Republicans, are you really that dumb? Really? Some Americans are extremely ignorant, some aren't, and some are purely isolated from the realities of the world because they haven't stuck their noses outside of their homes, except to go to church and the bingo hall. The world would be a little saner if the US government didn't have to stick its nose into the affairs of other countries and justify it by saying they are looking out for American interests. I have never understood the need to be armed, unless the whole justification is that one average American is afraid of the next average American, because you never know what they will do. Many Americans must think that the NRA is the greatest curse in American life today, probably on a par with the Tea Party. I could never see myself moving to the USA...I think life there can be toxic. Before anyone thinks I am being smug, Canadian aren't far behind their American friends, and a

change in government could help us here a lot. Unfortunately, both US parties are far right in comparison to any party here.

Hi Lloyd,

Well, I think that I have had enough of a vent on the gun culture of the USA. It was stupid 30 years ago and is even more stupid today... And I agree that while our current government would love to allow every Canadian (or at least every Albertan) to own automatic weapons for home defence, they also know that the majority of the population doesn't support this. As for the two major USA parties, the old joke still holds; the Democrats are akin to the left wing of the Conservative Party and the Republicans are the same as the right wing of the Conservative Party.

Pudmonkey is a little rough on the eyes, but it is not impossible. Hasn't stopped me yet from responding, has it? It will affect you only if you let it. Just hope you don't find anything worse. :-) I suspect that the reactions to Pudmonkey is part of your research, anyway.

Uh, no, it's not. Really, as stated previously, Pudmonkey was selected back in 2001 for the 20th anniversary Swill Online website for one reason only -- imperfect memory recall. I didn't have any copies of the original SWILLS (#1 through #6) and thus selected a font that I thought mimiced that of the old manual that the Maplecon Slandersheet was written on. As it turned out, even that old typewriter was cleaner than Pudmonkey. Most of the original issues -- smudged mimeo aside -- are more like that of VTCorona. Nevertheless, there is now a tradition to uphold and so Pudmonkey remains for my LoC comments and for article titles. In addition, SWILL has won an Elron for the font!

I don't begrudge you your studies of this sometimes-entertaining subculture we've devoted so much time and effort into...once you come to some conclusions, I'd like to see them. I can't figure out this bunch half the time, and I've been here for over 35 years now.



Not quite there yet... Getting close, the Autumn issue should have some conclusions based on the qualitative data collected to date.

Maplecon, that brings back memories. I think I was at that 1981 Maplecon. There are always some people who use their uniforms to terrorize the attendees. I've told a couple of them to fuck off over the years...damned childish cop-wannabees. I haven't done much programming for SFContario, but we acted as guest liaison for Chris Garcia, the FanGoH. This year, we've taken a dealer's table. Might as well try to make a few bucks.

A wee note on Maplecon in the Endnote...

This very morning, I spent some time at this weekend's Anime North helping with next year's CostumeCon 32, to be held in Toronto next year. Too big for me, too crazy, especially in the dealer's room. Polaris in Toronto is gone, and Con\*cept is gone in Montréal, but there is also Anime North with an attendance capped at about 20,000, and it looks like the pro-run Wizard World comics convention has abandoned Toronto, so the hard times are being spread around. I think the pros will still win because there is money to be made, and more and more people want to be entertained at fan-run cons instead of doing the entertaining. Passive entertainment is king, and active entertainment is going away...we are basically lazy. Yet...I have noticed that while the pro-run cons are still fairly healthy, fan-run cons are taking on subjects the pro-runs haven't touched. As examples...Burlington and Canadian ToyCons, Art-O-Con (Burlington, big dealer's room), GenreCon (Guelph, nerd culture), Con-G (Guelph, anime), Frostcon (Toronto, nerd culture), and there are other little conventions for specialty toys, furry fandom, comics, anime and gaming. They are all small and growing.

We have both been around for a long time... You have been constantly involved and I have stepped out and gaffiated for a couple of decades -- though I still observed a bit on the sidelines (BBSs and later the internet allowed for that). In a way, based on Southern Ontario cons, there would seem to be a bit of the "same as it ever was" going on. I remember in days of yore (late 1970's and early 1980's) that there was a

period when there were one or two big Toronto conventions and a whole horde of little ones -- many of which only ran a couple of years. Most of those little cons back then were devoted to mediafen or gaming or both. And most of them were run by younger fans back in the day as gaming and media SF&F were not considered as real SF&F and those who were into that variety of SF&F were not viewed -- by the movers and shakers -- to be real fans. I think the whole "nerd/geek culture" fashion (it's more than a fad but not really a movement) will, in time, become partially absorbed into SF&F fandom as a whole as yet another facet of SF&F fandom. And as that happens, it will eventually have its own big Toronto fan-run convention that also include programming for other niches of fandom.

I would disagree that these younger fans are lazy and into passive entertainment only; they ARE putting on their own conventions and it would appear that active, participatory entertainment/programming is something that they place emphasis on. At present, they also seem to be less to unfannish in the way that you and I view being fannish (and certainly unfannish to fans like Tara). Again, as I have stated before, part of this shift has to do with mediums of communication that are available today which means that new fans of SF&F (and there are a lot of them) are not being socialised into the subculture by the previous generations; they are charting their own paths and developing their own norms and values that, from the viewpoint of older fans, are unfannish.

Con\*cept may be gone, but I am pretty certain that a new Montreal convention will emerge. Polaris is gone and time will tell if Reversed Polarity will be its phoenix. Ad Astra continues. Although I don't know the exact reasons, I am pretty certain that Wizard World pulled out of Toronto as it didn't want to battle head-to-head with Fan Expo (and their comic con) on Fan Expo's home turf.

17...Fannishness and unfannishness is in the eye of the beholder or the critic. It's all subjective. At least you got the issue done, and not everyone pubs their ish. When it comes to any book, your mileage may vary, as will its level of shittiness. Why do we tear each other down over our choice of reading materials? With today's dropping literacy levels, we should be please that anyone is reading anything.

Because fans are people (and therefore human) and those who are literary fans are going to judge others by the books that they read. And those who are media fans are going to judge others by the shows that they watch. You find it occurs within other genres too, it's just that SF&F fans are more in contact with one another than say, fans of political thrillers.

Let's see what you write, and how good it is, and how it violates those norms. If you can put these seven stories together, you might just get a writing books out of it. Worth a shot.

Well, for the experiment to work, I will only discuss the premise of the stories written and their progress or lack thereof within the marketplace. As I am going to try and sell them, they won't be appearing in SWILL, unless they have exhausted all of the pro and near-pro markets (e.g. InterZone, On Spec). Even then, I am more likely to collect them and publish them via my imprint. But thank you for the encouragement.

Your comments to Graeme Cameron...I think you fit in as a local observer of fandom, recording all its foibles and warts. I appreciate what you do; I wish more would take notice. The community of fandom identifies themselves as such, having found through some books that the community exists. It took me some years to find that community, and while it was fairly unfriendly at first, others took me in to show me the local ropes.

I was definitely a full-fledged member of the SF&F community when I lived in Vancouver. With the Toronto community, there was no notion of a GTA back then and if you didn't live in the city you really weren't

fully a member of that community. Today, I live outside of the GTA and thus remain peripheral to the Toronto community except via the internet.

I understand your Endnote...this isn't worth endangering your employment over. I quite understand, Jim. However, your employer has already branded your topic of research as freaks and weirdos, so have they already passed judgment on your work. Have they invalidated their own support of your work with this, or can you still continue on with an objective study? I hope they haven't hamstrung you and your research.

This is not much of a problem as there was no support in the first place. When I started here, the attitude was; if you so desire, you can do research and publish, but don't expect to be rewarded for it like at university. Now, unless we can control your research topic and conclusions, we don't want you to perform research and publish -- though we lack the legal power to stop you from doing so -- and will make it difficult (i.e. throw up barriers) for you should you persist in conducting research and publishing. The only thing that has changed is that now I shall be using a pen name/byline for anything recent (post-March 2013) that I publish.

Two issues, and I am caught up again! Hope you're having a good weekend, and let's see what appears in issue 18.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Till next time...

# Endnote: Random Thoughts

James William Neilson

## Graeme's Latest Project

Graeme, in last the last ish, offered to become a SWILL columnist. This offer was accepted by the editor. Unfortunately, for SWILL, another project (in addition to all of his fanzines, being Secret Master of the Elrons, the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards, etc.) has taken priority -- the Canadian SF Fanzine Archive.

This online archive has the stated goal of "celebrating traditional Canadian science fiction 'fannish' fandom" -- the deconstruction of this 'mission statement' shall be the subject of a future article. Nevertheless, the archive is an undertaking that SWILL supports; it can be found on the web, here:

<http://www.cdnsfzinearchive.org/>

## SWILL #3 through #5 found

Thanks to the Canadian Science Fiction Fanzine Archive, scans of issues 3, 4, and 5 of the original SWILL are now available. Here is a brief revision of SWILL history based upon the new information. Issues 1 to 4 published in Ontario (February, March, April, and May). Issue 4.5 -- perhaps called Worldcon Special Issue or something like that -- printed in time for the Worldcon in Denver. This issue would have contained an editorial arguing that the Worldcon should more correctly be called Americon and a reprint of "The American Weigh". Don't know what the cover was, or whether I recycled a previous cover. Issue 5 came out in late September and issue 6 in late November/Early December. More on this in SWILL #19

## **The Maplecon Mystery Solved**

Okay, SWILL #5 makes it official; I trust my recall of events in 1981 of what happened in 1979 and 1980 much more than I do here in 2013. It would definitely appear that I attended Maplecon 2 in 1979 with the Droogs and Fritz and Maplecon 3 in 1980 with Lester and Andrew. And while all of the Droogs did attend Maplecon 3, we were not in droog costume (the last convention we did the droog group costume at was Worldcon 1980 in Boston).

However, overweight Trekkies in Original Series redshirts running through the convention floor with phasers would appear to have been an unofficial feature of both Maplecon 2 and Maplecon 3.

## **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...

August 2013      Fan Expo -- Toronto (one day)  
November 2013    SFContario 4 -- Toronto  
April 2014        Ad Astra -- Toronto  
August 2014      Loncon 3 -- London, UK  
November 2014    Reversed Polarity 2 -- Toronto  
November 2014    SFContario 5 -- Toronto

