

Evidence regarding the complaints made against Theodore Beale

Report to the Board of Directors of SFWA

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The purpose of this report is to examine the available evidence regarding the complaints that Theodore Beale has engaged in ongoing and deliberate efforts to disrupt SFWA's mission, use SFWA resources and venues made available to him as a member to promulgate a climate that is counterproductive to that mission, and to undermine the credibility of the organization both among the membership and the general public.

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## **A. Violation of SFWA bylaws and policies**

In this section only incidents which occurred in SFWA-controlled spaces are addressed. For the purposes of this report “SFWA-controlled spaces” are defined as:

- Events organized by SFWA (e.g. Nebula ceremony, etc.)
- Social events hosted by SFWA (e.g. SFWA lounges at conventions, etc.)
- Print publications published by SFWA (e.g. *The SFWA Bulletin*)
- Online spaces hosted or published by SFWA (e.g. the SFWA online forum, the SFWA blog, and any social media accounts controlled by SFWA)

Five general issues will be addressed in this section:

1. Improper use of SFWA channels
2. Publication of confidential SFWA material
3. Harassment
  - 3.1 Personal attacks
  - 3.2 Use of rhetoric and imagery associated with known hate groups
  - 3.3 Rape threat against SFWA member by blog commenter
4. Threats of harassment and mischief against SFWA and members

## 1. Improper use of SFWA channels

The incident which prompted this investigation was Mr. Beale's use of the SFWAAuthors Twitter account to distribute his blog of June 13, 2013 "A black female fantasist calls for Reconciliation." (See Fig A.1 for the tweet and Fig A.2 for the blog entry to which the link in the tweet led. Note the #SFWApro tag at the end which shows a conscious choice to have the blog entry published through the Twitter feed.)

Here is the policy sent to members regarding use of the SFWAAuthors Twitter feed:

SFWA maintains the @sfwaaauthors Twitter feed to help spread the word about members' blog posts about writing, fiction/reading (reviews, reading recommendations, etc), or publishing, or about their own writing or publishing news. If you're a member who would like to have the writing and publishing posts from your blog included in the @sfwaaauthors stream, please send an email to [twitter@sfa.org](mailto:twitter@sfa.org).

Not every blog post is appropriate for @sfwaaauthors. If a post is not about writing, or about fiction or publishing, do not mark it for inclusion in the @sfwaaauthors twitter feed. (Instructions on how to mark posts for inclusion in the @sfwaaauthors twitter feed will be provided when you email [twitter@sfa.org](mailto:twitter@sfa.org).) Repeated violations of this policy will be grounds for removal from the feed. SFWA reserves the right to determine what posts are appropriate.

Marking blog posts for inclusion that include threats or personal attacks or obvious trolling will also be grounds for removal.

While SFWA does maintain the @sfwaaauthors Twitter feed for the benefit of its members, ultimately the posts that appear in the feed are the responsibility of the authors of those posts, and are in no way endorsed by SFWA, nor do such posts reflect the opinions or policy of SFWA.

Mr. Beale made a conscious choice to be added to the feed (see Fig A.3). He was made aware of the guidelines (see Fig A.4 and Fig A.5) and stated in conversation on the SFWA online discussion boards that he was aware that some of the content of his blogs would likely be inappropriate (see Fig A.6). This also illustrates the fact that he made a conscious choice to have this particular blog post published by the SFWAAuthors Twitter feed.

SFWA received complaints about the tweet from several members (part 3 of this section looks specifically at the objectionable content of the entry) and it was removed from the feed roughly two hours after the tweet was first posted and between two and two and a half hours after the blog was first posted. (See part 3 of this this section for a more detailed explanation of the timeline.)

In an e-mail sent to the Board, Mr. Beale stated that the final paragraph of the guidelines show that "it is demonstrably false to claim that I have ever misused any SFWA platform." The precise interpretation of that paragraph is a matter for the Board to decide. However, it may be noted that

- a) The Twitter account is maintained and managed by SFWA

b) The Twitter handle contains "SFWA" with the permission of SFWA

## 2. Publication of confidential SFWA material

Mr. Beale has violated this policy on at least one occasion in the past (see Fig A.7) and been reprimanded for it (see Fig A.8). More recently, he has quoted on his blog of June 5, 2013, "Seriously Fascist Women's Association", from a warning received from Forum moderator Cat Rambo: "It's also intriguing to see how these liberal fascists claim labeling two old men 'sexist bigots' and openly calling for an end to their column is acceptable, but identifying them as 'ensorious' is, and here I quote the SFWA moderator, 'abusive behavior'." (See Fig A.9) The phrase "abusive behavior" is, in fact, an automatically-generated heading for the message sent to Mr. Beale, but Mr. Beale seems to have *believed* that he was publishing Ms. Rambo's own words and *intended to do so*. A post made to the SFWA online forums on June 1, 2013 provides more evidence that he believed he was posting Ms. Rambo's own words: "And speaking of those differences, the fact that my expression of my opinion about MsTobler's laudable example, which is entirely sincere, was declared by Cat Rambo to be "abusive behavior" and somehow merits a schoolmarmish 'warning' only underlines how intellectually feeble and fascistic the organization has become over time." (See Fig A.10) While the content he was reproducing was innocuous, this example suggests that despite an earlier warning and sanction he has shown little respect for the confidentiality of SFWA material.

### 3. Harassment

The following is the SFWA policy on harassment:

The SFWA administration, employees, members, and volunteers are responsible for assuring that all persons who participate in SFWA programs and activities do so in an atmosphere free of all forms of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Sexual harassment is unlawful and impedes the realization of SFWA's mission to inform, support, promote, defend and advocate for our members. SFWA will respond promptly and effectively to reports of harassment and discrimination of any kind and will take appropriate action to prevent, to correct, and if necessary, to discipline behavior that violates this policy. This policy applies to any events or spaces sponsored by SFWA, including but not limited to the SFWA discussion Forums, the SFWA website, the Nebula Awards Weekend, and the SFWA suite.

The final sentence of this policy explicitly states that it applies to all online spaces controlled by SFWA. While SFWA does not directly control what is posted to the SFWAAuthors account, the account is moderated by SFWA officers, employees and volunteers, making it analogous to the SFWA discussion Forums. The question, then, is whether the blog post of Thursday, June 13 published through the SFWAAuthors account made it impossible for "all persons who participate in SFWA programs and activities do so in an atmosphere free of all forms of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation." There are three elements to consider: whether Beale made personal attacks against other members in SFWA-controlled spaces, whether he created a hostile environment through his use of rhetoric and imagery associated with known racist movements, and whether he published threats against other members on the blog through his use of the SFWAAuthors Twitter feed.

#### *Personal attacks*

The blog post contained several personal attacks on SFWA members:

... Theresa Nielsen Hayden is dumb (see Fig A.11)

... the fat frog that is Nielsen Hayden (ibid.)

... we simply do not view her [Jemisin] as being fully civilized for the obvious historical reason that she is not (ibid.)

... whites defend their lives and their property from people, like her [Jemisin], who are half-savages engaged in attacking white people (ibid.)

Mr. Beale has also engaged in personal attacks on members on the SFWA discussion Forums:

I have zero interest in debating with you, Mr. Sanford. I enjoy challenges and you're not half as intelligent as people I've crushed in three exchanges. (Posted in reply to member Jason Sanford June 13, 2013 and deleted by moderators. See Fig A.12 and A.13)



Fuck you. Fuck you for asserting that the go-to-public immediately was the least-bad choice available. Fuck you for asserting that “wise” isn’t the appropriate measure. Fuck you for lightly passing over the possibility of picking up the phone. Yes, to all of that, “fuck you” is probably the politest thing to say in response. (Posted in reply to member C.E. Petit March 10, 2013 and deleted by moderators. See Fig A.14)

### *Use of rhetoric and imagery associated with known racist movements*

Along with specific personal attacks, the blog post published through the SFWA Authors feed also contained material that may be seen to have contravened the harassment policy due to its use of rhetoric and imagery associated with racist movements. Specifically, Mr. Beale’s post drew heavily on imagery and rhetoric associated with “reasonable racism,” which is defined by Priscilla Marie Meddaugh and Jack Kay as “a tempered discourse that emphasizes pseudo-rational discussions of race” and is primarily associated with the group Stormfront. (Meddaugh, Priscilla Marie and Kay, Jack (2009) ‘Hate Speech or “Reasonable Racism?” The Other in Stormfront’, *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 24: 4, 251 — 268) Meddaugh and Kay describe Stormfront’s approach in this way: “Though a gateway to other on-line white supremacist organizations, creator Don Black dissuades promoting violence, as well as the use of blatant racist or otherwise inflammatory rhetoric regarding contributions specific to Stormfront. Rather, he favors ‘quasi-scientific or pseudo-intellectual identifications of racial differences.’” (Meddaugh and Kay, citing Abel, D. S. (1998). *The racist next door*. New Times: Broward-Palm Beach.) Drawing on rhetoric and imagery associated with this and related groups in a post published through an official SFWA channel, therefore, may be seen as being the equivalent of wearing Nazi regalia or using a racist epithet at a SFWA event or social function.

As the title of their article suggests, Meddaugh and Kay identify a concern with “the Other” as a primary element of the group’s beliefs and symbolism. Following an analysis of 115 articles on the Stormfront discussion board, Meddaugh and Kay identify several motifs related to “the Other” that are characteristic of Stormfront and related groups. These include *the Other as genocidal threat*, *the Other as false martyr*, *the Other as oppressor* and *the Other as inferior*. Beale’s use of these four motifs in the post published on the SFWA Authors feed will now be examined and compared to texts associated with Stormfront and related groups.

#### *The Other as genocidal threat*

A consistent motif identified by Meddaugh and Kay is the perception of the Other as a threat to all White people. Here is a quote from the Beale blog post that employs this motif (throughout, “she” refers to Ms. Jemisin):

She is lying about the laws in Texas and Florida too. The [Stand Your Ground] laws are not there to let whites “ just shoot people like me, without consequence, as long as they feel threatened by my presence”, those self-defense laws have been put in place *to let whites defend their lives and their property from people, like her, who are half-savages engaged in attacking them.* [Italics and text in parentheses added: see Fig A.15]

Here is a quote from poster “Global Minority” on the Stormfront discussion board from April 22, 2012:

Every race other than Blacks knows deep down these "people" are brute savages that don't belong in civilized society. I support any group of people defending themselves against black thuggery and violence. And I support any people or organization that fight against so called "Black Civil Rights" Organizations which are really fronts to disarm Whites of their absolute right to firearms (people in the wake of the Trayvon Martin case are discussing getting rid of concealed carry and stand your ground laws), property (Civil Rights Act of 64), and equal protection under the law(through hate crime legislation, affirmative action etc)

And from poster "Volkolak" from March 22, 2011:

If you live in a state with pathetic gun laws, try to move as soon as possible to a state with Castle Doctrine or even better extended Castle Doctrine, where the law is that you have no duty to retreat or de-escalate a situation ANYWHERE that you have a legal right to be (sidewalk, grocery store, name a place) and may stand your ground and use lethal force. Also, carry extra mags. Many older Whites who do carry, carry low capacity semi-autos or revolvers as this was logically enough in their day. Sadly, in today's world I have come to believe that **capacity** should be a significant factor in choosing your carry weapon for situations like these. Negroes attack in packs like most primitive lifeforms. When I chose a carry weapon, I chose based upon what I feel is adequate to go up against 3-6 feral savages determined to take me out, not what it takes to ward off one or two human assailants with nothing more than simple robbery in mind.  
[emphasis in original]

*The Other as false martyr*

Meddaugh and Kay describe this motif in this way: "The category of the other as false martyr is portrayed in Stormfront Web pages as phony victim who recasts the facts of the past to privilege the other in the present." Here is a quote from the Beale blog that depicts Ms. Jemisin, and African-Americans in general, in this way:

She could, if she wished, claim that privileged white males are responsible for the decline of Detroit, for the declining sales of science fiction, even for the economic and cultural decline of the United States, but that would not make it true. It would not even make it credible. Anyone who is paying sufficient attention will understand who is genuinely responsible for these problems.(ibid.)

Here is a similar example from the article "George Washington: Politically Incorrect," written by former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan David Duke and posted widely on racist sites, including the Stormfront site:

Slavery had a pernicious impact on White people in America, corrupting those classes who owned slaves and harming those Whites who did not... Its real damage has been that it placed a people in our midst who as a group have little aptitude for our technology, no empathy with our culture, no adulation for our history and heroes, and no love for us, only resentment for perceived past wrongs... In North America, slavery was unique only in the fact that it was the kindest expression of it on earth. American Whites treated their Black slaves far better than African Blacks treated their own Black slaves. For this are Whites to be condemned?

### *The Other as Oppressor*

To again cite Meddaugh and Kay, "The category of the other as tyrannical in Stormfront Web pages depicts an oppressor who subjugates the privileges of whites for the promotion of a multicultural society." Randy Blazak identifies a resistance to multiculturalism and diversity efforts as a key element of Nazi skinhead recruitment efforts:

Perhaps the newest recruitment technique is to target schools that are experiencing a curriculum shift toward multiculturalism. As history and social science books are retooled to be more inclusive, the voice that is diminishing is the hegemonic, straight, White male perspective. Without the proper context, this shift can seem to be a conspiracy to write White contributions out of the standard educational curriculum. Several high schools in Oregon have been targeted for recruitment using the backlash against multiculturalism as a way in. (Randy Blazak, *White Boys to Terrorist Men: Target Recruitment of Nazi Skinheads*, *American Behavioral Scientist* 44 (2001): 982–1000.)

Blazak cites a 26-year-old former recruiter for the Nazi skinhead movement explaining the value of this approach:

It's really easy. You find out what's happening in a school and then find out where the kids hang out. You get some stupid conversation going and then you ask them about school. They bitch and moan and you say, "Yeah, it was a lot better in my day when we didn't have gangs and people who can't even speak English and all this multicultural shit." I'd say, "Don't you think it's fucked up that you can have a Black student union but not a White student union? Why are the Blacks allowed to be racist?" And you can see them agreeing. I say, "Did you ever own a slave? Did you ever kill an Indian? So why are they trying to make you feel guilty for being White?" Before they can answer I'd start telling them about ZOG. About how the Jews are behind all this to fuck over the White man. I give them the whole line, multiculturalism, gay rights, affirmative action. (Blazak)

Similarly, Beale in his post blames increased diversity in the SFF field for "the continued self-destruction of science fiction" (see Fig A.16) and further says "Jemisin clearly does not understand that her dishonest call for 'reconciliation' and even more diversity within SF/F is tantamount to a call for its decline into irrelevance... There can be no reconciliation between the observant and the delusional." (See Fig A.17. Ellipsis in original.)

### *The Other as inferior*

One of the most important influences on modern "reasonable racism" is the writings of Dr. William L. Pierce, author of *The Turner Diaries* and founder of the Neo-Nazi National Alliance (see "William Pierce, Neo-Nazi Leader, Dies," *The New York Times* July 24 2002 <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/07/24/us/william-pierce-69-neo-nazi-leader-dies.html>). Pierce's writings are found in many places on Stormfront and similar sites such as National Vanguard, in particular his article "Equality: Man's Most Dangerous Myth," which introduces the motif common among racist groups that non-whites are genetically different from whites, and therefore incapable of the same achievements:

The fact is, however, that the most important racial differences are genetic rather than cultural. Skin and eye color, facial features, skull shape, skeletal proportions, patterns of body fat disposition, tooth size, jaw shape, female breast form, odor, and hair texture are only the most noticeable genetically determined physical characteristics which differ racially.

Beyond these things are the entire biochemical constitution and development of the individual. There are profound racial differences in blood chemistry, in endocrine function, and in physiological response to environmental stimuli. Blacks and Whites mature at different rates. They have different susceptibilities to many disease organisms as well as different patterns of congenital disease. They even have different nutritional requirements.

Here is a quote from Beale's article echoing the point:

Jemisin has it wrong; it is not that I, and others, do not view her as human, (although genetic science presently suggests that we are not equally homo sapiens sapiens), it is that we simply do not view her as being fully civilized for the obvious historical reason that she is not. (Fig A.18)

Though Beale does not explicitly state that Jemisin's purported genetic differences make her inferior to him, the point is implied throughout the post. In another blog post, which was not published through the SFWAAuthors feed or any other SFWA channel, he makes his point more explicitly:

Africans [are] a genetically distinct population group, a group that therefore must necessarily be either inferior or superior to other population groups. (See Fig A.19)

A related motif in the rhetoric and imagery of these groups is that non-whites are incapable of true civilization. Here is Pierce again, from the same article:

Negro culture is not merely *different* from White culture; it is a less advanced culture and, by practically any standard, inferior. It is a culture which never advanced to the point of a written language or a civilized society. It never saw even the barest glimmerings of mathematics or the invention of the wheel.

The culture of a race, free of alien influences, is telling evidence of that race's essential nature. The African Negro with a cow-dung hairdo, a bone through his nose, and teeth filed down to sharp points, in other words, presents to us a far more accurate image of the Negro essence than does the American Black in a business suit who has been trained to drive an automobile, operate a typewriter, and speak flawless English.

The hokum currently being served up in the schools about a centuries-old Negro "civilization" based on the ruins of stone walls found at Zimbabwe, in Rhodesia (note: at the time of this writing, the country was still called Rhodesia) is simply the product of wishful thinking by proponents of racial equality who are willing to ignore all facts which conflict with their equalitarian mania. [Text in parentheses in original]

Here is a post by Stormfront poster "One Man" from November 26, 2011:

“You cannot turn primitive, low IQ savages into First World whites. If these aboriginals had the mental wherewithal to build a great civilization, they would. But they do not because they cannot.”

And Beale, from his post:

Unlike the white males she excoriates, there is no evidence to be found anywhere on the planet that a society of NK Jemisins is capable of building an advanced civilization, or even successfully maintaining one without significant external support from those white males.

Being an educated, but ignorant half-savage, with little more understanding of what it took to build a new literature by "a bunch of beardy old middle-class middle-American guys" than an illiterate Igbotu tribesman has of how to build a jet engine (See Fig A.20)

#### *Rape threat against SFWA member by blog commenter*

This section will look specifically at a single comment made by poster “Idle Spectator Jackson” on the blog post that was published through the SFWAAuthors Twitter feed:

Gahhhdawgdatchhhh

someone needs to run a train with the homeboys

next stop, Jemisin

(see Fig A.21)

In this context, “run a train” is clearly a rape threat. Appendix III looks at the question of considering posts by commenters, but in this case there is the added issue that by leaving the tweet linking to the post on the SFWAAuthors feed after he was aware of this comment, Beale was essentially publishing this comment through a SFWA channel. This is particularly important because, as the comment was the first one made on the post, it would have been seen by anyone who read the full post. A timeline of events helps to make the question more clear:

June 6, 2013 (all times in EST except as otherwise noted)

4:29 AM	Blog entry is posted to Beale’s blog (ibid.)
4:38 AM	Rape threat comment is posted to Beale’s blog (ibid.)
4:45 AM	Link to blog post is posted on SFWAAuthors feed
5:12 AM	First complaint is received
5:28 AM	Beale replies to a comment on his blog, showing that he has read comments (see Fig A.22)
5:41 AM	First screenshot of tweet is taken (in Pacific Time Zone: see Fig A.23)
6:45 AM	Second screenshot of tweet is taken (see Fig A.24)
7:09 AM	SFWA Secretary is notified of issue and instructed to delete tweet
7:25 AM	SFWA Secretary deletes tweet

As the above timeline makes clear, Beale had read the rape threat comment while the post was still being published on the SFWAAuthors feed, and chose not to delete the post, delete the comment or request that the tweet be deleted in the roughly two hours before that time and when the tweet was deleted by SFWA. (As Appendix I shows, Beale actively manages comments on his blog.)

#### 4. Threats of harassment and mischief against SFWA and members

This section will look specifically at threats of harassment and mischief made in SFWA-controlled spaces; other threats can be found in section C.

This investigation has found two threats of harassment and mischief against SFWA and members made by Mr. Beale in a SFWA-controlled space, both in a post later removed by moderators from the online Forums:

You can certainly try it [expulsion]. [...] I'll just tell you right now, I will absolutely be insisting on a Nebula award as part of any settlement. (See Fig A.26)

This would seem to imply that he is suggesting that he means to extort SFWA in some way so as to be guaranteed a Nebula award.

Immediately afterwards he adds:

What I find amusing is that some of you actually seem to think I'm being difficult now. (Ibid.)

It is not difficult to interpret this statement as a threat of harassment and mischief.

## **B. Continuing pattern of actions prejudicial to SFWA**

This section of the report examines the evidence on the question of whether Theodore Beale has engaged in ongoing and deliberate efforts to disrupt SFWA's mission and to undermine the credibility of the organization both among the membership and the general public that did not occur in SFWA-controlled spaces or in ways that directly violate SFWA bylaws and policies. While they may not be in direct violation of SFWA bylaws or policies, they may be taken as evidence that Beale's actions and continued membership in SFWA pose a significant risk of imminent and serious harm to the organization.

Three general issues will be addressed in this section:

1. Attacks on members
  - 1.1. Personal attacks
  - 1.2. Threats by commenters
2. Attacks on the reputation and integrity of the organization
  - 2.1. Accusations of corruption
3. Effect of Beale's continued membership on SFWA



## 1. Attacks on members

Attacks on members which occurred through SFWA channels or in SFWA-controlled spaces are addressed in part A. The following looks at attacks and threats which were made in his blog and other public space.

### *Personal attacks*

Beale has made numerous attacks on fellow SFWA members which may be seen as going outside the bounds of professional conduct. The best-known and most consistent is likely his use of derogatory nicknames, such as “McRapey” for John Scalzi and “McRacist” for N.K. Jemisin (see Fig B.1). He has also compared Amal el-Mohtar to an Egyptian cleric who has, according to Beale, called for the ethnic cleansing of Egypt (Fig B.2); accused James Enge of “despicable behavior” (see Fig B.3); accused Ms. Jemisin of plagiarism (see Fig B.4); and has published a blog comment claiming that Teresa Nielsen Hayden has herpes. (See Appendix I for the question of whether and why to consider blog comments. In this case, though, Beale actually reprinted the comment in one of his own blog posts, making him more clearly the publisher of the comment: see Fig B.5)

### *Threats by commenters*

Beale has permitted and, arguably, encouraged threats of violence against SFWA members on his blogs and elsewhere. (See Appendix I for the question of whether and why to consider blog comments.) As we have seen, Beale allowed one threat of rape against Ms. Jemisin to remain in the post that was published through the SFWA Authors Twitter feed; a similar threat was made in the June 13 post “SFWA Forum: the moderated posts”:

Jemisin libeled him.

the SFWA is aiding and abetting her in this libel.

come get some, bitch.

(See Fig B.6)

On June 18 an implicit threat was made by a commenter against member Aliette de Bodard:

Didn't we used to drop bombs on Europeans who were fascinated by racial literature?  
Eventually people like de Bodard will need the air raid sirens.

(See Fig B.7)

Another series of threats was made against Lee Martindale following a comment she made on Jim Hines’ blog (see Fig B.8) to which Beale took offense (see Fig B.9). Commenters to Beale’s blog post posted threats such as suggestions that she should commit suicide (see Fig B.10), statements that “she needs to

get punched or laid... or maybe both in quick succession” (see Fig B.11), requests to “Post her home address, I dare you...” (see Fig B.12) and detailed descriptions of her murder:

I’m pretty sure that Bane [*a former commenter*] would have had a long, eloquent post about seeing an eye through a scope and then the brilliant crimson & grey spatter when he caressed the trigger, or maybe something about the slippery, warm feel of entrails spilling over his hand

(See Fig B.13. Note that Beale ended this post with “This post is dedicated to the memory of Bane”; see Fig B.14]

One comment provided instructions on how to “SWAT” her (send a police SWAT team to her house):

If you want to SWAT at the gnatstys [*Internet spelling of “nasties”*], you could use skype from a café and call into the police phone number local to the threat, impersonating the threat and saying something like you’ve just killed your family, are going to blow up a school, etc. and watch the militarized blue-coats go after them. (see Fig B.15)

A few notes may be valuable in providing context. First, the suggestion that Beale should provide Martindale’s home address was not an idle one: on at least one prior occasion Beale has posted the home address of a reviewer (not an SFWA member) he felt had not read his book before reviewing it (see Fig B.16. for the post in which this happened. Although the full address was removed by the time that screenshot was taken, the comment seen in Fig B.17 shows that it had been posted.)

Finally, on June 15 2013 (two days after Beale’s attack on Ms. Jemisin went out via the SFWAAuthors Twitter feed) Martindale also received a threat by e-mail which, while it cannot be traced directly to Beale, echoes threats made against her, and the specific language used in them, on his blogs:

Keep on doing what you do, keep on following the same routine, you will be located, and you will be dealt with just like you deserve to be. My friends are starting a bail fund for me. See, you're not the only one who can make veiled threats of violence, you fat, stinking, ugly cunt.

Kill yourself now and save someone else the trouble you rotten, repulsive piece of human trash.

## 2. Attacks on the reputation and integrity of the organization

Mr. Beale has made statements on numerous platforms, including but not limited to his blog, that can be seen as attacks on the reputation and integrity of SFWA. This report does not consider the question of whether Mr. Beale's statements meet the legal tests for defamation in any jurisdiction. Instead, it examines more broadly whether these comments were intentionally harmful to the reputation and integrity of SFWA and, if so, whether or not they were made as criticisms in the spirit of good faith. General evidence on whether or not Mr. Beale has been acting in good faith towards the organization is found in Section C. However, there are specific questions which must be considered in asking whether Mr. Beale's accusations were made in good faith:

- Were the accusations either openly stated or clearly implied?
- Did Mr. Beale present evidence to support his accusations?
- Did Mr. Beale believe that evidence to be accurate and relevant?

### *Accusations of corruption and unfair business practices*

Most of the statements made by Mr. Beale that can be seen as attacks on the reputation and integrity of SFWA relate to accusations of corruption and unfair business practices. For instance, he has described SFWA of being "the very people who have created a global cottage industry out of thinly disguised necrophilia and bestiality" (see Fig B.18) and accused SFWA of acting as a monopoly:

Comment from demonl:

It's amazing to contrast the online interactions of fantasy/sci fi writers with the online social interactions of model ship builders.

Comment from VD [Beale]:

The difference is that one group of model ship builders isn't actively trying to prevent another group of them from being able to build model ships. (See Fig B.19)

The majority of Beale's accusations of corruption relate to the Nebula Awards and are found in two posts on his blog and one at the online magazine *Black Gate*. In his first post on the topic, "Amazon, the SFWA and authorial corruption" (December 27 2012) he states that "corruption [...] is absolutely rife within SFWA, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Organization" (see Fig B.20). While he avoided making the accusation openly in the title of the blog post, he was less circumspect in his tweet of the blog, which read "How SFWA corruption proves Amazon is right to limit author-written reviews" (see Fig B.21).

As noted above, there is an important distinction between genuine criticism of the organization and attacks on its reputation. There is nothing that inherently prevents an accusation of corruption from being genuine criticism so long as it is supported by evidence and done in good faith. The original

“Amazon, the SFWA and authorial corruption” post offers no evidence, instead inviting readers to find it in his post at *Black Gate*. The title of that post, “SF/F Corruption: Part I”, avoids making direct accusations against SFWA in the title, but within the text says “the Nebula Award is, first and foremost, a means for various small groups of people to shamelessly and dishonestly promote the works of themselves and their friends.” Note that he does not frame this in terms of these individuals misusing or gaming the system, but in terms of the Nebula system – and by extension SFWA – being itself corrupt. (See Fig B.22) No evidence is provided for this beyond the actual Nebula results and Beale’s personal opinion of the aesthetic merits of various books that won or did not win awards. In the comments, Beale also implies further corruption in SFWA, saying “the Nebulas are the least of it” (see Fig B.23) and openly states that “Corruption in SFWA is a documented and easily proven fact” (see Fig B.24). In this comment, and another where he is challenged to substantiate his accusations, Beale says that “this is merely Part I” (ibid.) and “Did you miss the part about Part I?” (see Fig B.25) So far as I am able to determine, however, no sequel to this post ever appeared at *Black Gate*, and his post at his own blog titled “SF/F Corruption: Part II” also provides no evidence, instead saying “I had intended to continue on the SFWA theme with which I began the Corruption in Science Fiction series, but a pair of articles concerning the legitimacy of the bestseller lists caught my attention” and then focusing on whether publishers are gaming bestseller lists (see Fig B.26)

In an edit to the original post on his blog, however, Beale did present what he claimed was direct evidence, and it’s worth looking at that in detail. In an edit to the original “SF/F Corruption: Part I” post, Beale added:

UPDATE: An SFWA insider confirms my observations: “[Vox] is correct when it comes to the inbred logrolling. As SFWA Bulletin editor from 1999-2002 I can attest to this first hand. A small clique and their “in” friends control quite a bit of what goes on in SFWA (at least it did back then and I have no reason to doubt that things have changed).”

(See Fig B.27)

The phrase “An SFWA insider confirms my observations,” provided as it is without elaboration or context, would seem to imply two things: first, that the source is a member of SFWA; second, that the source agrees with Beale’s accusations of corruption in this post. Neither, however, is true. The quote is taken from commenter “Dave T.” in response to Beale’s *Black Gate* post, and the text is quoted accurately (see Fig B.28). Later posts by the same commenter, however, show that he had not been a member of SFWA since roughly 2003, or nine years before the post (see Fig B.29), and also that he did not agree with Beale’s overall point about the Nebula process (and by extension SFWA) being corrupt (see Fig B.30). Moreover, it is clear that Beale knew both of these facts, because he participated actively in the comment thread following the article and actually responded to Dave T’s second comment (see Fig B.31).

Therefore, it would seem that Beale knowingly misrepresented someone as a current member of SFWA who was not, misrepresented him as an authoritative source of evidence for Beale’s accusation (since the accusations related directly to the 2012 Nebulas, and Dave T. said he had not been a member since

2003) and misrepresented Dave T's comments in order to provide support for an otherwise unsubstantiated attack on the reputation and integrity of SFWA.

As a result, it is my conclusion that Mr. Beale made open accusations harmful to the reputation and integrity of SFWA, provided no supporting evidence that would show that he was making an honest criticism in good faith, and furthermore knowingly distorted evidence in support of those accusations.

### 3. Effect of Beale's continued membership on SFWA

Aside from the threats of harassment and nuisance litigation discussed elsewhere in this report, there is evidence to suggest that following his recent actions Beale's continued membership in SFWA will serve to alienate many current members as well as discouraging currently qualified writers from joining.

#### *Prospective members*

The following is a sample of statements made in social media (blogs, Twitter, Facebook, etc.) in which writers who are not currently SFWA members state that Beale's behaviour is a barrier to their joining SFWA:

"Now I know not to join SFWA. I don't go where I'm not wanted."

"If the Board doesn't vote Beale out... I'm not sure if I want to join."

"Please count me in as one of those people [saying they no longer have interest in joining]."

"This is why I belong to NINC, not SFWA."

"If he's there when I qualify, then I'm writing a letter explaining why I have no interest in joining."

"If he's in when I qualify, I am never joining."

"I cannot even imagine doing it [joining SFWA] as long as this type of thing happens and people like this are allowed to continue in this organization."

"I wish I was an SFWA writer just so I could renounce my membership."

"I'm one of those who won't join as long as Beale is a member."

"I'd like to publicly state that, while I qualify for SWFA membership, and have been waffling over whether to join for some time, I will not be joining while Beale is a member."

(Because of the number of these, and because they were made in publicly-available fora I have not provided screenshots. They are available on request to Board members.)

Perhaps the clearest evidence of the effect of Beale's continued membership on prospective writers is the case of a writer who had qualified and applied for membership actually cancelled in the middle of the process, citing the following reason: "I simply can't be part of an organization that supports racism."

#### *Current members*

Many current members have also stated that they intend to resign their membership if Beale remains a member. (All of the quotes below either come from e-mails sent to officers of the Board, in which case

the members gave permission for a portion of their e-mails to be reproduced here, or were taken from publicly-available fora.)

"I will be appalled if SFWA don't expel Theodore Beale and definitely won't want to be part of their organization again."

"I was tempted to walk away after the earlier debacles, but this is just beyond outrageous."

"My membership is on the table as well. This organization is a professional embarrassment."

"I don't want to remain part of an organization that allows its public facade to be used for this sort of drivel. If the question comes down to my support of SFWA versus being part of an organization that gives Beale a platform to harass fellow authors, then I will step away from SFWA."

"I'm giving SFWA one last chance, but if they botch it I'm gone and will urge others to do the same."

"I'm concerned for SFWA's increasingly tarnished reputation and frustrated that Mr. Beale seems intent on alienating myself and other women and minority members from the organization."

"Keeping this individual in the organisation is not good for members. It makes the organisation laughing stock in the wider community, and detracts from more worthwhile activities."

"I love what SFWA does for writers, and I love being a member, but I hate thinking that I am a member of an organization that this racist, sexist guy also belongs to."

"I value various SFWA services, projects, and advocacy efforts, but I am unwilling to belong to a writers' organization which welcomes and enables a virulently disruptive and unprofessional member who keeps breaking rules and violating policies, and who uses the organization's tools and venues to personally attack other members." (This last comment was from a member whose membership was not, in fact, renewed due to the concerns stated here.)

Most prominently, an outgoing Board Member indicated that he intended to let his membership lapse until Beale was no longer a member: "My membership is due and I can't in good conscience renew it until SFWA finds the means or moral backbone or whatever's ultimately required to expel someone as hateful and wilfully destructive as Beale—not just from the organisation but from the culture present within it."

A broader sampling from member e-mails received on the issue can be found in Appendix II.

## **C. Actions which demonstrate bad faith**

This section of the report examines actions by Mr. Beale which, while not individually as serious as those described in parts A and B, may be taken as cumulative evidence that his interactions with SFWA have not been in good faith.

Two general issues will be addressed in this section:

1. Declarations of unwillingness to obey SFWA bylaws and procedures
  - 1.1 Archiving Forum material for later publication
  - 1.2 Refusal to abide by bylaws and Board sanctions
2. Threats of nuisance litigation

As well, the final part of this section will look at posts and comments made by Beale in which he makes statements regarding his intentions and his attitude towards SFWA.



## 1. Declarations of unwillingness to follow SFWA bylaws and procedures

Section A looked at occasions where Mr. Beale may have actually violated SFWA bylaws and procedures. This part of the report will look at his general attitude towards those bylaws and procedures, in particular public statements where he has said that he does not consider himself bound by them and does not intend to observe them.

### *Archiving Forum material for later publication*

Mr. Beale has repeatedly stated that he has made copies of material on the online Forum and intends to publish it:

I've already got the entire SF Forum on record, so it would be fascinating to see them attempt to defend various statements by certain authors while claiming that mine were worthy of expulsion.

(See Fig C.1)

Commenter: You can make public the entire contents of the forum you archived, without having to worry that they'll kick you out.

Beale: Certainly, were I no longer bound by confidentiality.

(See Fig C.2)

Note that Beale does not say he has archived all of the discussions relevant to his case, or that he will only publish those: he says that he has archived "the entire SF Forum" and will publish, in his commenter's words (which he affirms) "the entire contents of the forum you archived." In another comment he states clearly that he will not consider himself bound by confidentiality "if I was not a member with access to the forums" (see Fig C.3).

To remove all ambiguity, Beale also published this exchange:

Commenter: Archived all the discussions?

Beale: Yep.

(See Fig C.4)

Since this material was posted in publicly accessible blog posts bearing the tag "SFWA", it may be reasonable to view it as constituting a threat that he will publish a large archive of confidential SFWA material if he feels he is wronged by the organization. It's also worth noting his syntax – "the confidentiality agreement would no longer bind me if I was not a member *with access to the forums*" [italics mine]: because there is no comma after "member," the most obvious meaning of this would be

that he would respond to a loss of access to the forums with publication of this confidential SFWA material, whether or not he were formally expelled.

*Refusal to abide by bylaws and Board sanctions*

Mr. Beale has stated clearly that he does not intend to abide by the SFWA bylaws if the Board votes to expel him. In particular, he has said that he does not accept the section of the bylaws specifying the formula for repaying a Lifetime Active member who is expelled:

Any expelled Life member is entitled to more than the bylaws indicate due to the official valuation put on a Life membership. If they attempt to remove it [...] they will without question create real financial damages.

(See Fig C.5)

As the last sentence of that excerpt suggests, Mr. Beale has been clear that he intends to sue SFWA on this basis if he is expelled. His threats of nuisance litigation are examined more closely in the second part of this section.

He makes a similar claim in a post on the SFWA online forums in which he suggests, essentially, that the organization has no legal right to expel him:

A lifetime membership in SFWA is presently valued at \$5,000.00. Although the bylaws presently contain a formula that is intended to deprive a lifetime member of the greater part of that officially established value, that particular section is highly unlikely to hold up if challenged in any court of law. I'm sure you will understand that the SFWA cannot simply steal property worth \$5,000.00 from its members *regardless of what the bylaws say or how unanimous the opinion of its board members may be.* [emphasis added]

(See Fig C.6)

## 2. Threats of nuisance litigation

Mr. Beale has repeatedly threatened to harass SFWA through nuisance litigation. Mr. Beale has made explicit his intention to sue both in the SFWA online forums (in a post later removed by moderators):

A lifetime membership in SFWA is presently valued at \$5,000.00. Although the bylaws presently contain a formula that is intended to deprive a lifetime member of the greater part of that officially established value, that particular section is highly unlikely to hold up if challenged in any court of law. I'm sure you will understand that the SFWA cannot simply steal property worth \$5,000.00 from its members regardless of what the bylaws state or how unanimous the opinion of its board members may be. (Ibid.)

and also on his own blog:

The board can make that determination [whether or not to expel him] and hope that it will stand up in court.

(See Fig C.7)

He has also suggested that his intent is to harass SFWA through nuisance litigation:

Once the lawyers get their hooks in, they're very, very good at keeping the billable hours going.

(See Fig C.8)

My lawyer broke his leg a few weeks ago. He's bored.

(See Fig C.9)

## Intentions and attitudes towards SFWA

Mr. Beale has made his attitude towards the organization clear through his blog posts. On the most obvious level, he frequently refers to SFWA through derogatory plays on the meaning of the acronym, such as “Seriously Fascist Women’s Association” (see Fig C.10), “Spitefully Fascist Writers of America (Fig C.11) and “Seriously Fat Women Authors” (see Fig C.12).

More significantly, he has made clear that he sees little value in SFWA or membership in the organization:

SFWA is already sunk so far deep into the mire that it’s hardly possible to bring it further into disrepute.

(See Fig C.13)

Commenter: VD, any value with the SFWA?

Beale: Considerable entertainment value, but other than that, not so much.

(See Fig C.14)

The appeal [of membership] is [...] the mere fact of my membership infuriates all the right people.

(See Fig C.15)

He has also stated openly that he not willing to compromise, avoid conflict with the organization of other members, or accept sanctions if they are imposed:

In rejecting NK Jemisin’s call for reconciliation within the SFWA, I declared that there can be no reconciliation between the observant and the delusional.

(See Fig C.16)

I’ll never back down to them.

(See Fig C.17)

Finally, Beale’s attitude may be summed up in this exchange where he explains his motivations for seeking conflict with SFWA:

Commenter A: The point isn't to win, the point is to carry out the threat, and to make the threat if it's warranted. Even if it was to come to Vox's expulsion from SWFA, then a lawsuit, Vox wins as long as he doesn't back down.

(See Fig C.18)

Commenter B: How is that a win?

(See Fig C.19)

Beale: It all depends upon what the objective is. If, for example, I wished to set up a rival organization, it might be more effective to encourage the existing one to burn itself down first. Or perhaps I'm deeply wounded, emotionally, and I'm simply lashing out in the only way I know how.

Or it could be the objective is to win three Nebula prizes running as part of a settlement. Or perhaps I think this is the way to become president of the organization since I couldn't win in a free election. Or it could simply be an instinctive desire to sow chaos.

(See Fig C.20)

## Appendix I. Inclusion of blog comments

This Appendix examines the question of whether to give weight to comments made on Beale's blog by people other than himself. A key question is whether or not Beale actively manages the content of the comment threads on his blog by removing comments: if he does so, it follows that he has permitted all other comments to remain.

In considering the question, it's worth looking at the precise meaning of the term "moderate" in the context of Blogger, the blogging platform used by Beale. As this article by Blogger explains (<https://support.google.com/blogger/answer/42537?hl=en>), turning on Comment Moderation in that platform means that all comments have to be actively approved by the operator of the blog before they are published. Beale's blog is not moderated in this sense, possibly because the large volume of comments on his posts would make it impractical.

However, there is evidence to suggest that Beale actively *manages* the comments on his blog. To begin with, his post "Rules of the blog" lays out conditions under which he will delete comments:

If you refuse to either answer a question or admit that you cannot answer it, then you will not be permitted to comment here and all of your subsequent comments will be deleted.

(See Fig X.1)

Cross-comments and off-topic comments will usually be deleted. If your comment gets deleted, deal with it.

(Ibid.)

There are at least five people who have been banned that insist on trying to comment here from time to time under different names; just ignore them as someone will get around to deleting their comments as well as the comments of those who respond to them soon enough.

(See Fig X.2)

You will not call me a liar without providing any evidence of my lying, nor will you attempt to attribute to me words I have not written or actions I have not performed. If you do, your comments will be deleted and you will probably be banned.

(Ibid.)

Any insertion of evolution or Creationism into a post that is not directly and specifically related to either subject will be deleted.

(See Fig X.3)

If you are one of the small group of persistent anklebiters who insist on making the same tedious and incompetent attacks over and over again, I will simply delete your comments. This

group includes, but is not necessarily limited to Beezle, Cabal, Cisbio, Dan Picaro, and the weirdo who keeps posting about his ancestors being fish.

(See Fig X.4)

Attempts to claim that my refusal to further engage with a commenter whose arguments have repeatedly been demonstrated to be flawed are the result of cowardice or an inability to respond are false and will be deleted.

(Ibid.)

There are, therefore, clearly stated rules on what is not permissible content on Beale's blog. Since Beale does not forbid threats or defamatory comments, it would seem that they are allowed under his rules.

He restates his willingness to delete comments in a later blog, "In which we are amused," in which he explains how comments work on the site:

It's even easier to Remove Content [using Blogger's comment template] than it was with CoComment [...] so don't operate under the mistaken impression that it's going to be any harder for me to keep the usual suspects from getting out of hand than it was before.

(See Fig X.5)

Along with his stated intention to manage comment content on his blog, there is evidence that Beale actively does so. He threatens commenters with deletion:

Obvious, you will address me here as Vox if you wish your comments to remain.

(See Fig X.6)

and blocks commenters when he disapproves of their content:

Beale: You can start commenting again as soon as you demonstrate that you can produce something besides ignorant and reflexive anklebiting, Obvious. It didn't escape anyone's attention how you fell silent and didn't admit that you were wrong when I referenced the information about the introduction of 16-bit color and dynamic lighting models.

If you can't bring anything original to the table, no one is interested in what you have to say.

Commenter: Really?

(See Fig X.7)

Beale: Yes, really. If you're just going to ignorantly snap at ankles, you're not going to be allowed to participate. Take a position, for crying out loud. Stand up for what you believe, don't just yap in reflexive response to things about which you know nothing.

Look at DH. He probably agrees with me about as much as you do. But he has a lot more to say than simply offering snarky negativity.

There is nothing wrong with disagreeing. Or being wrong. But for the love of all that is left and right, don't be so bloody tedious. And it wouldn't hurt if you'd drop the passive-aggressiveness either. It doesn't make your arguments convincing, it makes them sound like they're coming from a petulant teenage girl.

(See Fig X.8)

Deletion due to content seems to be common enough on the blog that commenters expect it:

Vox is certainly ging [*sic*] to delete this but your comment is too amusing...

(See Fig X.9)

The above comment was, in fact, deleted: it survives in the comment thread because another commenter quoted it. (We can be certain that it was deleted by Beale and not the commenter because when a commenter deletes his or her own comment it looks like Fig X.10. The commenter whose comment was deleted participates further in the thread and does not dispute the attribution of the quote, so we can assume that it is genuine.)

Therefore it would seem that Beale actively manages the content in the comment threads on his blogs, meaning that while he may not necessarily agree with the content of those comments that are not deleted, he does consider them to be appropriate for publication.

In addition to the above, there are two comments that should be given particular weight: the rape threat against NK Jemisin (which was published through the SFWAAuthors feed; see Section A.3.3, Rape threat against SFWA member by blog commenter) and the allegation that Teresa Nielsen Hayden has herpes (which he reproduced in one of his own posts; see Section B.1.1, Personal attacks).



## Appendix II: Submissions by SFWA members

Many SFWA members have contacted members of the Board to express an opinion on this issue. In total, 66 Active, Associate or Affiliate members sent e-mails on the topic that were either received by the investigator or forwarded to him by the Board members who initially received them. Since not all Board members were able to forward the e-mails they received to the investigator, it is likely that some voices are going unheard.

Excerpts from some of these e-mails can be found below. As well, each e-mail was coded as being in favor of expulsion, action at the Board's discretion, or no further action. (Only one member called for any specific penalty other than expulsion, asking that Mr. Beale be censured. This was rolled into "action at the Board's discretion" for statistical purposes. )

All figures that follow refer only to the opinions expressed among e-mails sent to the Board and forwarded to the investigator:

Among Active members, 39 (72%) favoured expulsion, 13 (24%) favoured action at the Board's discretion and 2 (4%) favoured no further action (Lifetime Active members were included in this category; see Fig X.11)

Among Associate members, 6 (67%) favoured expulsion, 1 (11%) favoured action at the Board's discretion and 2 (22%) favoured no further action (see Fig X.12)

Among Affiliate members, 2 (67%) favoured expulsion, 1 (33%) favoured action at the Board's discretion and none favoured no further action (see Fig X.13)

Among all members, 47 (71%) favoured expulsion, 15 (23%) favoured action at the Board's discretion and 4 (6%) favoured no further action (see Fig X.14)

Excerpts from member e-mails

Below are excerpts from some of the e-mails sent advocating each position:

### *Expulsion*

"He's destroying SFWA's credibility on the national stage, and making it very, very tough for those of us with professional ethics to stay with SFWA."

"Mr Beale has repeatedly and aggressively used SFWA platforms to broadcast and disseminate these views with obvious malicious intent."

"Beale's actions have reached the point that they are interfering with our ability to work for our members."

"While Beale is free to say anything he wishes on his blog, there is no requirement that he be permitted to continually use his membership in our organization to bring added attention to his hatred."

"He seems to be looking for opportunities to troll the organization and use our slow-action and tools against us with intentional malice."

"He has been permitted to air his views. We have not curtailed his right to be heard. But freedom from censorship does NOT equal freedom from consequences."

"Should the board wish, I shall personally recompensate the SFWA for any membership dues that need to be refunded to Mr. Beale."

#### *Action at the Board's discretion*

"If the organization takes a stand against harassment of any flavor, it will go a long way to engendering the trust of members and potential members."

"He [Beale] has every right to be as outrageous in public venues, or in private, as he wishes to be. Trust me, if SFWA was to kick every member who said racist or sexist things from time to time there'd never be a quorum. [...] What has happened here, though, is that he crossed a very serious line by using an official SFWA communication venue to slam an African-American female member with words like 'monkey' and 'half-savage,' and THAT, unless I'm mistaken, is actionable under the bylaws. [...] Maybe he's just a troll looking for a good time, but in my opinion he's not a good representative of the organization. If you agree, take whatever action you find appropriate."

#### *No further action*

"Mr. Beale violated the established Twitter policy. Per that same policy, his tweet was deleted and his access to the SFWA Twitter feed was removed. Any additional actions against Mr. Beale specific to his blog post would have to be covered by another policy entirely. I'm not aware of any policy that exists, including the one regarding sexual harassment (as it applies, again, to SFWA-specific areas), that Mr. Beale has violated, nor of any mechanisms, including censure, that allow for the punishment of his behavior [in this case]."

"I would be a lot more comfortable if the response from the board was a strong condemnation of what he did followed by the publication of clear guidelines of professional and acceptable behavior by those representing SFWA (e.g., in a SFWA-branded line of public communication) and among members internally, with clear language that censure and/or expulsion can result from violating them."