

ALEXIAD

(ΑΛΞΙΑΔ)

\$2.00

Thoroughbred fans may have been cheated of a Triple Crown this year but not trotting horse fans who got to see the magnificent colt Glidemaster glide home in the Yonkers Trot. I didn't get to watch as we were travelling but I was thrilled when I could finally get to my computer and learn that Glidemaster had indeed won the trotting Triple Crown. I wish I could have seen him in person, but Yonkers New York is just a little far to go to see a horse race unless you happen to have won the lottery recently. I did at least get to see the horse race at the Kentucky Futurity.

Elizabeth Garrott continued her Christmas tradition of hosting a table for the St. Matthews Baptist Church Christmas extravaganza. This year it was marvelous Celtic music and the food was delicious. Thanks for inviting us, Elizabeth, and more thanks for watching the cats over Thanksgiving.

— Lisa

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Joe's Birthday is **December 24, 2006**
Christmas is **December 25, 2006**

Printed on December 6, 2006
Deadline is **February 1, 2007**



For some of you, this will be the **last** issue — unless you subscribe, write, or otherwise indicate your interest.

Reviewer's Notes

The first Monday in December is quarterly Trash Day in our part of Louisville. Lisa has been walking along with me until we get across the street from where I work; then she goes down the street to catch the bus and I cross it to go to work. But Monday we paused.

The neighbor had set out two boxes of books. A minute or so later we had two more boxes of books, as if we really needed them. (Friends will have second choice at them, but that's another story.) They were almost all tie-ins; mostly STAR TREK™ but also others.

Every era has its folk tales. But there are folk tales and then there are folk tales. I looked at the fanfiction.net site and noted with some dismay that there were fan fiction stories about Edwin A. Abbott's *Flatland*. Yes. And, as I understand it, fanfiction.net doesn't have the really outre ones.

Yet . . . how different are the tales of Kirk and his band from the Matter of Britain or the Matter of France, or the Matter of Germany? Perhaps it was because Arthur, or Charlemagne, or Barbarossa were common heritage, while Kirk is owned by a company that wishes to maximize its profit therefrom.

Then too, creators are recognized, fitfully. Saying that you have a right to express the passionate love between Aragorn and Legolas is a violation of what J. R. R. Tolkien intended to say and do.

All the new ideas, though, seem to wander amid the maze of twisty little websites, all alike, while the sure sale stuff that the market wants now keeps on being ground out. What will happen with the next set of readers? Assuming there even is one.

RANDOM JOTTINGS

by Joe



Modest Proposal Department: As you know, with the lengths of books becoming greater these days, the classics of the sixties and before are now coming out in combined editions. Thus, for example, the Science Fiction Book Club is bringing out Edgar Rice Burroughs's Mars books in combined form. Having *A Princess of Mars*, *The Gods of Mars*, and *The Warlord of Mars* in one volume makes some sense, as those are a connected narrative, especially the second and third.

What I'd like to see is a one-volume collection of the original serialized versions of the four "core" Lensman books — *Galactic Patrol*, *Gray Lensman*, *Second Stage Lensman*, and *Children of the Lens* — that is to say, without the interstitial explanatory material, so that in one complete narrative the reader can gradually see as the story progresses how Kinnison (and eventually, family) learned of the depth and complexity of Boskonian and its Plot Against Civilization. Instead of being told flat out at the beginning.

The first episode of the second season of *Rome* will be shown on HBO on a.d. XIX Kalendas Februarius MMDCLX (or, in the barbarian, January 14, 2007). Vale!

In October of 2006, Henry Allingham left Brighton and went to Witten in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, where he met Robert Meier. There's nothing particularly unusual about this, except that Allingham is the oldest surviving British vet of WWI (110 years old), and Meier is the oldest surviving German one (109). They got along very well, some ninety years on.

The oldest surviving American vet, and in fact the oldest surviving WWI vet in the world, is Emiliano Mercado del Toro of Puerto Rico, at 115. There are fifty-five recognized surviving veterans, including fourteen in the U.S. — Lisa's cousin and my stepcousin Robley Rex (105) of Louisville is one — six in Britain, four in Australia, and three in Canada. (Subject to change without prior notice.)

NASA's Phoenix Mars probe will have with it a special silica glass DVD containing messages from various famous people, including

Sir Arthur C. Clarke and Ray Bradbury, as well as recorded messages by Carl Sagan and Isaac Asimov, art by artists such as Frank R. Paul, Chuck Jones, Kelly Freas, and Clifford Geary, the famous radio interview of H. G. Wells and Orson Welles, and names. Yours too, if you sign up before February 1, 2007 at:

<http://planetary.org/special/fromearth/phoenix>

"The Planetary Society will not share or sell your e-mail address," it says, so you won't be getting messages from the widow of Tul Axtar of Jahar needing a foreign bank account to transfer forty-seven million tanpi off Barsoom. (Thanks to Oino Sakai for pointing this out.)

I was wrong. The title's "floating city" in Jules Verne's *Une ville flottante* (1870, 1871) is the *Great Eastern*, a ship as big as a small town. So then I decided to try reading *La Chasse au Météore (Le Bolide)* (1909), that is *The Chase for the Golden Meteor* (1998), which turned out to be "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre" so to speak. However, when the couple getting married in the small town in Virginia did so according to French civil marriage procedure, it was sort of offputting.

Continuing in the Vernian trend, after some time searching on Google satellite maps, I observed that the location of Stone Hill (the site of the Columbiad in *De la Terre à la Lune* (1865)) seems in the real world to have rather a lot of sinkholes, and be rather lacking in actual hills. (As is pointed out on the webpage of the Stone Hill SF Association (www.stonehill.org), the water table in the area is only two feet below the surface.) There was such a picture in *The Annotated From the Earth to the Moon* (1978). Thanks to Gutenberg, which has both French and English texts of the book, it is possible to find that the original was "Stone's-Hill [*Colline de pierres*]".

<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/799>

Werner Herzog, director of *Grizzly Man* (2005), the story of the life and death of Timothy Treadwell, is doing a documentary on life and science in Antarctica for the Discovery Channel. One wonders if he will cover the *The Thing* film festival at McMurdo.

I've been reading Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (2005) and noting the alternate history potential. For example, on occasion Lincoln traveled to the front by ship down the Virginia coast, spending the night in some convenient bay. Imagine what a fortuitous riverside bivouac by Stuart's cavalry might have done. Or her description of Lincoln holding an axe at arm's length by the head. "*Conan the President*"?

. . . Abe glared at Booth and the conspirators, his axe in hand. "Who dies first!?" he snarled, and then he was in among them, blade rising and falling to left and right . . .

Question: who is the Senior Science Fiction Writer now? He or she has to be the earliest-published living writer. The leading candidate is Frederik Pohl ("Nova Midplane" with Cyril Kornbluth, *Super Science Stories*, November 1940) but more work is obviously needed.

OBITS

We regret to report the death of **Nelson S. Bond on November 4, 2006**. Born **November 23, 1908**, Bond began as a public relations man who decided to write fiction; his first SF story "Down the Dimensions" was published in the April 1937 issue of *Astounding*. He was best known for his series such as the "Meg" stories of a reconciliation of a gender-divided society, or the comic stories of Pat Pending the inventor, Lancelot Biggs the tinkering spaceman, and others. He preferred to write short stories, but also did screenplays, and even a James Branch Cabell checklist. His other interests included philately. He was named a SFWA Author Emeritus in 1998.

We don't appreciate some people while they're alive, and even their passing can be untimely.

We regret to report the death of **John Stewart "Jack" Williamson on November 10, 2006**. Born **April 29, 1908** in Texas, Williamson began writing very early, with his first ever story "The Metal Man" being published in *Amazing Stories* for November 1928. His writing achievements included the Legion of Space series, the Seetee Series (as "Will Stewart"), the Humanoids stories, the Hugo-winning autobiography *Wonder's Child: My Life in Science Fiction* (1984), and the Hugo and Nebula winning story "Terraforming Earth" in 2000.

His last published book was *The Stonehenge Gate* (2005; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 4 #5). At the time of his death he was the Senior Science Fiction Writer. He was named a SFWA Grand Master in 1975.

He was in at the beginning and now none are left from those days.

We regret to report the death of **Jeanette Sabella on November 16, 2006**, mother of *Visions of Paradise* editor Robert Sabella. Our condolences to Bob.

We regret to report the death of **Leon E. Stover on November 25, 2006** in Chicago. Born in 1929, Stover was the editor of the Westside Press critical edition of H. G. Wells's science fiction works, as well as being an author and anthology editor himself. He wrote a number of other critical works, including the Twayne Press book on Robert A. Heinlein.

MONARCHIST NEWS

Recent excavations in Rome have unearthed the imperial insignia of Maxentius (Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maxentius AUC MLIX-MLXV (AD 306-309)), the loser of the battle of the Milvian Bridge.

BORN AGAIN

Commentary by Joseph T Major

The data entry specialist, back when we had one, used to share my office. John had had a very interesting life. He was the one who had the Rush Limbaugh show on every afternoon for as long as he could stand it. He was a Democratic Party activist and also a profound anti-abortion activist. He was interested in genealogy, which made sharing the space tolerable, and I was sorry when he left.

John had been born here in Louisville, and one day he began reminiscing about his youth, seeing a free newspaper being distributed promoting some odd theory. The next day I handed him a book that explained it.

A man who is, one after the other, an active baseball player who founds teams and leagues, a pioneering airplane and airline entrepreneur, a leader of a wildly (if locally) successful political movement, and a philosophical theorist with extremely devoted followers sounds like someone you should know about. As you might guess, Alfred William Lawson (1869-1954) is profoundly unknown. He wouldn't be, by any meaning of the term, significant, but as a character study he is worth some notice. The book about him mentioned above is *Zig-Zag-and-Swirl: Alfred W. Lawson's Quest for Greatness* by Lyell D. Henry, Jr. (University of Iowa Press; 1991). Lawson is also discussed in Martin Gardner's *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science* (1957), in a chapter titled "Zig-Zag-and-Swirl".

If I had to describe Lawson's career path I would choose a term from his initial employment and say that he choked. After a very good season as a pitcher in the minor leagues he was called up to the majors where he went 0-3 and batted .000 for as you can guess a very brief career. After that he founded a number of minor leagues, all of which tended to wither and die quite precipitously. When he went into aviation, after grand plans and a spectacular demonstration of his first plane, his second crashed on takeoff, taking the company with it.

And then there was the Direct Credits Society . . .

In the middle of his baseball career, Lawson had written a utopian novel, *Born Again* (1904). It also happens to be a Lost Race novel and a social thriller. After annoying the rest of the crew on his ship, John Convert gets tossed over the side, but fortitously and fortunately lands on an uncharted island, where Arletta, the last survivor of an ancient race, slumbers in suspension. Awakened, she imparts to him the history and culture of her people, evolved beyond crude brutish humanity, before she passes onward. Inspired by this example, Convert returns to America where he begins spreading the truth, until his lookalike evil cousin Edward murders Convert's girlfriend's lookalike cousin Arletta (and you thought Virgil Samms and his lookalike double first cousins the Olmstead twins were bad) and manages to

frame Convert for it. He is martyred, er executed, but his girlfriend Arletta (yes, she, the victim, and the ancient survivor were all named Arletta; they were psychically linked, it seems) posthumously vindicates him and resolves to carry on.

In 1931, Lawson delivered his response to the Depression, in a book titled *Direct Credits for Everybody*. America was a productive society, he explained, but there were blockages and drags on the system. What was needed, therefore, was the elimination of these obstacles. The financiers, you see, were parasitical manipulators; they should be got rid of, and instead the government would institute direct credits to everyone, being the only lender. The government would also take direction of the money supply, issuing sufficient money for the workers to buy up the products of their labor. This system would free the productive capacity of the American people, restoring prosperity and stimulating production. With this credo, the Direct Credits Society was founded, under the stirring motto of:

Justice for Everybody Harms Nobody

In a discussion of the mystery religions of the last years of the first millenium of the era of the city of Rome — to not be anachronistic — L. Sprague de Camp presented his argument as to why Christianity triumphed. It triumphed over the other mystery religions, he opined, because it had a better product than its competitors — more fulfilling, more inclusive, more rewarding, better presented.

Similarly, Marxism crowded out a host of opposing (somehow "competing" seems wrong here) radical socioeconomic theories through its better packaging. Some of these radical theorists became rock-ribbed conservatives once their proposals were the law. For example, The National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry was a radical nineteenth-century farmers' group demanding a federal granary (to store overproduction) and a federal sub-treasury (for low-interest loans to farmers) in every county. Such things now exist, in effect if not in the precise form those radicals of the 1870s demanded; and sure enough, the Grange is now a conservative group:

<http://www.nationalgrange.org>

But the Grangers were one of many competing organizations calling for the reorganization of society. More urban Civil War vets flocked to the Nationalist Party, the organization formed in response to Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* (1888), with its calls for a "labor army" commanding all the means of production and distribution, brought into being by the creation of all-encompassing trusts followed by a merger of commerce and government. (The "urban" is only my guess, but from reading the naïve portrayal of farm work in Bellamy's *Equality* (1897) I think it very likely; see for yourself, both of those books are available on the Project Gutenberg e-book website.) And so on.

There were dozens if not hundreds of lesser theories and organizations, books and writers. One sees this in works such as Ignatius Donnelly's *Caesar's Column* (1890), where the financiers monopolize the economy until a workers' revolt overthrows and exterminates them, but the workers turn out to be unable to manage the system. In some ways Donnelly approached the broadness of Lawson, having unusual and non-standard views on Atlantis and on the authorship of Shakespeare as well. *Caesar's Column* and some of his Atlantean books are also available at the Project Gutenberg website. (Donnelly had some views on the ethnicity of the financiers which will be discussed later.)

In Canada, of course, you had Social Credit. There is a substantial conceptual theme of social credit (with small letters) in Lawson's theories. The question is whether Lawson had encountered C. H. Douglas's works on the topic. If he had, his self-image would not have permitted him to admit it. Most readers of Lawson's works would, I believe, form the opinion that he was possessed of an immense ego, a self-image so powerful and so large that he could never admit in any way that he had ever been influenced by anyone else. Whether or not he actually had is another matter. Then too, ideas *can* be independently developed.

The parallel is with Robert Heinlein, whose immediate post-EPIC work was *For Us, the Living* (2003), which presented in standard "utopian novel" format his version of social credit ideas. That is to say, a traveller from "outside" has to learn all about the world, is shown everything, along with lectures about how much better it is that it was where he came from, and comes away enchanted, the way John Convert did but up close and personal. This dates all the way back to Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) and as recently as Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia* (1975).

When Heinlein approached the topic again, in *Beyond This Horizon* (*Astounding*, April-May 1942; 1948) he had found his voice, and was able to present the ideas in and as the background of a more conventional story. Even *For Us, the Living* is more interesting than *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* or, I suspect, *Born Again*. (*Born Again*, not to mention Lawson's more theoretical works, is also on the Net. I got through six chapters of that book before understanding why the guys on the ship had thrown John Convert overboard.)

That is now and this was then. The Direct Credits Society took off. Lawson made speeches all over the midwest, gaining thousands of supporters. He must have been a very persuasive and charismatic man. Gardner and Henry quote songs written in his honor which test severely the limits of endurable adulation. (One of the less flattering descriptions is "Alfred William Lawson is God's greatest gift to mankind.")

The Direct Credits Society also distributed a newspaper called the *Benefactor*, with punchy headlines in a distinctive sans-serif type, citing Lawson's latest commentary. This was the newspaper my office-mate John remembered.

Looking at the public relations items produced by the Direct Credits Society, some viewers may have a bad feeling about this. The portrayals of financiers are uniformly negative, and some may be concerned that there may have been a connection made, the way that Lawson's fellow Michiganders Henry Ford and Charles Coughlin had certain opinions, remarkably like Ignatius Donnelly's, about the ethnicity of financiers. In spite of Lawson's cooperation, or at least not prohibiting cooperation, with Coughlin's National Union for Social Justice, Lawson was not anti-Semitic; his voluminous writings are not critical of Jews, or for that matter any other ethnic group. This in spite of his stated opinion that the financiers controlled every government and indeed every other organization in the world except for the Direct Credits Society.

As the economy recovered without the need for direct credits, Lawson turned his mind to other pursuits. He had been more broadly minded than most of his associates, of whatever field, and had devoted his mind to a grand theory of life, the universe, and everything. Modestly he declared, "The basic principles of physics were unknown until established by Lawson," and such proved to be true in every field to which he applied his fertile mind.

He had already written a nonfiction book, *Manlife* (1923), on the principles of bodily preservation, or how to live a long healthy life. These principles included vegetarianism, indeed fortifying salads with cut grass, thoroughly chewing every mouthful of food, eschewing smoking and drinking, taking cold head-dunks in the morning . . . someone who followed these precepts would live longer, at least it would seem longer.

But now, this mighty mentality turned to explaining the universe. His magnum opus, the Lawsonomy Trilogy, came out beginning in 1935 with *Lawsonomy*. This was followed by *Mentality* (1938) and *The Almighty* (1939). Lawson's brilliant vision completely replaces all existing theories of science; indeed, these volumes show a fountain of concepts and fields of endeavor all springing from the central core of Lawsonomy. Lawson's brilliant insights into the nature of the universe awed his readers. Who else but could realize that sound was a physical object; that universal gravitation was merely a sham explanation of Suction and Pressure (Lawson's first two great discoveries, along with Zig-Zag-and-Swirl; one of his books shows his initial investigations into Pressure, and only a suppressive person, sorry, a skeptic would point out that it shows him as a tramp riding on the cowcatcher of a train); that the Earth was itself a living organism, ingesting nutrition at the North Pole, processing it, and expelling it at the South Pole (I'm sure that Nicholas Johnson, author of *Big Dead Place* (2005); reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 4 #4) could see the point); could understand . . . indeed, the cosmic mind of Lawson knew no limits. But it was his insights into the root causes of human action that were the most striking.

Human actions were the result of interaction between creative entities, called "menorgs", and

disruptive entities, called "disorgs". Menorgs are God's agents for creating things; disorgs are their opposite. The human body is pervaded with innumerable submicroscopic menorgs and disorgs, all doing their appointed tasks; menorgs uplifting, improving, and repairing the soul and body while disorgs destroy and devastate. Under the influence of a proper mode of thought and behavior (as, say, laid down at its best in Lawsonomy) a human can overcome the disorgs and become what God intended.

Why does this sound like a combination of the "terros" and "deros" of the Shaver Mystery with the "thetans" of a certain popular science of modern mental health? Did Richard Shaver, or Elron, read Lawson's works, and if they had, would they have admitted it?

Indeed, devising experiments that would confirm his other scientific theories would be difficult, not to mention probably disappointing to his followers at least as far as the "confirmation" part went.

Nevertheless, while the great bulk of the members of the Direct Credits Society passed on to other things, a hard-core remnant persisted. In 1943 Lawson bought property in Des Moines, a closed college with quite a nice campus, and established the Des Moines University of Lawsonomy (DMUL). This mighty facility would train the Knowledgegians, those thoroughly educated, trained, and informed in the principles of Lawsonomy, and send them forth to educate, train, and inform the millions of others who would flock to the Cause, so that by the year 2000 the entire world would be run on Lawsonian principles. You can't say the man's aims were modest.

His life was, by way of contrast. Unlike other such leaders, Lawson did not sail around the world on a gigantic yacht, or move from mansion to mansion. Or, more to the point, have a profuse supply of women. He did live a moneyless life, but that was in keeping with his own beliefs.

Lawson died in 1954; the DMUL campus closed two years later. The hard core of the hard core persisted in the communitarian vision and moved to Wisconsin, establishing the Wisconsin University of Lawsonomy (WUL). Lyell Henry movingly describes how, in a solemn ceremony in 1979, the surviving students of Lawsonomy, devoid of a living Knowledgegian to certify the advancement of suitable candidates (for Lawson had been the only one, as Martin Gardner had suspected), by fiat awarded their senior students that degree.

Apparently, the WUL has gone the way of its parent institution. However, as indicated above, one can still read the works of Alfred William Lawson on the Web:

<http://www.lawsonomy.org>

(Funny he didn't invent or predict **that**.)

Why study Lawsonomy at all, except as an attempt to understand Lawson? He was one of those who possessed grandiose and even narcissistic beliefs; he alone possessed The Vision, his understanding of the world was complete, thorough, and all-encompassing. It

just had no connection to the outside world.

Such theorists exhibit many of the symptoms of schizophrenia. The use of terms with an extremely individuated meaning, for example; here we have such terms as Suction and Pressure which seem to have meanings above and beyond what they mean to most people. There is a grandiose self-esteem; it wasn't just the basic principles of physics that were unknown until established by Lawson, according to Lawson. Yet Lawson managed to get through life without breaking down; neither did his visions end in the same apocalyptic manner that those of other charismatic leaders have done.

His planes flew, though. It would not have mattered overmuch if he had justified their performance by Suction and Pressure or by aerodynamics as long as they flew. Nevertheless, if he had maintained that the basic principles of flight were unknown until established by Lawson, this would have alienated other aviation pioneers; people who knew the why and the wherefore. If he had then designed a plane along his own principles that hadn't flown, reality would have delivered a final check to this Great Vision.

Some science fiction people do get enamoured of Great Visions, of all-encompassing theories. We have our Deglers, we have those who take openmindedness and tolerance past the boundaries into total lack of judgment. It's not surprising that (for example) that one writer who is taken with Velikovsky is also slipping into line with other theories which have in common with his only their disconnect from reality. (One, in fact, was discredited in a court proceeding.) Other theories are less obviously disconnected, but turn out to have the same problems. The universal genius who has all the solutions is irrelevant to the real world whether he be a fulminating ex-con hiding in mansions, a egocentric self-proclaimed commodore, or a theorist teaching in a consecutively numbered building. Or Alfred William Lawson, God's greatest gift to mankind. Their theories are elaborately constructed, but are not connected to anything; they predict nothing.

GRAVEYARD OF DREAMS

Commentary by Joseph T Major

*The fountains are dusty in the
Graveyard of Dreams;*

*The hinges are rusty and swing with tiny
screams.*

— "Graveyard of Dreams", H. Beam Piper

Even doggerel can say something.

James Baen had magazine ideas even after he left *Galaxy*. He became an editor at Ace Books and among his productions there was a "bookazine", a book with the features of a magazine (except a letter column). When he was at Ace, this was titled *Destinies*. (Under his own management, what he brought out was first under the title of *Far Frontiers*, later *New Destinies*.)

In some ways, the project was doomed. As Baen himself was later to point out, assembling

this book was far more costly in both money and time than putting out a single novel of that size. Had it been a flagship publication, highlighting new works, it might have done better.

Nevertheless, the issue to hand (Volume 1, Number 5, October-December 1979) contains a number of good stories by a variety of authors. Their subsequent activities have been varied and not altogether positive. Considering that it has been more than twenty-five years since this book came out, it should not be surprising that some of the contributors have died; others have suffered worse fates.

As the best example of the latter, take the cover story: "**Silver Shoes for a Princess**".

The princess is Taya, a girl being raised by robots on a spaceship. She forms an affection for her teachers, not surprisingly, and the story recounts her growth and realization of her circumstances and her purpose for being in this condition. The author deals well with the growth and transition of the protagonist as she grows into a realization of the world.

Unfortunately, he himself didn't. **James P. Hogan** became enamored of the idea that "anything at odds with accepted wisdom has to be right" and so drifted first into supporting Velikovskianism and then into supporting Holocaust Denial. (An odd pair, considering that one asserts a literal version of the Exodus narrative and the other, well, doesn't.) Simultaneously, his style also deteriorated; he became addicted to infodumps. "Silver Shoes for a Princess" is charming and moving because Taya gradually learns the nature of her surroundings and being through her own actions. This method is singularly lacking in the author's later works.

The lead story, "**Go Starless In the Night**" is of a brief encounter — and yet it contains comments on cryogenic preservation, total war, the uses of the past, and memory. Indeed, it ends with a melancholy yet sweet presentation of a man's saving his sanity by going mad.

Roger Zelazny, the author, was considered one of the notables of the sixties. His strength then was seen as his employment of myth; from powerful shorter works such as "A Rose for Ecclesiastes" (1963), or "For a Breath I Tarry" (1966) with its beautiful evocation of "A Shropshire Lad"; the title is a quote of XXXII and the events of the story put an exotic and beautiful science-fictional spin on the poem.

But more people knew him for his Amber series. That had begun stunningly well, with its protagonist gradually growing into and out of his background, so to speak. But then he did a rerun series, based on the thesis that "everything you know about Amber is wrong". It seems to reverse evolution, that he should go from poetic mythologizer to pulp producer. (He died in 1995.)

The next story, "**Three Aliens**" is only average; a tale of three different species meeting in space, not quite communicating yet having a general exchange of information to their net gain. This average is nevertheless readable and interesting.

The author, **Kevin O'Donnell, Jr.**, had a

brief career after this, shifting from writing science fiction into other fields and having health problems. He may have run into the problem of not having a breakout novel. (His principal series, the "Journeys of McGill Feighan", for example, has had the fifth book pending for sixteen years. The other four had consistency problems but that's another story.)

After that comes "**Feathered Pigs**" about yes, intelligent pigs with feathers. This isn't so much a story as it is an idea for one, and in such a brief time the author has to present his concept. Such is done here, not too badly. It sounds absurd, yet the story is presented as if it were the beginning of something longer; it successfully suggests a vast background.

Frank Herbert was a representative of the other trend of the sixties, the exploration of an idea. *Dune* was what one pointed to when talking about the science in science fiction; an entire novel predicated on ecology. Herbert had had a previous career (his first novel, *Under Pressure/The Dragon in the Sea/21st Century Sub* came out in 1956 and he had a number of short stories too) but *Dune* was his breakout novel.

Which was in some ways the problem. While he did a number of other works after *Dune*, he became trapped in the toils of a saga; *Dune* sequels sold well, publishers and readers alike wanted them, but he really didn't have much more to say in that field. (This hasn't stopped with his death (in 1986), either.)

Next story is "**The Predators**", a detective story with a twist; an unusual way to solve a crime and punish an unpunishable offender. The criminal here is hoist with his own petard, so to speak.

One can't now imagine **David Drake** doing this. His military fiction began, I understand, as his attempt to resolve his own post-Vietnam traumas. As with Herbert, he heeded too much the requests of publishers and the demands of fans, and now, his reconciliation with his trauma seems to be by telling it over and over again.

The last story, "**What Kind of Love Is This?**" combines a number of elements; body reshaping, imposed personalities, media madness, and identity questions. Norman Spinrad was to later speculate at novel length about the combination of media madness and body reshaping in *Child of Fortune* (1985).

Jack C. Haldeman was the lesser-known of a pair of brotherly writers; his brother, Joe Haldeman, was better known for his literary reconciliation with his Vietnam experiences. (As B. D. Burkett found out, publishers don't want to hear about Vietnam vets who came to terms with their war and went on with their lives, so the sample is skewed.) Jack never quite found a breakout novel before his death in 2002.

The nonfiction is more of concepts that failed of their promise or died prematurely than the authors. The first essay, "**New Beginnings**" describes in enthusiastic detail the first Voyager flyby of Jupiter. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory had as many writers as a big regional convention, it seems, coming in to watch the

flyby, and they were all enthusiastic about the forthcoming age of space.

Sometimes the most trivial of incidents is the greatest of harbingers. The article describes how enthusiastic everyone was about a hoofmark shaped feature on Io, and all and sundry present swore that they would call it "Sullivan's Hoofprint", after Walter Sullivan, the *New York Times* science writer, also present, who had discussed the legend of Io and Zeus. This feature had been completely reshaped by the second Voyager, six months later.

The greater promises of the article also seem to have misfired. There is a long discussion of the Galileo mission, which the author fears might be shut down for budgetary reasons. Budgetary reasons turned out to be the least of the Galileo's problems, which included not only a forced change of launch craft but paranoid fears of nuclear contamination.

The author of this article himself soured on NASA. **Jerry Pournelle** seems to have drifted away into his own set of fantasies. From reading his comments in other venues, it looks like he went to great effort to build a great space-advocacy machine, but then he decided that he had built it and they would come, so he didn't have to actually do anything to bring them in. And when they didn't, well, he hadn't done anything wrong, now.



The next essay, "**The Stars Are In Waiting**", is an example of this. It points out, accurately, the problems of rocket propulsion and of public funding. The proposed solution, however, is even less probable; the article is touting the development of a reactionless-thrust device. A certain reactionless-thrust device.

Yes, they were still pushing the Dean Drive then. This was one of the chimeras of the sixties. Norman L. Dean had a device that would bang back and forth. He wouldn't show how it worked unless an investor put up half a million in cash, up front, back when that was real money. This and other paranoid responses were very persuasive. (Given that there are alternative explanations of the apparent thrust, about the most favorable thing to say about Dean is that he was easily self-persuaded.)

The essayist, **G. Harry Stine**, was a long-time advocate of such matters (and related ones, such as model rocketry). His efforts in this field were somewhat lacking in result. He did keep on advocating space until his death in 1997.

This is followed by a collection of articles all eagerly heralding various dramatic advances in space technology: "**The L-5 Review**". One

entrepreneur was working on his suborbital spacecraft; another had been kicked out of his current launch facility but would relocate. But in fact neither ever did anything, and similarly the other great advance described, space sails, has been a nonstarter.

The articles were written by various senior members of the L-5 Society, founded with great fanfare in the seventies to build Gerald K. O'Neill's space habitat; indeed, vowing to disband itself on one. Instead, in 1987, the L-5 Society merged with the National Space Institute to form the National Space Society (NSS), which has been ever since heralding the wondrous future of space to come. How much have they been doing to make these dreams come true?

There are two essays about the craft of SF. The first, "**The Immortals: From Print to Film and Back Again**" is an often-excruciating description of how lowest-common-denominator writing can take a serious, thoughtful idea and turn it into a silly chase story. It was this sort of behavior that makes media SF so disliked.

The author knew: he was **James E. Gunn**, original author of *The Immortals* (1962), the book tormented into the silly chase TV series "The Immortal". He also teaches English literature — presumably at a low level, since he also writes, and therefore by professorial rules not qualified to really understand. He also also has just been named a SFWA Grand Master.

The second is part of a series: "**Science Fiction and Science, Part Five: Science Fiction and Reason**". The author discusses the interconnections among these topics; he explains why, in his opinion, "science fiction" is based in science, even if the science is not in the foreground. The entire series was very thoughtful and readable, and deserves reprinting.

Poul Anderson cited, of course, examples from his own work in the essay. Sadly, by then and even later on more so, he was, I would think, fading. Trends in his own work took over, so you would have the infodump in chapter two which now ran over several more chapters. His breakouts didn't break out (example, his attempt to carry on his Flandry series with a new series about Flandry's daughter, which did not get past the first book, *The Game of Empire* (1985)) and his old stuff worked in the same old ruts. For all of that his work retained its charm and he retained personal charm up until his death.

The book contained a book review column. This is the most saddening item to consider.

The reviewer begins with two painful, insightful reviews: Orson Scott Card's *Hot Sleep* and John Varley's *Titan*. Each one is a failure, he says, and he says why; citing improbabilities, illogical thinking, continuity faults, and the like. (There were items in *Titan*, the only one I read, that were worse even than what he said.) He also finds things to praise about them; excellent prose, likeable characters, "damned good storytelling", and other matters.

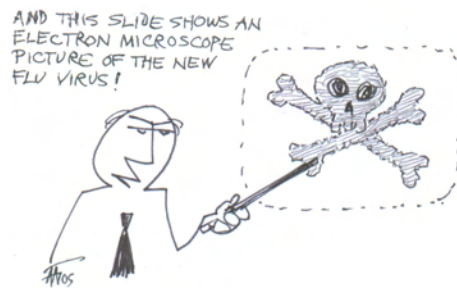
By way of contract, the reviewer also describes Richard Matheson's collection *The Shores of Space*, which Damon Knight tore

apart, and how he himself noted the things Knight noted (most notably the atrocious style) and yet he *liked* the book, and makes a good case for doing so.

The title of the column, however, contains a hint as to what was going wrong: "**Spider vs. the Hax of Sol III**". **Spider Robinson** had begun well, as they say. His reviewing for *Analog* was marked by that light-hearted insight that was on display here.

The problem was that he was already falling into several pits. One was that of being *too* light-hearted; of going for the obvious pun, a little too facilely. Another was that of the familiar rut, doing the same story as demanded again. And then there was his worship.

(There are several reasons I won't read his latest work, *Variable Star* (2006). Part of it is the simple problem of style that hampers one person continuing another's work. As Darrell Schweitzer quotes his friend Henry on such works, "I only buy it if I'm interested in the *minor* work of the *junior* writer." Such works tend mostly to be the junior writer's characters and concepts using the name writer's images. Thus, in this example, the protagonist of *Variable Star* is a skinny Canadian musician. He seems to have taken Heinlein's heroes being himself a little too literally. Continuing Knight's critiques, Robinson also commits the same error that plagued "Lee Correy's" *Starship Through Space* (1954); it contains passages modeled all too closely on sections from Heinlein books. [And "Lee Correy" himself was G. Harry Stine.]



Reading this issue, knowing the fate of the writers and their ideas, will evoke a certain feeling. Their fine and grand ideas now lie in a graveyard of dreams; and, as in the original Piper story (if not in its expansion, *The Cosmic Computer* (1964)) there is no miraculous Object of a Quest to redeem their dreams, to stimulate a new life in the old ways.

*We sit in the twilight, the shadows
among,
And we talk of the happy days when we
were brave and young.*

— "Graveyard of Dreams", H. Beam Piper

THE SENTINEL

Review by Joseph T Major of

EIFELHEIM

by Michael Flynn

(Tor; 2006; ISBN 987-0-765-30096-6;

\$25.95)

First Contact may have problems. The basic example is the one of First Contact between comparative equals in technology, on "neutral territory", where each has reasonable concerns about security: "First Contact" by "Murray Leinster" [William Fitzgerald Jenkins] (*Astounding*, May 1945; Retro-Hugo Winner). Leinster also postulated a common interest, so to speak, between the different species.

But the contact may not be between equals, it may not be on neutral ground, and it may not be possible to resolve the differences by a swap. Sometimes it may be outright conquest, as in "Despoilers of the Golden Empire" by "Donald Gordon" [Randall Garrett] (*Astounding*, March 1959). The conquerors may take advantage of a factional dissent among the inhabitants, as in H. Beam Piper's "When In the Course" (1981) or David Weber's *Heirs of Empire* (1996). Or, they could be economically and technologically crushing, as in Greg Costikyan's *First Contract* (2000).

But then, the all conquering technological superiority may not be all that all conquering; as Poul Anderson described in "The Man Who Came Early" (*F&SF*, June 1956). The title character found himself overwhelmed. Anderson would do a variance of that in "The Longest Voyage" (*Analog*, December 1960; Hugo Winner), wherein the natives made an explosive choice in the field of potential technological acceleration. (And then, just to show that he was on all sides of the question, Anderson also did *The High Crusade* (1960; *Astounding*, July-September 1960) which showed that technology is one thing but politics is quite another.) Not to mention the time-travellers in *Time Slave* (1975) by "John Norman" [John Frederick Lange], who not only couldn't impress the people of 60,000 B.C.[E.] but lost a woman who was a Ph.D. in mathematics (for some reason Norman seemed to have it in for women who had a Ph.D. in mathematics) as a slave to the man who had torn her clothes off, tied her up, and then liberated her suppressed natural submissive nature.

Piper and Weber set their heroes in conflict with the local religious authorities, who were portrayed as wanting to control if not outright suppress technology, as they did dissent. (As opposed to, for example, Garrett, whose Commander Frank ever gave heed to the precepts of the Universal Assembly as he sought the power metal so needful in the Second Empire.) This is the image of religion that is the norm in SF.

As Anderson did in *The High Crusade*, and Harry Turtledove does again and again, most notably in *Noninterference* (1987; *Analog* July 1985, July 1986, May-July 1987), just because their technology isn't up to the level of yours doesn't mean they're stupid. As people — intelligent beings — found out in both cases, assuming that low tech means dumb can be a fatal assumption.

Michael Flynn (who sometimes uses the middle initial "F.", some would think just to annoy bibliographers) had a story in the

November 1986 issue of *Analog*. He would become better known, however, for his story of a secret conspiracy intending to do humanity good, *In the Country of the Blind* (1990, *Analog* October-November 1987), which I once mockingly called “None Dare Call It Foundation”, after Gary Allen’s conspiracy opus *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* (1971) which as the witty line in *National Review* ran, linked the Council on Foreign Relations to everything except the men’s room in Grand Central Station. Given that Flynn has written an essay titled “The State of Psychohistory” (*Analog*, April-May 1988) and a story titled “Pson of Psychohistory” (*Analog*, June 1994), he may see that point.

The issue of *Analog* for November 1986 (are you beginning to wonder by now if there isn’t a certain *bias* towards that one publication?) had a science-fictional historical detective story, and try saying that three times fast. The detection, while it did involve sudden death, had more to do with a sociological problem. In keeping with the author’s attention to the structural links of society, the story told of how the dynamics of commerce and control led to a certain pattern in how cities were built — except, in this one place, there was a gap in the network.

Investigating the gap turned up legends, stories of strange travelers from far-off. As the pieces came together, it became clear that the people who came to Oberhochwald in Germany were from very far off — and they weren’t human. Except, in a sense, within, they were.

What was noteworthy about the story was how it drew together those soft sciences — sociology, economics, psychology — with the hard science of physics, tying speculation in that science into the structure of its story. The story, “Eifelheim”, was nominated for the Hugo Award and for the Locus Award; it won that year’s (1987) *Analog* Award for Best Novella/Novelette.

Twenty years later, Flynn has returned to that story. Now, what he has done is to write at greater length about how the people of Oberhochwald reacted to these beings from another world, and how they discovered that these aliens were not altogether alien.

Those expecting the aliens to use their technological and moral superiority to show the poor benighted humans how oppressive the Church is, and destroy it, as for example Crown Prince Sean MacIntyre [son & heir of Galactic Emperor Colin MacIntyre — talk about John W. Campbell’s belief about the innate superiority of Scotsmen!] did in *Heirs of Empire*, will be out of luck here. Flynn realizes that, it seems, there will always be the question of why people are born, why do they die, and why do they spend so much of the time in between wearing digital watches . . . trying to understand and control the world around them. (Think of what a watch does. Many a true word hath been spoken in jest.) Father Dietrich of Oberhochwald, the pastor who is the protagonist of the fourteenth-century story is portrayed as a humane, learned man trying to understand the world God made. If he is tolerant of Jews, he can certainly be tolerant of creatures from a world completely

outside his knowledge.

That’s another point; Father Dietrich doesn’t understand, he has to be taught, and he sees things in the terminology of the world he knows. He tries to understand the aliens’ interstellar culture in terms of the empyrean, for example. It took a lot of work to render this, and a difficult decision to render it as it was.

There are other factors working on the characters. The aliens aren’t going to show Father Dietrich and his overlord Manfred von Hochwald how to make gunpowder and thereby set up a new empire. For one thing, the locals already know how to make gunpowder. (It should be noted at this point that Piper’s “When In the Course” was revised to become “Gunpowder God” (*Analog*, November 1964, the issue on sale when Piper killed himself), the first part of *Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen* (1965).) For another, while some of their enemies can indeed be overcome by higher technology, the technology is not available to overcome all of them. The robber baron Philipp von Falkenstein can be blown away with the aid of personal contragravity lifters; but overcoming *Yersinia pestis* is not so easy.

This is the grim underlying theme of the story. The aliens have not brought a deadly plague with them; plagues we have enough on our own. When the Black Death comes to Oberhochwald, we have a painful presentation of suffering and loss laid out for the reader.

Which also explains why, as those who were free of the plague left the town, they said it was no longer Oberhochwald, but “Devil-Home” — *Teufelheim*. Which got elided to “Eifelheim”.

That is where the modern story, the bulk of the original novella, came in. Tom is a cliologist, a mathematical historian, a profession almost out of *In the Country of the Blind* — and in his study of how humans organize their communities, he find a hole in the German matrix of commerce and communication, a hole labeled “Eifelheim”.

Part of the charm of the original story was the gradual emergence of the event, as it were; the happenings in Oberhochwald in the fourteenth century were obscure, had to be pieced together from a snippet here and a reference there, a commentary in one place and an allusion in another. In a way, it was reminiscent of how the nature of Boskonian, of the Eddorians, gradually emerged as the story of Kimball Kinnison and the Patrol progressed, in the original serializations (*Galactic Patrol: Astounding* September 1937 — February 1938; *Gray Lensman: Astounding* October 1939 — January 1940; *Second Stage Lensman: Astounding* November 1941 — February 1942; and *Children of the Lens: Astounding* November 1947 — February 1948). In the updating, the technology has been refitted, as it were, to the contemporary reality of the internet. Of course, in the original Flynn was following in the tracks of Jenkins’s “A Logic Named Joe” (*Astounding*, March 1946 — you were expecting maybe *Planet Stories?*), the story that anticipated the Internet.

Paralleling Tom’s historical detection is the detection in physics done by his domestic

partner Sharon. She is looking into the extremely arcane theories of dimension, and investigating why red shifts are so quantized. There is a brilliant scene near the end of the book where it all comes together . . .

The aliens, it seems, did not bring death with them, but death came anyhow. Not disease; far from being struck down by “by the humblest things that God, in his wisdom, has put upon this earth” [*The War of the Worlds*, H. G. Wells (1898; before there was an *Astounding*)], their fate is more subtle. A nutritional deficiency; not something that is on Earth, but something that *isn’t*. The temporary solution could be rendered as something horrific, but because the characters are speaking in the language of Catholicism, it becomes moving. If one dies, the nutrients in his or her body can sustain the others. Thus the “alchemist” — biochemist? — that the Earthlings call “Arnold” goes out into the snow to die, carrying a note that says, “This is my body. Whoever eats it shall live.” [Page 154] He might well have said, “I am just going outside and may be some time.” (Without even the hope imparted to the original in Brenda W. Clough’s Hugo and Nebula nominated “May Be Some Time” [*Analog*, April 2001].)

The proof is out there. In the final chapter, Tom and some of the other modern characters go out to Eifelheim to find the physical proof of this First Contact. In a way, this moving chapter is an anti-climax, for the real climax comes when Sharon sees that it all came together; the aliens traveled between the stars using the science she herself was investigating:

“This may sound weird,” Tom announced, “but I feel oddly disappointed.”

She opened her eyes and looked at him. He was studying the medieval circuit diagram. “Disappointed?” She couldn’t believe he had said that. Disappointed? When they had just been given the stars?

“I mean, that they didn’t have a complete set of plans. Then you’d know what to do.”

She stared back at him where he stood framed in the kitchen doorway. “But I already know the only thing that matters.”

“What’s that?”

“I know it can be done.”

— *Eifelheim*, Page 305

That is science fiction as it should be.

There is one other reference that comes from my association; one would think Flynn would have made it if he could have, but one never knows. The alien the excavators exhume had been baptized as “Johannes Sterne” and they translate the name as “John of the Stars”. How about “John Star”? You know, as from *The Legion of Space* (1934; *Astounding*, April-August 1934), *The Cometeers* (1936; *Astounding*, May-August 1936), *One Against the Legion* (1939; *Astounding* April-June 1939), and *The Queen of the Legion* (1983). And think of what will happen when John Star comes

back to his people . . .

The original story "Eifelheim" was nominated for the Best Novella Hugo, recall. It came in dead last in the voting. Looking at the competition, I still don't understand why; I found the loss to be quite astounding.

In Roger Macbride Allen's *Orphan of Creation* (1988 [what, no *Analog* serialization? Astounding]), we have the downside of the Wonderful Discovery. Allen's investigators find the skeletons of Australopithecines — in Mississippi, unfossilized, of nineteenth-century date. What Allen shows, as a cautionary reminder, is that not everyone will believe such a discovery, and indeed, the discovery is very quickly demonstrated to be a hoax. Until, that is, when the discoverers come out of the Gabon with somewhat more recent specimens, at which time the discourse takes a whole new turn. In his final chapter, Flynn hints at a similar controversy to come: "And don't forget the cries of fraud or hoax that will be raised." [Page 312]. There's a story in that.

There's another story to be found in the development of the drive; this isn't the era of John W. Campbell's Arcot, Wade, and Morey ("Piracy Preferred" (*Amazing Stories*, June 1930), *The Black Star Passes* (*Amazing Stories Quarterly*, Fall 1930), "Solarite" (*Amazing Stories*, November 1930), and *Islands of Space* (*Amazing Stories Quarterly*, Spring 1931)), who could capture an alien technology Monday morning, have it in production by Tuesday noon, and roll out the upgrade late Thursday. A more realistic story would show the pains of progression. Then too, given the risk-averse society of today, there might well be legal obstacles. Think "Trends" (by Isaac Asimov, *Astounding*, July 1939) in result if not in precise method.

One wonders what will be out there; a collapsing irresolute empire as in *The High Crusade*? Or something else, perhaps? Harry Turtledove's "The Road Not Taken" (*Analog*, November 1985) hints at a universe of expansion that sounds almost like the heady days of the thirties in SF. I wish he'd write more novels set in that milieu, instead of the Civil War stood on its head or WWII turned backwards. But whatever sells. Or a universe out there like in the story by "Christopher Anvil" [Harry C. Crosby] of a conquered Earth overwhelmed by more numerous, but less inventive aliens, and how it got back at them, so to speak, *Pandora's Planet* (1972; *Astounding* September 1956, *Analog* April 1961, August 1962; expanded version *Pandora's Legions* (2002)).

Contrawise, we could have something like "A World By the Tale" by "Seaton McKettrig" [Randall Garrett, again] (*Analog*, October 1963), where Earth is a backwater with absolutely nothing to offer to anyone in the galactic civilization. They're out there, we just can't get the wherewithal to go. Imagine finding a galaxy like that.

Or . . .

Once we had passed that crisis, it

was only a matter of time before we found the pyramid and forced it open. Now its signals have ceased, and those whose duty it is will be turning their minds upon Earth. Perhaps they wish to help our infant civilization. But they must be very, very old, and the old are often insanely jealous of the young.

I can never look now at the Milky Way without wondering from which of those banked clouds of stars the emissaries are coming. If you will pardon so commonplace a simile, we have set off the fire alarm and have nothing to do but to wait.

I do not think we will have to wait for long.

— "The Sentinel", Sir Arthur C. Clarke



THE WOODROW WILSON DIME

Review by Joseph T Major of
THE DISUNITED STATES OF AMERICA
by Harry Turtledove

(Tor; 2006;
ISBN-13 978-0-765-31485-7; \$24.95)
"Crosstime Traffic Book 4"

Vall looked at the coin. "I don't see what is so wrong with this. This leader is memorialized on his nation's currency in an entire sheaf of time-lines," he said, and proceeded to reel off the relevant coordinates.

"Chief, this coin, while identical to the coins in the time-line — " he recited a number within the range Vall had given, and then went on, " — was found in a time-line over three thousand parayears away."

Stunned, Vall stared again at the professorial image on the small silver disk. Was the Paratime Secret out? Or worse yet, was there yet another method out there?

— Not by H. Beam Piper, Jack Finney, or Harry Turtledove

In Jack Finney's novel *The Woodrow Wilson Dime* (1968), the protagonist finds an unusual coin in his change. It's an artifact from an alternative world, and by focusing on it he can travel there. (Finney used subjective reimagining as a time travel device repeatedly throughout his writing career, from "The Third Level" (1950) to *Time and Again* (1970) and its sequel *From Time to Time* (1995).) The traveller discovers that it's not just numismatics that has developed differently; in the timeline of the Woodrow

Wilson dime, there are for example no zippers, but cosmetics to fill in the navel are big. So he begins a little crosstime traffic. Then other matters intervene.

Crosstime Traffic doesn't need to have read *The Woodrow Wilson Dime*. They just do it. However, the theory and practice of the Galbraith-Hester crosstime transporter (whatever happened to Maxoni and Cocini, did they not get to the patent office until after closing time?) expresses itself in many and varied ways. At least the factors and dealers of the organization are trained in the backgrounds of their alternate time lines and learn how to cover up.

Some of the time lines, though, are a little hard to work in. Such as the one that is the birthplace of our female protagonist, Beckie Royer of the sovereign state of California. You see, the convention called to revise the Articles of Confederation had a fatal disagreement over the representation of the sovereign states in congress assembled. So, the Articles remained in force, but the government operating, or not operating, under its sanction just sort of eroded away. (Presumably the Declaration of Independence there did not have a passage about "unanimous consent of the governed".)

Oddly enough, this has not produced a super-technological world where even gorillas, chimpanzees, and dolphins are full citizens. Indeed, not every human being in every sovereign state is a full citizen. Which is why Beckie is a little nervous while crossing the border between Ohio and Virginia. Smuggling guns into a slave state can do that to a body.

Coming into the sovereign state of Virginia from another timeline can be nerve-wracking too. Justin Monroe is going to work at a coin shop that just happens to be the local Crosstime Traffic portal in Richmond. When they have to make a delivery to western Virginia, smack dab in the middle of the fighting, things take a turn for the worse. And then there was a little matter of a quarantine to consider . . .

The contrasting stories are of Justin learning self-reliance under very serious conditions, and Beckie learning to entertain the thought of how things might be different. While it doesn't quite involve the exchanging of zippers, or belly button flug, what they swap is more important, and less obvious.

SUBGENREFICATION

Review by Joseph T Major of
WITCHLING

by Yasmine Galenorn
(Berkeley; 2006; ISBN 0-425-21254-8; \$6.99)

. . . My 38 DD boobs gave the world a real show, along with my hourglass figure, long raven hair (it's blue black on all areas of my body, as everybody now knows), and JLO-esque butt.

— *Witchling*, Page 18

I would like to remind everybody that this description of the heroine and narratrix of this book was not written by a guy, even if it does read like a description from a lads' magazine.

The market for romance has expanded dramatically in the past few years. Anyone going into used book stores and seeing shelves after shelves of fat volumes with titles including various riffs on “love”, “passion”, “desire”, and other amorous terms will believe this.

But one of these expansions has been in familiar terms: “Time-Travel, Futuristic, and Paranormal Romance”. Now I’ve been told that some of the best fantastic and sfnal work coming out these days is in that category. And some is. But as in any other mass-production category, quantity outdoes quality all the time.

The production line causes problems. For example, and a wildly popular, multi-volume, multi-web-page example at that, in Diana Gabaldon’s pulse-pounding *Outlander* (1991), first of a long series of time-travel romances, about the most realistic part of the novel was the part where the handsome highlander hunk in the eighteenth century who was the uptight but beautiful twentieth-century English nurse’s real true love beat her up. (He wouldn’t have been the clean-cut, tall, buffed, dashing, debonair figure of covers, either, but I said “about the most realistic”.)

Those who just had to have their *Outlander* fix and couldn’t get it would have to get other “time-travel, futuristic, and paranormal romances”. From the publisher’s point of view, with a choice between a skiffy work that would sell 40k copies and a romance that would sell 400k . . . Thus this.

Galenorn seems to have gone through fantasy works, grabbed everything that looked interesting, and slapped it in. Thus Camille (the narratrix mentioned above) is one of three sisters who are half-mortal and half-faerie. Camille is a witch, with spells that misfire (i.e., she described herself in such intimate detail because she had cast a spell to make herself invisible and it made only her clothes invisible; moreover, because she was the spellcaster as well as the target, it didn’t initially make her clothes invisible to her. Oops) and a rather adventurous life otherwise. The other two sisters are Delilah and Menolly (?). Delilah is a were-cat. Menolly is a vampire — your modern Really Nice, Really Misunderstood, & Really Really Sexy Vampire.

The three sisters run a book store and on the side work for the Otherworld Intelligence Agency — the “otherworld” being our mundane land. And, the fact of Faerie being known, the sisters are pestered with all sorts of admiration and denigration. That’s a very realistic point.

The plot problem has to do with demons loose in the mundane world. Camille, her sisters, a lover or two, and various interesting passers-by and hangers-on (the dragon is neat) have to deal with these matters before all Hell breaks loose.

There are a number of good points along the way. Camille isn’t a super-being, indeed her magic will occasionally misfire and not just to leave her apparently naked to her enemies and also her friends. All the sisters have problems. The humans and other faerie creatures have their own motivations and don’t exist only to further the needs of the protagonist. Galenorn knows

how to carry on a story; the plot never drags, the explanations fit in (there’s no “as you know” attitude here), and the resolution is consistent. There’s saving graces of humor.

Oh and did I mention the **Hot Sex™** that Camille has with the svartan Trillian (!?) and with Morio the Japanese fox demon? If she looks the way she says she does, that’s understandable. At least they don’t have tentacles, unlike the lovers of a certain other notorious fantasy romance heroine.

I think the problem is that there are all these components. As I said, the background looks all too much like it was made by going through other fantasy works, grabbing everything that looks interesting, and slapping it in. We can appreciate her understanding in the field, all the parts are good, but when the reader stops to put them together . . .

This is, of course, first of a series, and there will be more **Hot Sex™** and also a little out of bed action when this is . . . **[To Be Continued]**

THE VERY MODEL

Review by Joseph T Major of

POISON STUDY

by Maria V. Snyder

(Luna; 2005, 2006;

ISBN 987-0-373-80257-9; \$6.99)

No doubt the ghost had been expecting in his previous life that after he made Yelena the acrobat dance naked in chains to the kiss of a whip, she would put her head against his body and sob, “Master, a slave begs to be used!” like a good kajira. What a surprise he got when she killed him!

Since, however, he was the son of someone important, that meant that the next rope Yelena would be associated with would be one around her neck. But fate and the government had a different form of death in mind for her . . .

Snyder’s story is one where nothing is what it seems to be and everyone has something to hide. Even Yelena, who has what she has to hide hidden even from herself.

Her reprieve from the gallows is, you see, to be the food taster for the Commander. Ambrose raised a rebellion against the King after getting drafted into a mine he had been so unfortunate as to discover, and after massacring the monarch and becoming the Commander he proceeded to clamp down; dividing the country into districts under the command of his generals and putting the country under strict regiment. (There are precedents in the “real world”, whatever that is, for this from Cromwell and the Major-Generals to the Inca dominion.)

One can’t keep such a situation down, and naturally the Commander is concerned about his time being cut short by poison. Hence a food taster — which is where Yelena comes in. Of course, that her new boss Valek poisoned her in the job interview, so to speak, is what keeps her around. If she doesn’t take the antidote, she dies. At least she can always escape.

And similarly, the Generals have problems. One of them will be the heir, but the Commander has a complicated procedure for naming the heir beforehand but keeping it secret

until after his demise. (What’s to make them obey it after he’s gone?) As such things will, too, it leaks out, and the heir-presumptive, General Brazell, might have a little difficulty with Yelena. It was his son she had killed, and whose ghost keeps on popping up at the most inopportune moments to remind her that she owes him.

For a condemned prisoner under indefinite reprieve, Yelena seems to have an uncommon license, she studies arms, does undercover work, and even food criticism. Unpoisoned food criticism, that is. Though some might wonder about this wonderful new stuff Brazell has called “Criollo”. (I’ll give you a hint; its active ingredient is “theobroma”; look up theobromine.)

As the plot thickens, everyone starts pulling buried secrets out of his or her soul. As when Yelena gets approached by an emissary from the lands to the south, the ones cut off because, see, they practice magic, and here magic is a capital crime. Well, Yelena is sentenced to death anyhow, having another strike against her won’t matter. Yes, she could be a mage too, if she lives. And others have their own secrets.

Snyder has constructed a complex and rare background and set against it a detailed and intricate story of revelation and concealment. Her references are subtle, not blatant (i.e., the real-world consequences of treating like a Gorean slave girl someone who **doesn’t** have submissive kajira fantasies). She wraps it up with a resolution for come of the problems amid discoveries by others and by Yelena and those close to her, but there are more complications to come when this story is . . . **[To Be Continued]**

EVERYTHING & EVERYONE

Review by Joseph T Major of

THE LAST EXPLORER:

Hubert Wilkins, Hero of the Great Age of Polar Exploration

by Simon Nasht

(Arcade; 2005, 2006;

ISBN-13 987-1-55970-825-8; \$27.50)

One of the ways to write a long historical novel is to have a character who sits in on every big event. The archetype here is Lanny Budd, the title character of Upton Sinclair’s political thriller series, Roosevelt’s Presidential Agent who dealt face-to-face with Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Churchill . . . Nowadays we get things like:

“Well, this opus is about the old Manhattan Project. The heroine is a sort of super-Mata-Hari, who is, alternately and sometimes simultaneously, in the pay of the Nazis, the Soviets, the Vatican, Chiang Kai-Shek, the Japanese Emperor, and the Jewish International Bankers, and she sleeps with everybody but Joe Stalin and Mao Tse-tung, and of course, she is in on every step of the A-bomb project. She even manages to stow away on the *Enola Gay*, with the help of a general she’s spent fifty incandescent pages seducing. . .”

— *Uller Uprising*, H. Beam Piper

It may surprise you to learn that there was a real-life guy who was everywhere and knew everyone (no, not quite like in *Dire Dawn*, the book referenced above in that astounding act of SF prediction), at least in the polar exploration field.. He was on the ill-fated *Karluk*, though he got off quickly enough. He was on Shackleton's last expedition. He shot photos with Frank Hurley, the photographer of the *Endurance*. He competed with Richard E. Byrd at both poles.

And then he told Captain James Calvert of the nuclear submarine *USS Skate* (SSN-578) about how to surface in the Arctic. Which Calvert did several times, once to bury him at the North Pole.

Sir Hubert Wilkins was, it seems, the guy who had been everywhere and seen everything, as well as doing a good bit of it. Nasht begins with a description of the origins of his hero, who was born to a modest family of Australian settlers, themselves of obscure but honest origin. Crkey!

The family's ranch was wiped out in a drought, and Wilkins set out to study weather patterns. How this required getting into the nascent Australian cinema business isn't quite clear, but his experiences in that field demonstrated that Wilkins could pick up a new competence with ease. In 1912, after a number of interesting experiences, he added to his talents by learning to fly.

At this point, it's relevant to add that Wilkins was slightly color-blind; and what with being next to loud unmuffled engines, not to mention a certain wartime incident, he also became deaf. Somehow these deficiencies never quite seemed to hinder him.



Then he got a job on an "important arctic expedition" — the Canadian Arctic Expedition, of which he would be photographer. The Canadian Arctic Expedition has been very well chronicled in works such as Jennifer Niven's *The Ice Master* (2000; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 2 #1) but, fortunately for him, Wilkins was not on the doomed *Karluk* for very long. He went off with Stefansson, but not for long either, which was just as well. (I think Niven did not follow up his later career the way she did the other members of the expedition because at the time he went by "George H. Wilkins" and when he

was knighted in 1925 Sir Hubert changed his preference to his second name.)

While recuperating in England (he traveled a lot) he met Frank Hurley, who had recently been marooned at the other end of the world in an incident of *Endurance*, and they set out to be official photographers for the Australian Imperial Force at the Front in France. Wilkins got blown up once and received the Military Cross twice, for saving wounded men.

After the war, he joined the Shackleton-Rowlett Expedition, going ahead to South Georgia while the *Quest* was laid up for repairs and getting to Grytviken in time to see her flag at half-mast. After that, he went back to flying over the North and South, crossing and crossing up the careers of many of the famous of the world and of exploration.

If airplanes weren't good enough, there were always submarines. Nasht recounts in agonizing detail the doomed career of the research submarine *Nautilus* (yes, Jean Jules-Verne, the grandson, took part in the renaming), formerly *USS O-12* (SS-73), and how and why the boat didn't go very far under the pack.

Somehow amid all this Wilkins had a personal life. He romanced a number of personable young ladies, ending up marrying an Australian actress named Suzanne Bennett after a very brief personal acquaintance (interspersed by flying in the Antarctic) and as such impetuous marriages do, it only lasted a mere twenty-nine years. He was also knighted for his many and varied activities.

After that and the Hollick-Kenyon expedition (more flight over Antarctica), things slowed down for Sir Hubert. He seems to have been an Honourable Correspondent for British intelligence during the twenties (the period when he met Lenin) and to have worked with the OSS in the Second World War.

In one chapter that may be disturbing to some readers, Nasht describes Sir Hubert's encounters with two dubious figures. He had joined the Explorers Club in New York, and not surprisingly come into contact with its most lugubrious member, who would not countenance doubt of his two principal controversies: "I reached the Pole. I climbed Mount McKinley. The controversy from my angle is at an end," said Dr. Frederick A. Cook (quoted Page 275). Later on, Sir Hubert told some of his stories to a pulp writer — L. Ron Hubbard. But his own oddness manifested itself in *The Urantia Book*, an even wilder tale of galactic creation, of which Sir Hubert was one of the few privileged to read it at first.

His next venture into exploration came at the end of his life, when the above-mentioned naval officer consulted with him on how to fulfill the dream he had had. And then, in November of 1958 he died of a heart attack. He was cremated, and in the first winter surfacing at the Pole, Captain Calvert scattered his ashes there.

The Last Explorer is an intriguing introduction to a man who was too diverse and all-present to be a fictional character and should be better known.

ROALD AMUNDSEN

Observation by Lisa Major

Since Joe has been very patient with my obsession with horses I decided it was only fair that I learn something of polar exploration. I read a few books and from the start it was Amundsen who interested me the most. I was fascinated by his willingness to learn from the Inuit, so different from proper British gentleman Scott's belief there was nothing to be learned from savages. Amundsen's expeditions were a tribute to careful planning, Scott's were a tribute to the persistence of hubris through the ages. Amundsen tried hard to think of everything that could possibly go wrong and while he could, of course, not succeed many times his preparations for what he could think of got him through what he could not foresee.

PASSAGE

Review by Joseph T Major of

ABDUCTED:

How People Come to Believe They Were Kidnapped by Aliens

by Susan A. Clancy

(Harvard University Press; 2005;

ISBN 0-674-01876-6; \$22.95)

The initial problem that Joanna Lander has in *Passage* (by Connie Willis; 2001) is that whenever one of the patients in the bizarrely renovating hospital has a Near Death Experience, her sponsor Dr. Mandrake gets there first and tells the patient what he or she saw. So she cannot get any independent confirmation of her theories. (Her later problems stem from being unable to assert herself while surrounded by manipulative people; that is to say, being in a Connie Willis novel.)

And this is to some extent the problem that Susan Clancy eventually discovers she has. Clancy, at the time of the publication of this book a postdoctoral fellow in Psychology at Harvard, set about to find out, as the subtitle says, how people come to believe they were kidnapped by aliens.

She gives a brief history of the flying-saucer phenomenon, not as personal or funny as *Shockingly Close to the Truth!* by James W. Moseley and the unfortunately late Karl T. Pflock (2002; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 1 #4) and not as exhaustive as Curtis Peebles's *Watch the Skies!: A Chronicle of the Flying Saucer Myth* (1994) [she does not even cite either of these books] and explains where abductions came in.

Then she herself came in. There were enough abductees out there willing to talk to her. The problem was finding those who had anything to say. (Again, paralleling *Passage*, where of the three un-corrupted NDE test subjects, one just wants to talk about disasters, one wants to brag (or lie) about his wartime experiences, and one volunteered for everything and so does nothing.) It took some effort to find serious abductees.

But there were serious ones. She seems to have made a point of citing that her first subject was otherwise almost nerve-wrackingly normal. They ranged from the troubled to the merely

puzzled, but one and all were persuaded that they had been abducted.

Or had been persuaded. Clancy's conclusions were that there were a variety of experiences, sleep paralysis being one of them (sleep paralysis is where your mind wakes up but your body hasn't quite got in step with the program yet), that led to some sort of conclusion that something was wrong. In this day and age, the "something" that could be found out about was alien abduction.

She does seem to have been perhaps a bit too accepting. One notorious downer about abductions is the universal lack of physical proof, no artifacts, not even scars. As with the one abductee who cheerfully recounted to her how the aliens had inserted a foot-long probe **into her nose** (Pages 75-6). An MRI would show any consequent damage to the brain, assuming there was any.

One problem with the origins of this is that so many of these incidents, including the ur-incident, the Barney and Betty Hill abduction, were recovered memories. Now hypnosis has its problems. Before alien abductions there were past lives (i.e. Virginia "Ruth Simmons" Tighe of *The Search for Bridey Murphy*, by Morey Berenstein (1956)) and multiple personalities (i.e. Chris "Eve White/Eve Black/Jane" Costner-Sizemore of *The Three Faces of Eve*, by Corbett Thigpen and Hervery Cleckley (1956)). And now of course there are repressed memories of molestation. (I've cynically thought that if Morey Bernstein had hypnotized Chris Costner-Sizemore, she would have had a past life as "Jane", while if Thigpen & Cleckley had treated Virginia Tighe, she would have had an alternate personality named "Bridey".) Clancy touches on the problems of imposed pseudo-memories under hypnosis.

What kind of people believe themselves abducted? Clancy cites a psychological personality concept called *schizotypy* (Pages 129-130) which is categorized by eccentric thoughts, odd beliefs (particularly paranormal ones), and being loners. Then she points out:

If we accept that about 4 percent of the population is fantasy-prone and that fantasy-proneness correlates with schizotypy, there are probably about 18 million Americans who fit this profile. Very few of them think they've been abducted. . . a rich fantasy life, magical beliefs, and strange perceptual symptoms are not in themselves enough to make people think they were abducted. What is also required is a belief system — one that predisposes them to interpret unusual experiences and thoughts in terms of an extraterrestrial hypothesis, rather than, say, multiple personalities or chronic-fatigue syndrome or attention deficit disorder.

— *Abducted*, Page 135

I will add that in particular a fantasy-prone subgroup with which you may be intimately familiar is definitely not prone to abduction, or as one of our correspondents pointed out:

. . . HEY, y' know why the aliens DON'T abduct fen? We'd drive em' nuts with questions. "Can I see your engine room? <oh please oh please> Does it run on antimatter, pulse, plasma, warp or improbability?" "Who does your costumes/make up?"

— Trinlay Khadro, *Alexiad* V. 2 #1

It should be said that not all fans can be so informed. One wonders what would have happened if Clancy had interviewed Claude Degler.

It's worth pointing out that Clancy is extremely doubtful that abductions are taking place. What she points out is that, far from there being all the same thing happening, the methodology is so divergent from abductee to abductee. The aliens don't seem to have any uniform protocol for examinations. This follows the earlier parallel; in an early report on "flying saucers", the Air Force people doing the study pointed out that there was **no** consistency of shape among the flying saucers; no two people ever saw the same sort of vessel. Either there were a *whole* lot of different makes of flying saucers or the viewers weren't seeing real physical vehicles.

But why do these people talk with some fondness about probes up the fundament and otherwise being sampled in intimate ways?

At the end of every interview, throughout the five-year course of the research, each abductee was asked the same question: "If you could do it all over again, would you choose *not* to be abducted?" No one ever said yes. Despite the shock and terror that accompanied their experiences, the abductees were glad to have had them. Their lives improved. They were less lonely, more hopeful about the future, felt they were better people. They chose abduction. Being abducted by aliens is a transformative event. Not only does it furnish an explanation for psychological distress and unsettling experiences; it provides meaning for one's life.

— *Abducted*, Page 149

The aliens, therefore, were some kind of a solution.

CRACK IN THE WORLD

Review by Joseph T Major of
*A CRACK AT THE EDGE OF THE
WORLD:*

*America and the Great California
Earthquake of 1906*

by Simon Winchester
(HarperCollins; 2005;

ISBN-13 987-0-06-057199-3; \$27.95)

When I was young and there was a lack of things to see at the movies, I went to anything even remotely speculative. So it was that in Frankfort's Capitol Theater, one day in 1965, I saw the movie *Crack In the World*, about a

scientist using a thermonuclear weapon to provide geothermal power to what we hadn't yet learned to call the Third World, and instead opening up a gap in the Earth's crust that threatened to make what would be indeed a world-shattering kaboom.

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0059065/>

Simon Winchester proves to be as roundabout and casual a chronicler as any. Who else would think to start an explanation of the reason for the San Francisco Earthquake in Iceland? But, in a sense, it does.

In the past few decades, the theory of plate tectonics has proven itself valid and useful; it explains so much. In the area of San Francisco, for example, the North American Plate is overrunning the Pacific Plate. This generates volcanoes, as the lighter rock of the sea floor heats up and gives off its lighter constituents (the same explanation as for Krakatau, the topic of Winchester's previous work *Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded: August 27, 1883* (2003), and note the proximity to that of the Sumatran earthquake of 2004, which was also caused by a slip of a plate).

Iceland is astride the edge of the North American Plate. So is San Francisco. Indeed, the plate is moving away from Iceland towards California. Wherein lies the problem. (And, by random chance, the cracks in *Crack In the World* almost followed the edges of the southern part of the Somalia Plate.)

From that and the history of earthquakes in general (Winchester touches on the New Madrid Earthquakes of 1812, an event that is still relevant to us here) he goes on to the history of San Francisco.

Then it all comes together. Winchester describes the events, the destruction, and the response. General Frederick Funston of Philippines fame coordinated a vigorous military response. (There is even a polar link; the commander of the Pacific department, who was away in Chicago and tried to get back and grab the credit, was Adolphus W. Greely, of the notorious Cape Sabine Arctic expedition of 1881-4.) The Mayor, Eugene Schmitz, the candidate of the exceedingly corrupt San Francisco machine, proved unexpectedly more than adequate to the task. Ordinary people of all kinds showed themselves self-sacrificing, devoted, peaceful, and brave.

(He does not, however, mention the case of the automobile dealer who turned his three cars into ambulances and saved many lives. As a reward, the company awarded him the franchise for the whole state. Thirty years later this now rich dealer, after suffering through the loss of a child and a divorce, bought a horse. The company was Buick, the dealer was Charles S. Howard, the horse was Seabiscuit, and then there was another movie I saw.)

The quake was recorded by film and drawing, by newspaper reports and memories. Winchester reprints pictures of the city by the famous photographer Eadweard Muybridge, drawings of the event by Enrico Caruso, and carvings in Chinese by would-be emigrants.

That touches on a social factor. The eruption of Krakatau led to a Islamist revival in the then Dutch East Indies. Similarly, the destruction of records in the fire meant an increase in Chinese immigration; the law then only permitted relatives to enter the country, but now any would-be immigrant could claim to be related to someone there, with all that that increased Chinese population meant.

The story is spiced with other matters of trivial or perhaps even dubious relevancy. I don't think Winchester's trip to the Barringer Meteor Crater (Pages 134-136) is all that relevant, but when he realizes that he knows the family, makes a cell-phone call, and gets a personal thanks from the old man himself for keeping them in champagne, I am consumed with envy that he had such a cool time. And seeing how the protocontinents aligned and realigned themselves (Pages 73-80) is an illumination of the greater process of which this is a lesser part thereof.

The problem with *A Crack at the Edge of the World* is that it needed to be either shorter, without many of the intriguing side-excursions, or very much longer, to explore the ramifications of all those factors. Winchester realizes that there are a number of influences on a historical event, and that in turn its influence is not all that narrow or constrained. As I was reminded, while I was writing this, by the Hawaiian earthquake.

A more tightly focused view may be found in Dennis Smith's *San Francisco Is Burning: The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and Fires* (Viking; 2005; ISBN 0-670-03442-8; \$25.95). As would not be surprising from the author of *Report from Engine Co. 82* (1972), Smith focuses on the perspective of the firefighters. This gives us a thorough view of the activities of principal actors in the disaster. At the same time, it gives us a restricted view of the event. People are characterized as "good" or "bad" depending on how their actions affected the firefighting; i.e. Funston didn't deploy troops to the fire lines, but to keep order, so he was inadequate and wrong-headed.

WRONG OF PASSAGE

Review by Joseph T Major of

SHATTERED JUSTICE:

A Savage Murder and the Death of Three Families' Innocence

by John Philpin

(Avon (HarperCollins); 2006;

ISBN-13 987-0-06-076632-0; \$7.99)

In *Rite of Passage* (1968), at one point, while waiting to get out of her current predicament, Mia Haverro observes that stranger killings seem wrong to her, and that you should only be killed by someone you know. Studying the history of crimes and murder would indicate that most killers do take Mia's advice, and the police act accordingly.

The structural defects of traditional police intuition and modern forensic science were put on embarrassing display in this case. During the night of January 20, 1998, a twelve-year-old girl

named Stephanie Crowe was brutally murdered in her bed, in her family home in the suburbs of San Diego, California.

This was not a poor family or a violent neighborhood; quite the contrary, the Crowes lived a modern, suburban, upwardly mobile lifestyle. The police secured the crime scene, and perhaps because the accused (more later on this) didn't have high-priced lawyers, they kept from contaminating it. It wasn't the crime scene that was the problem.

Because of the lack of forced entry, the police rapidly concluded that it was a family murder, and focused on Stephanie's older brother, Michael. After two days of prolonged questioning, including subtle psychological methodologies, advanced technological methods, and sheer police patience, Michael confessed. Two of his friends, guys he played Dungeons and Dragons™ with, were implicated; they were similarly questioned and confessed.

In this triumph of investigatory work no one at the time seems to have been particularly bothered to note that Michael was ill. He was initially fingered as the suspect because of his lack of reaction to the killing, the brilliant investigators and profilers seem to have dismissed his health as irrelevant.

Indeed, a FBI profiler studied the case and characterized the crime as an "organized" crime, just the sort to be a family killing. Add to that factor the consideration that the boys played games where they killed all sorts of beings and you've got a family psycho. Right?

This triumph of investigation began to crumble when in a hearing, the court disallowed the confessions. Something about nonstop questioning without a lawyer, with intimidation and other dubious means. You would think Michael was accused of having been molested. I suppose the only reason they didn't waterboard him was that they hadn't heard of it yet. Without motive or means — the weapon was never found — the case was at a standstill, and Michael and his friends were permitted to go free, albeit under the constant shadow of an indictment.

Meanwhile . . . residents of their area of San Diego had been bothered. They found a disheveled man in their houses, or merely knocking on the door, asking for "Tracy". That was California, so he was ushered out the door (or away from it) with the comment, "We're not the Tracy you're looking for, pass on." Well, not those precise words but their feeling was on that order. This man, Richard Tuite, had been in the Crowes' neighborhood. You can tell it wasn't our sort of neighborhood. After a while someone thought to take a look at the blood on his shirt and you know what — it matched Stephanie's!

This case opened up a debate within the authorities. However, on May 26, 2004, Tuite was convicted of manslaughter. Given his chronic drug use and general derangement, a verdict was problematic; that he had done it was far less so.

The archetype for role-playing game murders is the Lieth von Stein case in North Carolina. (There are two books on that crime: *Blood Games* by Jerry Bledsoe (1991) and *Cruel Doubt* by Joe McGinniss (1991).) But there, the gamers gave more than adequate warning and left more than enough evidence. Michael Crowe and his friends were nothing like Lieth von Stein's stepson Chris Pritchard and his friends; they knew the difference between gaming and reality. There was no Raise Dead spell to work on Stephanie.

Now if there could only be a Return Reputation spell for Michael and his friends.

WITHOUT A TRACE

Review by Joseph T Major of

NO REGRETS: And Other True Cases

by Ann Rule

(Pocket Books; 2006;

ISBN 0-743-44875-8; \$7.99)

"Ann Rule's Crime Files: Vol. 11"

I've seen the plaint that Ann Rule focuses on helpless victimized women. Not always. The theme of this volume seems to be more that of unrealistic dreams.

Rolf Neslund had his fifteen minutes of fame in what was perhaps not the most endearing way. After sixty-five years of maritime experience and adventures, *The Sea Captain* Rolf Neslund was the harbor pilot who rammed and destroyed the West Seattle bridge, during what was possibly a Transient Ischemic Attack. His next attack would not be so transient.

For Rolf disappeared one day in August of 1980, a little more than a year after the event that led to his retirement. His wife, Ruth, seemed just a trifle unconcerned.

She would be less so several years later when, after careful and patient investigation, she was indicted for his murder. The evidence was small but hardly flimsy; indeed the Neslund investigation shows how everything leaves a mark. Some of the clues were direct, such as the blood spatter patterns in obscure parts of the Neslunds' house. Some were indirect, such as the absence of any financial transactions from Rolf after his disappearance.

If nothing else, Ruth's lawyers had read a few mysteries, for they listed Rolf as a defense witness. As Rule reports, every time someone came into the courtroom, they all looked to see if he was arriving. (Presumably, even Ruth, since the jury had trouble coming to a verdict.)

As usual, mystery-novel tricks never work. Ruth Neslund was, indeed, convicted of premeditated murder without a body. *Corpus delicti* means body of the evidence, not body of the defunct.

Rule thinks that *It (Ain't) Hard Out There for the Pimps* and tells a story with little mystery but much cruelty about one of their victims — even though she didn't go all the way. Arden Lee first came to public notice when she, naked, beaten, and of course raped, staggered out of a cellar begging for help. She survived after a long recovery. The assailant was found, and pleaded guilty.

She had worked in a club that deserved the

name of “strip tease”, for all that the dancers would show off, they wouldn’t even touch the customers. (At least a lap dancer touches customers.) Contrawise, the dancers were paid little of the money they worked for. And then there were other calls on them.

In a strange coda, the manager of the exotic dancing club where Arden worked asked for a little more from one of his dancers. Finally, after a course of beatings and sexual abuse climaxing in a triple with the manager and his wife, she stabbed the manager to death. The jury found it was self-defense.

When **The Runaway and the Soldier** met, it was a happenstance that was no lover’s meeting. When an unidentified corpse turned up in the woods near Bellvue, Washington, there was understandably a tumult. Yet, by the end of the month, her killer had been found and had pleaded guilty. It had been an impulse; they had been drunk, there had been an argument, and then she was dead. He had lived with it for three months; perhaps being caught was a kind of solution.

The Tragic Ending of a Bank Robber’s Fantasy wasn’t even as rewarding for the robber as Scott Scurlock’s (*The End of the Dream* (1998)) had been for him, and it shows one thing that invalidates those Stainless Steel Rat tales. Sam Jesse must have been a Harrison fan; he had worked out how to rob a bank and figured it would be easy. However, when a manager wouldn’t play his appointed role in the robbery and stepped in, matters turned quite fatal. And Sam couldn’t even fly away and escape.

The next story is of how the people in and around Sauvie Island in Oregon, near Portland, had **A Very Bad Christmas**. Finding a drowned child and a headless woman near the beach can do that to you. They were identified by people who knew them, and that led to a husband who had been composing a lurid tale of spousal adultery — presumably as cover for their sudden disappearance. However, his lack of affect — he didn’t seem particularly grieving about her death — sort of gave it away, and he wrote a confession. They never did find the son. At least his life sentences were consecutive (“He doin’ triple life! How the f— do you do *triple* life!?” — Richard Pryor).

The problem of the mother who threw her two sons into the river in order **To Save Their Souls** highlights what, in Rule’s opinion, is a fatal flaw of the McNaghten Rule. Any evidence of premeditation or attempt to cover up the killing is sufficient to put a crime outside the limits of this qualification. Yet the woman Rule discusses in this chapter did precisely that, and yet she was clearly deranged. Rule describes the context, the events, and the mental background of this and similar cases — and then, it seems, the killer disappeared into the mental health system, a mysterious end to a very tragic case.

The escapees told their hostage to be compliant . . . **Or We’ll Kill You** and she suffered a wild flight across the West, threats of death at every turn, not to mention the rape. This is the story of two crooks who grabbed a

crisis center counselor and drove wildly across California, constantly threatening to do more. (One of them just wanted to have his fun, understand.) Their hostage managed to keep hold of herself, and when they encountered some hunters, talked herself free. Encountering men who have guns and are ready to use them will do that. Only, afterwards, there came the post-traumatic stress, the divorce, and oh yes, the long antibiotic session because the rapist **might** have had VD. They couldn’t tell her if he did, you see, because that would violate his right to privacy. Who all was violated, anyway?

This selection isn’t as strong as most of Rule’s collections. The essays are undated — the events were apparently some time ago, which can be annoying. What comes through is Rule’s sympathy for the victim, even when the “victim” is the criminal. There is too much sympathy for the criminal; ask Bonnie Garland’s family; or Dominick Dunne.

CSI: SPILSBURY

Review by Joseph T Major of
**THE FATHER OF FORENSICS:
The Groundbreaking Cases of Sir Bernard
Spilsbury, and the Beginnings of Modern
CSI**

by Colin Evans
(Berkley; 2006; ISBN 0-425-21007-3;
\$14.00)

A critique of the various *CSI* shows is that the analysts are also the evidence technicians; realistically, they would not be. But their founding father was.

Forensic science was founded by one doctor applying to the solving of crimes the techniques used by another in diagnosing illness. But Dr. A. Conan Doyle only at first wrote fictions where a character acted the way his teacher Dr. Joseph Bell diagnosed. It took a third doctor to do those things in the real world, to get down and dirty (and not just “so to speak”) at crime scenes.

It began in 1910, when a junior Home Office pathologist found himself thrust into a sensational crime involving murder, lust, disguise, flight, and a dramatic arrest. The case of “Dr.” Hawley Harvey Crippen, his vanished wife Belle Elmore, and his tawdry mistress Ethel le Neve, and the dramatic chase across the Atlantic to arrest Crippen and le Neve drew the attention of millions. (One can see a reflection of Scotland Yard’s Inspector Dew’s trans-Atlantic journey on a faster boat to get Crippen and le Neve in Arthur Whittaker’s Sherlock Holmes pastiche, “The Case of the Man Who Was Wanted”, which implies that it may have been written around then.)

Dr. Bernard Henry Spilsbury was the son of a wholesale chemist (in American, a pharmacist) who had himself wanted to be a doctor. Spilsbury had gone up to Oxford and then studied medicine in London, graduating in 1905 and becoming a pathologist. Now he was in the basement of the Crippen house in north London, searching for the body.

At Crippen’s trial, Spilsbury was only the

second medical witness for the prosecution, but his confidence, certainty, and knowledge, as well as his willingness to explain these matters to the jury, made him the star of the trial. Crippen was convicted and hanged; Spilsbury was on his way to fame.

For the next thirty-seven years, Spilsbury dealt with the most famous names in the British legal profession, as prosecution witness (and every once in a while, as a defense one). He was *the* forensic expert, gathering the evidence and analyzing it, in many of the most dramatic cases of the era — in London, anyhow.

(Perhaps if the British government’s Home Office had indeed been more of a centralized body, Spilsbury might have been consulted on the notorious Wallace case in Liverpool — see Jonathan Goodman’s *The Killing of Julia Wallace* (1969) or the movie *The Man from the Pru* (1990) for the gory details.)

Evans discusses a number of Spilsbury’s innovations and habits. For example, he was responsible for the development of the “Murder Bag”, the evidence-collecting kit used by policemen at a crime scene until that task was taken over by trained specialists. One point noted in some detail by Evans was that Spilsbury never published — he could have written a book on the whole art of forensic medical detection, but he was too busy doing it to settle down and write.

It is somewhat amusing to imagine some barrister acting in the Clarence Darrow school, or more likely Darrow himself, brought across the Atlantic to be of counsel in a dramatic murder case, using the classic Darrow dismissal of expert witnesses with the simple question of how much the witness was paid for this testimony. Spilsbury’s fees were lower than customary, and of course he worked for the Home Office.

Evans cites concern about Spilsbury’s high profile and positive image; juries might well be convinced against the evidence. He describes one case where Spilsbury was shown up, and cites cases where Spilsbury cleared people who had been accused. Also, he describes how Spilsbury encouraged women to get into medicine, to become not just nurses but doctors.

And then there was his final judgment on himself . . . the Second World War had been hard on Spilsbury. Both of his sons had been killed in the war, he himself had suffered a stroke, and he had been overworked. In 1947, he killed himself in his lab with gas from a bunsen burner.

This book brings back into public view the great founding father of forensic medicine.

HOLOCENE PARK

Review by Joseph T Major of
**THE DNA DETECTIVES:
How the Double Helix Is Solving Puzzles of
the Past**

by Anna Meyer
(Avalon/Thunder’s Mouth; 2005;
ISBN 978-1-56025-863-6; \$14.95)

In *Eldorado* (1913), the Scarlet Pimpernel pulls off the most daring of his extractions from

the toils of those demned Frenchies. Though one would wonder, upon seeing the weedy and ill lad he and the League had extracted. The game was definitely worth the candle here, though, as the lad happened to be Louis-Charles, *de jure* King Louis XVII of France & Navarre. Sir Percy resolved to keep the lad under cover, as it were, depositing him with an associate (presumably business, for a demned fool and grand fop, the Blakeney estates were well run and apparently the Mahster was free of any prejudice against engaging in *trade*) of the name of Naundorff, what?

The Baroness had done her homework; Chapter 7 of this book includes the story of Karl Wilhelm Naundorff, the German watchmaker who thrilled French Legitimists with the story of his daring escape from the Temple — and of his true identity, Louis XVII, the Lost Dauphin. (Presumably Mark Twain also heard of this.) But, there was a heart floating around, a heart purportedly of the Dauphin, dead in the cruel prison where he had been pent by the revolutionaries. Which was it?

Nowadays we can find out. Wherein lies this tale. Meyer begins by wondering if she hasn't somehow slipped into *The Clan of the Cave Bear*, or become wed to "The Gnarly Man"; her husband bears a few of what we know to be Neandertaler traits, and the question arises of whether or not our kind of humans and Neandertalers were interfertile. She describes the research that developed sequences for these ancient men, and revealed that no, the men of the Neander Valley were not ancestors of modern humans.

Most of the discussion is of ancient animal species. Would it be possible to recreate lost species of comparatively recent times? Not dinosaurs, mind you, but moas, mammoths, Tasmanian wolves, quaggas, and other such animals that died out recently enough to leave viable DNA. This seems more plausible than the other, though Meyer discusses that also.

Other matters include diseases. I haven't asked my stepcousin Robley Rex if he got the Spanish Flu. There's a good reason to (*very* carefully) recreate it, but first the researchers have to find some. Which involves trips to the frozen North . . .

Finally, there are the historical mysteries. Meyer describes the stories of the woman who fell in the Landwehr Canal in Berlin, and the watchmaker from that town (mentioned above), and the scientific testing that proved they were not Grand Duchess Anastasia and Louis XVII respectively, as well as the tests on the heart of the Lost Dauphin.

This brief but entertaining book is a charming introduction to the current state of DNA investigation. No doubt there will be much more to come.

ILL-MET IN BOSTON

Review by Joseph T Major of
THE BROTHERS BULGER:

***How They Terrorized and Corrupted Boston
for a Quarter Century***

by Howie Carr
(Warner Books; 2006;

ISBN 987-0-446-61888-5; \$9.99)

In fantasy, the Great City is always hideously corrupt and mismanaged, overrun with gangs and dominated by a cruel despot, from Lankmar to Ankh-Morpork, from New Crobuzon to Sanctuary. Apparently this isn't really fantasy, and the recent structural failures in the tunnels of the Boston Big Dig are an example of this.

Consider the case of a couple of Bostonians: William Michael "Billy" Bulger looked like the Great American Success Story. Born to a poor but proud couple in the Irish slums of Boston, Billy went into politics, becoming President of the Massachusetts State Senate, which given the frequent ineffectualness of the governors meant that he was as close to running the state as anyone else.

James Joseph "Whitey" Bulger did his best to keep down crime in Boston, with the help of the FBI. However, the way he did it was to kill every crook who wouldn't obey him, which meant for example that the Boston FBI office could proudly say that there was no significant Mafia presence in Boston. Whitey had killed them. Oh yes, he was a FBI informant, so they protected him.

They were brothers.

In a colorful but shaky narrative, *Boston Herald* writer Howie Carr recounts these parallel lives of different yet similar brothers. Billy rose to his own level in politics, an example of intrigue and manipulation. Whitey rose to his own preeminence in the White Hill Gang, the "Irish Mafia" of Boston, accumulating along the way a term in Alcatraz, a reputation as a bisexual, and other fun quirks.

As Billy collected benefits and handed out patronage, so did his brother manipulate the darker world. Carr describes, for example, how Whitey took over a liquor store, with scenes that would be comic if they were not so deadly. Stealing the store and then demanding that the former owner come back so everyone would see that he hadn't been killed, for example.

Naturally, they both got involved in The Cause. Billy asked Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein to speak at the University of Massachusetts. Whitey merely sent a shipload of guns to Ireland and worse yet it got intercepted.

(This became one of the cause celebres of the secret world, when former Department of Justice Office of Special Investigations lawyer John Loftus wrote *Valhalla's Wake* (1989), about how MI-6 murdered the man who went public with the story. However, it turns out that he was in fact murdered by Whitey Bulger. Loftus has not admitted the error and one can understand why other actions carried out by his former organization have been vigorous, zealous, and not overly scrupulous about such insignificant legal procedures as disclosure.)

Billy Bulger, as I said, had risen as far as he could go. He could not be Mayor of Boston (oddly enough, he could have been mayor and still stayed in the state senate — talk about double dipping!), much less any more exalted position. Finally, when all his options seemed closed, he made a lateral move into the

Presidency of the University of Massachusetts, where he proceeded to act the same way he had in the legislature. Anyone who was a relative (except, apparently, Whitey, who admittedly didn't need it, being worth about \$50 mil) or good friend of Billy could get a good position in the university administration. The superlative of "featherbed" seems to need invention in order to properly describe this.

In spite of his protection in Higher Places, Whitey knew his time was short. He disappeared in 1994; presumably not in the way that other people associated with him had disappeared. This state of affairs caused some embarrassment for his brother, who had to testify about his family ties before congressional committees he didn't control. They didn't find anything that could stick, though, and Billy wheeled and dealt to the last, getting himself a hugely padded retirement package.

While Carr tells a compelling and complex story, there's only one problem; it's unsourced. Those who inform on prominent criminal or political figures have a disinclination to be identified, naturally, and yet there is always the spectre of gossip or spite tainting these revelations. There's a frightening narrative here of how corruption, cronyism, and collegiality can erode trust in government and good public administration. How much can it be relied on?

One point not immediately apparent was that Whitey figured out how to spin the law-enforcement system. Being an informant for the FBI was supposed to reduce crime; it only protected him. The Boston G-Men didn't want to give up their source, and through their law-enforcement efforts became his accomplices. With this and other such relationships gone wrong, it makes one wonder what the real point of cultivating informants is.

For more information on James Joseph "Whitey" Bulger, consult:

<http://www.fbi.gov/wanted/topfen/fugitives/bulger.htm>

YOUR SINS AND MINE

Review by Joseph T Major of
WHILE EUROPE SLEPT:

***How Radical Islam Is Destroying the West
from Within***

by Bruce Bawer

(Doubleday; 2006;

ISBN 0-385-51472-7; \$23.95)

In his review of Taylor Caldwell's *Your Sins and Mine* (1956), Damon Knight cites Caldwell's description of a growing catastrophe that is systematically denied by all and sundry (except the narrator and his father). As the fields fail, as new and more virulent weeds invade, as vicious new insects burrow their way into human flesh, all the powers that be systematically and cheerfully pretend that this is only a local, temporary, and exaggerated condition. Knight thought that universal state of denial grotesquely absurd.

The most valuable part of Bawer's analysis is not his observations on the Islamicization of Eurabia, er Europe. Rather, what is most

noteworthy is his discussion of the universal state of denial among the European elites; if asked whether they believe each other or their own eyes, the response is obvious.

Bawer covers, in admittedly a rambling and very personal way, the spreading problem of the Islamization of Europe. Muslim immigrants are flooding into the countries of the European Union, dominating their communities. They are disproportionately welfare-dependent, disproportionately criminal, and overwhelmingly culturally aggressive.

And what is the response of the elites to this? For example, we have a warm and favorable discussion of “family oriented cultures” to explain why Muslim forced marriages are right and proper. When the British Socialist Workers Party stages a protest, it separates the women from the men and suggests they dress modestly (headscarves if not burqas). And so on down the line; except when inconvenient events are not explained away, but ignored (i.e., assaults and rapes of unveiled women).

What makes this work, to the extent that it does, Bawer observes, is the total dominance of the intellectual class. The political class *is* the media class. Any dissenting opinion is shut out. So what we have is a political situation where the outsiders are stigmatized and marginalized as “fascist” — to the benefit of the very real neo-fascist parties.

Bawer also discusses anti-Americanism. How bad is it? He cites the *only* show on Swedish television that ever presented arguments in favor of the invasion of Iraq, an episode of *Oprah* with a debate on the matter. The network that showed it was censured for having violated equal-time regulations.

Not surprisingly, there is also a recrudescence of anti-Semitism. Muslims attack Jews freely and without fear of retribution. Other people just stand by and watch.



Which highlights another point of his; there is a profound inability of these people to defend themselves. Whether it be fundamental anti-militarism or simply standing by and letting beatings, rapes, and even murders take place without objection, the peoples of Europe seem remarkably uninvolved in their own defense. For example, when Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh was fatally stabbed while shopping in a department store, a number of eyewitnesses declined to get involved. What did Harlan Ellison say about the people who (supposedly) watched Kitty Genovese's murder and did nothing? “The Whimper of Whipped Dogs”

(1973).

Bawer has a dog in this fight, as we say: the book begins with his expressions of discontent with that backwoods redneck nation which won't let him marry his partner, where he is addressed with a term more appropriate to a bundle of wood. But then he discusses how he finds America more congenial. He can't be attacked by Arabs for being gay in America. (Yet. Incidentally, *Prayers for the Assassin* by Robert Ferrigno (2006; discussed in *Alexiad* V. 5 #4) is now available in paperback (Pocket Books; \$7.99).)

People are leaving. Bawer cites emigrants leaving, they say, on unspecified cultural grounds. One can guess what these cultural grounds are.

It won't stop there, I'm afraid.

NELL? WELL!

Review by Joseph T Major of
NELL GWYN: Mistress to a King
by Charles Beauclerk

[Charles Francis Topham de Vere Beauclerk,
styled Earl of Burford]
(Grove Press; 2005, 2006;
ISBN-13 978-0-8021-4274-0; \$18.00)

Lord Churchill might be thought impolitic to visit the late Protestant Whore, yet he had his Christian duty to consider. Whereat he call'd upon her at her house. She was direly ill, yet one thought possess'd her mind. “My Lord,” she declar'd unto him, “how shall I be properly memorialized to posterity?”

He inclin'd his head in thought, then said, “Madame, meseems you will be commemorated by your own posterity.”

“‘Tis passing strange you should speak thus, my lord, for I had the same thought regarding you.”

John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, had the great fortune to be described, at length, by his even more notable scion Sir Winston S. Churchill; and then, given a more recent highlighting by yet another, Charles, Earl Spencer. Now his first master's English tart has been described by her own descendant, a man more previously known for advancing claims on behalf of a different relative.

If nothing else, he knows his theatre, and Beauclerk brings to the task an understanding of how acting worked then. But it's not nothing else, of course.

Along with the story of the life of Nell, Beauclerk has proven himself a “good clerk” indeed, including striking images of life at all degrees, from the slums to the court. Their clothes, their meals, their entertainments (understandably), their worship, their blasphemies, and more, all are limned in bright and amusing words. When he gets a chance, he really lets the wit run wild:

Poetic justice, however, was served one famous morning in St. Paul's Cathedral. A Puritan divine was preaching on the Resurrection when a

lady in the congregation suddenly stripped herself naked in her pew and advanced on him with cries of ‘Welcome the Resurrection!’ One can only hope, for the minister's sake, that the members of the congregation that rose up in response did not include his own! Merry England may have gone underground, but it was certainly not dead.

— *Nell Gwyn*, Pages 6-7

The life of Nell Gwyn gives the reader a perspective from which to see the tumultuous events of the reign of her Third Charles, King Charles II. From her low birth (though the *date* is known, the place isn't, and of the three proposed sites, Beauclerk prefers Oxford, and I'm sure that the coincidence that he himself went there has nothing to do with it) to her rise from orange-girl to actress to royal mistress, we see a woman in and of her times. She saw everything and was involved in nothing, she was known by all and had done little to incur odium; she had perspective.

And of course a ready wit. Beauclerk recounts the two famous legends about how he got his last name and his courtesy title, while reminding the reader that these may be true and perforce, that they may not be (Pages 264-265). As well, he sets the context for Nell's admission of being a sex worker of the Anglican observance (Page 306). Beauclerk seems to think that the current Charles could have done better in his choice of companions.

Speaking of the Romish whore, Beauclerk also deals with the competition, with albeit a preference for his own grands-mum. He gives brief but telling descriptions of Barbara Villiers Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland, Louise de Penancoet de Kéroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth, Hortense Mancini, Duchesse de Mazarin, and Moll Davis, the other actress. Also on the stage, so to speak, is the man who looked up to Nell as friend if not mother; the doomed James Scott, Duke of Monmouth.

We've mentioned the theater. Nell was more fortunate in that field than was another notorious mistress, Marion Davies, in that she was suited best for comedy parts and usually got them. However, Beauclerk describes the rich dramatic life of the reviving Restoration theatre. (He confines his Oxfordian blather to a footnote.) He even quotes an afterword to a play that was written specifically to commemorate her:

This good old play, Philaster, ne'er can fail,
But we young actors, how shall we prevail?
Philaster and Bellario, let me tell ye,
For these bold parts we have no Hart, no Nelly,
Those darlings of the stage that charmed you there.

— Afterword (1695) to *Philaster, or: Love Lies a-Bleeding* by Beaumont and Fletcher
— *Nell Gwyn*, Page 130

Bellario was the page to Prince Philaster, so here Nell did it in breeches. However, looking at the illustrations, which

besides various pictures of London in their day, of Nell's Third Charles, her opponents Barbara Palmer, Louise de Keroualle, and Hortense Mancini, there are indications that she would not do too badly today. That is, there are three nudes of her. Mrow Mrow (Rated R)

In an afterword, Beauclerk carries the story on from Nell's son, the first Charles Beauclerk, up to his own, James Beauclerk [James Malcolm Aubrey Edward de Vere Beauclerk, styled Lord Vere of Hanworth]. The Dukes of St. Albans had a very up and down career of bad investments, madness, and such, but also worthy careers in the Navy, in the Church, doing social work, and other good causes. (Or perhaps not, since Charles's uncle, Lord Peter Beauclerk, is an acupuncturist and self-styled alchemist. Been up to Hogwarts?)

THE NOKOTA

by Lisa

At our latest trip to the Horse Park we were lucky enough to see a breed called Nokota, descended from Lakota Sioux warhorses and feral horses. Blue roan is a popular color among them. They are a rare breed, there are perhaps a thousand of them. The horse we saw was named Blue Moon Rising and he was truly impressive.

The Nokotas had a narrow escape from extinction. Their story deserves to be known as much as the Appaloosas. Luckily, a French horseman, the Marquis de Mores, saved about 250 of them. Another horseman named Huidekooper took up after the death of De Mores. Today the breed is being kept alive chiefly by brothers Frank and Leo Kuntz, who own most of them. The Nokota is today the official horse of North Dakota. They even have a science fiction connection, having appeared in a remake of *War of the Worlds*.

Sources

Nokota Horse Conservancy web site
<http://nokotahorse.org>

Rockin Bar H farm web site
<http://www.rockinbarh.com>

HORSE NOTES

by Lisa

The 2006 World Appaloosa Championship, held in Fort Worth, Texas, went to a horse named Captain Zip Ahoy. Captain Zip Ahoy is seven years old. His world championship brought his owner a check for \$1,000. Captain Zip Ahoy also won the Nutrena Iron Horse Award, which like the Visa Triple Crown championship, went to a horse who showed high consistency in 4 out of 5 classes. It earned Zip Ahoy a check for \$10,000.

John Henry

The Horse Park has now made it official that John Henry is retired from being shown due to the crankiness of extreme old age. Apparently John feels that more than twenty years of being gawked at twice a day is quite enough. He can still be seen grazing in his paddock or resting in

his stall. I will miss seeing him in the Parade of Champions but at over a hundred in human years John is entitled to the equine equivalent of a rocking chair.

The Breeder's Cup

The Breeder's Cup was marked by the death of the fine filly Pine Island, the Phipps stable pet in the Distaff.

In the Classic it looked as if Bernardini had the Classic won but then the aptly named Argentinian colt Invasor blew by him the way Bernardini had blown by many a good colt previously. Bernardini still managed to outfinish top older horses. And after Pine Island's death I was glad just to see him come back safe and sound. The Classic was his last race and now he's at stud in the Bluegrass. Perhaps someday I'll get to actually see and photograph him.

Sunday Silence

Following the recent public breakdowns of horses, I saw an article about how breeders were finally trying to breed sturdier Thoroughbreds. I could not help but think back to nearly twenty years ago when one horse ran sound through the grueling Triple Crown trail, during which he won the Derby and Preakness. You would think American breeders would have been hurrying to get on waiting lists so that they could send a fine mare to him, wouldn't you? Well, they didn't. Sunday Silence didn't have a fashionable pedigree, he just came from a line of tough hard-knocking horses. The fashionable breeders preferred his flashier rival Easy Goer, son of the highly fashionable sire Alydar and winner of the Belmont. Japanese breeders, seeing a huge opportunity, hurried to make Sunday Silence's owner an offer he couldn't refuse. In Japan, Sunday Silence sired many good horses. His flashier rival Easy Goer had a heart attack at the very young age of 8 and dropped dead in his paddock.

The Racking Horse World Championship

Score at Halftime won the racking horse world championship this year. The picture showed a horse much like the Tennessee Walker. I wonder if they too can dance like flame in the arena.

THANKSGIVING

by Lisa

Thanksgiving being my holiday, we went to Henderson and had Thanksgiving with Dad, Jean and my sister Esther. All were very generous with food.

The day after Thanksgiving Joe and I were in an adventurous mood so we yanked ourselves out of bed and hurried to Circuit City at 4:30 a.m.. Once there we stood in a long line to get into the store. We passed several piles of bedding left there by people considerably more adventurous than we were. The line moved surprisingly fast and soon we were in the store, but not soon enough to get a \$12.99 thumb drive. The ones left were twice as much. I passed on \$2.99 memory cards for the camera. We bought several DVDs from the four for

eight bucks bin. I also found some old Jimmy Stewart and John Wayne classics for less than ten bucks each.

That night I got some good shots of the sunset over the Ohio River, helped by two barges that chanced to pass while I was there. Next morning I rose early and headed down to the river for some matching sunrise shots. For several minutes not much happened. And then suddenly, a magnificent show of lights started happening around me. Jet trails coincided with a magnificent sunrise show that got better each minute. At about the end of the show I got the dreaded message that my memory card was full. Right after that hundreds of birds filled the sky in what would have been a magnificent shot. I cursed and kicked myself hard for passing on the memory cards. At least I have the memory. And I have learned that the next time I see cheap memory cards to buy them.

On the Care and Feeding of Reading Lists

by Lisa

Several years ago I realized that if I wanted to read all the books I wanted to I was going to have to start a reading list. I duly started one and it grew rapidly. I only recently began seriously working my way through it recently. I quickly discovered that there were many duplicates on my list so I had to spend some time each day working to eliminate the duplicates. So far I am about halfway through books on Hamlet. The list is now more than four thousand pages long, too big for a single Word Perfect file. It is very doubtful that I will ever get all the way through the whole list. Each book brings others to read. The list is basically a lifetime reading journey. It is my hope, however, that along the reading journey I will become something approaching truly literate.

WINTERSMITH

A Discworld novel by Terry Pratchett
(HarperCollins; ISBN: 0060890312; HC;
\$16.99)

a short review by Grant C. McCormick

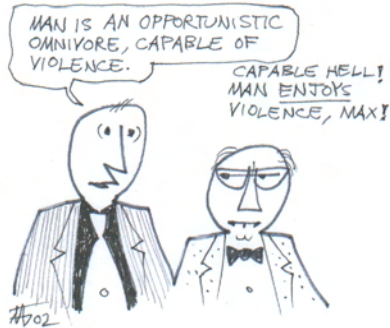
Wintersmith is the latest young-adult Discworld novel, and is the direct sequel to *The Wee Free Men* and to *A Hat Full of Sky*. In this book, Tiffany Aching makes a mistake, and because of it has to face the desire of the Wintersmith as well as the ire of the Summer Lady. Her handling of this unwanted attention influences her own feelings about romance and about growing up.

I find *Wintersmith* to be a more entertaining read than was *A Hat Full of Sky*, comparable in quality to *The Wee Free Men*. In *Wintersmith*, you see Tiffany Aching as a young woman (her thirteenth birthday happens during the novel), Roland, the baron's son, has a much more impressive presence (if not as much time on the page) in *Wintersmith* than in *The Wee Free Men*. The reader gets to meet several of Tiffany's other apprentice witches, and her current Mistress (Miss Treason). Granny Weatherwax, Nanny Ogg, and Miss Tick all make return

appearances. Several minor Goddess have cameos, and, naturally, the Nac Mac Feegle are everywhere. You even meet You.

The novel is set in both the Chalk and in Lancre. In *Wintersmith*, you get a better feel for the lives of the 'typical' witch (Miss Treason), as well as the atypical one (Nanny Ogg). Tiffany makes some important discoveries about herself and her position in the World.

Wintersmith is a most satisfying novel, and I recommend it highly.



THE SHADOW OF SAGANAMI

by David Weber

(Baen; 2004; \$26.00 hc/\$7.99 pb)

Review by E. B. Frohvet

In the star Kingdom of Manticore, Saganami Island, named for an early hero of the Navy, has for two hundred years been its Annapolis, the principal training center of its Naval officers. As the Kingdom expands into a nearby cluster of worlds that have voted to join, the expectation is yet more war. Graduates of the elite school are increasingly likely to be rushed directly into combat assignments. The plot follows a half dozen of these new officers aboard cruiser HMS *Hexapuma*. (Admiral Honor Harrington makes only a cameo appearance.) Multiple adventures culminate in the customary brutal, bloody slugfest to conclude the book.

Having run out of story lines directly involving Honor Harrington, Weber (like Anne McCaffrey, to whom this volume is dedicated) has simply moved on to a new generation of characters. Unlike C. S. Forester, the obvious source material for this series, Weber need not be bound by historical accuracy, and may invent as many wars as he pleases, restricted only by internal consistency. It is in that area the author runs into the chronic problem of open-ended series. Internal consistency supposes that every reader has read, and followed in detail, all preceding books. Combine this with the writer's penchant for explaining in detail every political crosscurrent of every faction. The result is a steadily declining ratio of military action to factitious political blather; which can be tedious to the casual reader to whom, for instance, the Republic of Monica is a minor concern. There were in fact so many diversions that I had trouble keeping track of the main characters: a list at the back cites 139 characters! To encompass all of this often superfluous detail

requires a bloated 745 pages. Or to sum up: too much info dump, not enough action.

AT ALL COSTS

by David Weber

(Baen; 2005; \$26.00 hardcover)

Review by E. B. Frohvet

I stand corrected: Weber can indeed write yet more adventures of Admiral Lady Dame Steadholder [fill in as many honorifics as you like, she probably has them] Honor Harrington. The perpetual war with the Republic of Haven is going badly. The Havenites have regrouped under a new government to whom running things sensibly is more important than insane ideologies. Their navy is expanding faster than that of the star Kingdom. The Manticoran Admiralty places Honor in command of Eighth Fleet, the Kingdom's crack offensive strike force, with instructions to create enough attacks on outlying Havenite systems and allies, to divert enemy forces into playing defense rather than attacking Manticore and its allies. A subplot running at the same time involves Honor's polygamous marriage to old friend Hamish Alexander and his crippled wife Emily, and the birth by uterine replicator of their child. As things look darkest for Manticore, the Republic offers a truce, and peace talks. Can they be trusted?

It doesn't matter, as [SPOILER ALERT] the Havenites have reluctantly decided to roll the dice once and for all, for the biggest prize: a frontal assault on Manticore's home system. Weber's trademark pattern has been to end every book with a battle. This scenario allows him to stage the Mother of all Battles, with casualties running into the hundreds of thousands (think Stalingrad in space). Which leaves the obvious question: what's left for the next book?

CAN'T GIVE IT UP

by Johnny Carruthers

[originally on

<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/>]

I'm sure that you have heard a number of recent news reports about how chocolate is rich in antioxidants. Well, I read a news story today which suggests that there might be yet another health benefit to eating chocolate.

The story came from Reuters, and was about a study that Johns Hopkins University was conducting on aspirin and heart disease. Specifically, the study looked at 1200 people with a family history of heart disease, and was looking at the effects of aspirin on platelets in the blood.

Before receiving the aspirin, the 1200 volunteers were instructed to stick to a strict exercise regimen, not smoke, and avoid caffeinated drinks, wine, grapefruit juice, and chocolate — all known to affect platelets.

Some of those volunteers — 139 in all — just couldn't give up chocolate for 24 to 48 hours before the testing. (I can't say that I blame them. I might be able to do it once, maybe

twice, but it wouldn't be a very good idea to ask me more than that. I start to get mean when I suffer from chocolate deprivation.) Some of them said, "I can do anything but I can't stay off my chocolate," and the doctors conducting the study knew that they would violate the restriction.

As Diane Becker, one of the doctors conducting the study, put it, "Nobody ate like a chocolate chip. If they were going to eat it, they ate some chocolate. It went all the way from a chocolate chip cookie to someone who ate a gallon of chocolate ice cream with chocolate chunks and two chocolate chip cookies at one sitting."

The "chocolate offenders" were eliminated from the aspirin survey, but Becker looked at their blood anyway. Researchers ran platelet samples from both the chocolate offenders and those who managed to abstain before the test through a system designed to time how long it would take for platelets to clump together in a hair-thin plastic tube. What they discovered was that the blood of the chocolate eaters took longer to clot than did the blood of the abstainers. Urine tests showed that the chocolate eaters had lower levels of thromboxane, a platelet waste product.

While Becker states that while eating chocolate doesn't come close to matching the effects of taking a single baby aspirin a day, her team wants to conduct another study. This one would measure how much chocolate people eat, and see if chocolate eaters have a lower incidence of heart attacks and stroke.

The antioxidant qualities of dark chocolate have been trumpeted for the past couple of years. But I have read several news stories about this discovery, and from what I have seen, the type of chocolate consumed didn't seem to have any difference on what the researchers found. Of course, judging from some of Becker's comments, someone would have to consume massive amounts of chocolate daily to equal the effects of aspirin on clotting.

Okay, so how is this a problem?

HERSHEY CANDY CANE KISSES

Candy Review by Johnny Carruthers

[originally on

<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/>]

When I reviewed the Chocolate Mint Kisses recently, I said that we would probably be seeing them on the shelves again sometime after Halloween. Well, at least one store wasn't waiting. I was in CVS a couple of days ago, and I saw the Chocolate Mint Kisses in the candy aisle.

Right next to it, I saw a new limited edition Kiss for this year's Christmas season. That is the Candy Cane Kiss. This is white chocolate with peppermint flavor. Red stripes decorate the top of the Kiss, and inside are red candy bits.

When I first opened the bag, I was greeted with a strong peppermint aroma. My first thought was that the peppermint flavor would be as strong as the aroma, almost to the point of being overwhelming. Also, when I saw that these Kisses contained "candy bits," I was

expecting bits of crushed peppermint hard candy.

Both of those initial thoughts turned out to be wrong. The peppermint flavor is not as strong as the aroma would indicate. This is good, because an overly strong peppermint flavor would overwhelm the mild sweetness of the white chocolate. Instead, the peppermint flavor is just the right strength to serve as a balance to the white chocolate.

And the candy bits are more like red nonpariels, not crushed fragments of hard peppermints. They don't seem to provide any additional flavor to the Kisses, but they do add a slight amount of crunch.

Like the Chocolate Mint Kisses, the Candy Cane Kisses will probably start appearing on the shelves more and more after Halloween. And they should be on the shelves through the end of the year, and will probably disappear with the after-Christmas sales. But if they are as popular as the Chocolate Mint Kisses are, it is highly likely that they will be making annual appearances from now on.

HERSHEY SPECIAL DARK COFFEE KISSES

Candy Review by Johnny Carruthers
[originally on
<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/>]

I saw these at Kroger and I picked up a bag. I'm not too surprised to see this limited edition hitting the shelves when it did. It can't be a coincidence that these appeared at the same time the regular size version of the Special Dark Espresso bar appeared on the shelves. I'm just a little surprised that Hershey didn't think of a store display that brought the two together.

The Special Dark Kisses are the same as the Special Dark Espresso bar — dark chocolate infused with coffee flavor. Make that a STRONG coffee flavor; the coffee smell hits you as soon as you open the bag.

As I may have stated on more than one occasion, letting the Kiss melt on your tongue is the best way to enjoy it. The dark chocolate and coffee flavors swirl over your tastebuds, coating them in a velvety blanket of dark richness.

I know that all chocolate has caffeine in it. But as I mentioned when I reviewed the Special Dark Espresso bar, I think that Hershey added a little more caffeine when they added the coffee flavor. After eating several Special Dark Kisses, I find that I have a little bit of a caffeine buzz going — one similar to what I have after my first cup of coffee.

Again, this is a limited edition, and I have no idea how long the Special Dark Coffee Kiss will stay on the shelves. I suppose it depends on how long it takes to get the word out to people who love their coffee and chocolate the same way — dark and sweet.

I had an interesting time at the library. I stopped to talk to Angel, one of the children's librarians, and . . . let's just say that she was having "one of those days." She looked like she needed a lift, and since I had a few of the Special Dark Coffee Kisses with me, I gave her one.

The first thing she said was, "Where were you earlier?" She had taken some medicine that, based on her description, had left a rather foul aftertaste in her mouth. (Haven't we all experienced that at one time or another? I know the feeling well.)

After she popped the Kiss in her mouth, her eyes widened with both surprise and delight. She asked, "Where did you get these?" I told Angel where I had purchased the Kisses (Kroger), and I mentioned that they were a limited edition. Angel then said something about having to go buy all the available bags.

Fortunately, I don't think Kroger is the only place that is selling them. I would hate to think that this turned into a case of no good deed going unpunished.

CHOXIE

Target's Chocolate Brand
Reviews by Trinlay Khadro

The mod labels and overblown descriptions on the packaging are fun.

Choxie Red Raspberry Truffles

"A blend of dark chocolate, cream and raspberry juice concentrate and dusted with raspberry powder."

These are one of one of my favorites — one or two pieces satisfies my chocolate jones. These come in a clear plastic "ginger jar" container with a mod blue/green and raspberry mylar wrapper, containing 8.55 oz (242 g) of chocolates

One container lasts me over a month. I enjoy the blend of dark chocolate's sweet bite and the fruity raspberry tang of the powder coating and juice-enhanced filling.

Choxie Giant Chocolate Bing Cherries

"Sweet tart dried cherries in rich milk chocolate, covered in a burgundy cherry coating."

Because I like the fruit/chocolate flavor combination, I've also tried these. These are sweeter than I usually go for: the cherry flavor is very strong, with a minimal flavor of chocolate blended in. The dried cherry centers have a pleasant chewiness and fruity tang — but I find the coating reminiscent of a cough drop.

Choxie Raspberry Lemon Crunch Candy Bar with Lemon Biscotti Bits

"Dark chocolate with smooth raspberry lemon truffle and biscotti bits."

A 2x5" cardboard box with pink and orange mod design. Inside the box lies a foil-wrapped bar with scored lines to break it into eight pieces. Dark chocolate coating over a smooth with crunchy bits interior. Sharper flavor than the Raspberry Truffles, with a pleasant sweet tangy chocolate/lemon blend. The lemony citrus is stronger than the raspberry, but the raspberry adds a balancing sweetness to the dark chocolate.

I bought the candy bar at the checkout on a whim, and ended up going back for more. These also are pleasant from the freezer for a different texture and mouth-feel.

And now I've just eaten too much chocolate — as if there could be such a thing: I'll go make an omelette now to balance it with some protein.



FANZINES

and Furthermore . . . #18 October 8, 2006, #19 October 12, 2006, #20 October 27, 2006, #21 November 10, 2006, #22 November 30, 2006

John Purcell, 3744 Marielene Circle,
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Banana Wings #28 November 2006
Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley
Road, Croydon, CR0 7ES, UK
2006 Nova Award Winner
banana@fishlifter.demon.co.uk

Beyond Bree September 2006, October 2006,
November 2006
Nancy Martsch, Post Office Box 55372,
Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-5372 USA
beyondbree@yahoo.com
Not available for The Usual; \$12/year, \$15
in envelope or overseas.

The Drink Tank #100 October 6, 2006, #101
October 23, 2006, #102 October 29, 2006,
#103 November 6, 2006, #104 November
15, 2006, #105 November 29, 2006
Christopher J. Garcia
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In a Prior Lifetime #16 October 2006, #17
November 2006
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It Goes On the Shelf #28 October 2006
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JOMP, Jr. #25 September 2006

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The Knarley Knews #120 October 2006

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Lofgeornost #85 November 2006

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MT Void V. 25 #14 October 6, 2006 — V. 25,
#22 December 1, 2006

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Opuntia # 62.3 October 2006, #62.5A
November 2006

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Peregrine Nations V. 6 #3 October 2006

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Pixel # 7 November 2006, #8 December 2006

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Science Fiction/San Francisco #31 October 4,
2006, #32 October 25, 2006, #33 November
10, 2006

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Steam Engine Time #5

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Visions of Paradise #107 September 2006,
#108 October 2006, #109 November 2006

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The 2006 **Nova Awards** were presented at
Novacon 36 in Bentley, Walsall, UK, on

November 12:

Best Fanzine: *Banana Wings*, ed.
Claire Brialey &
Mark Plummer.

Best Fan Writer: Claire Brialey.

Best Fan Artist: Sue Mason.

The Novacon website (www.novacon.org)
has a report that there was an issue of *Plokta*
published in May 2006, but there were no
sightings of it outside London.

STOP PRESS

A publication titled *The Resplendent Fool*
#61 arrived just too late for listing this.
Thomas D. "Tom" Sadler is moving to
Kentucky! More to come.

HEART PROBLEMS

Commentary by Johnny Carruthers
[from <http://purpleranger.livejournal.com/>]

Out of all the news I heard coming from this
year's Worldcon, there was one thing that both
delighted me and bothered me. That was
learning that Forrest J Ackerman was the winner
of this year's Big Heart Award. It delighted me,
because Forry has done so much for science
fiction, both on the pro and fan sides, that he has
probably deserved the Big Heart not once, but
several times over the decades. Of course, for
most of that time, he was the one presenting the
Big Heart Award during the Hugo Award
ceremonies. That made it unlikely that he would
ever receive the award, at least until he he
stepped aside from presenting it a few years ago
(that was 2001, I think).

The part that bothered me, if only a little,
was hearing that the award would henceforth be
known as the Forrest J Ackerman Big Heart
Award. It isn't the fact that an award would be
named for him that bothered me; not only do I
think Forry has deserved the Big Heart, I think
he has also deserved having some award named
for him, in recognition of his long service to
science fiction fandom. What bothers me just a
little is that, up until now, the full name of the
award was the E. Everett Evans Big Heart
Award.

Now, if I'm remembering the details
correctly, Evans was a well-known fan in the
1950s and earlier. The Big Heart was
established after his death as a tribute to Evans,
and to commemorate fans who exemplified
Evans's "big heart." (If I am getting this wrong,
please correct me.) I suppose the fact that most
fans don't know the full story about Evans was
one of the reasons (if not the main reason) for
the renaming, but I would have preferred that it
would have been better to make that full story
better known, perhaps by printing it in each
Worldcon's program book.

As I said, I heartily support the idea of an
award named in Forry's honor. But I would
prefer that it be something that all of SF fandom
would (at least theoretically) have a voice in
selecting. Something, for instance, that would be
nominated and voted upon using the same

process as the Hugo Awards. Maybe even
something that would be awarded under the
auspices of the World Science Fiction Society.
To me, that might be a more fitting tribute to
Forry — and leave Evans's tribute intact too.

ELFLING



God, if I can have a minute —
All the minutes of eternity are Yours,
I hope I only need one.
This is Elfling, one of Your lesser servitors.

He came to us not long after we married,
Hiding under the deck from the cold and wet.
He said "peace" in his kitty way.
Mewed in his kitty way into Lisa's heart.
He took us in; we took him in.

He was one of Your pretty things,
Furry and sweet and cuddly.
I don't know why he was out on the street.
He was everybody's friend.

He had been out on the street,
You would have thought he had learned.
When ever a door was opened, he made a dash.
We chased him, or stopped him, or feared.
He got hugs and scolds, and the next time —
Straight for the door.

He watched us for a time, we watched him;
We knew his span was not ours, but no —
When Sulla died, he saw what was left,
He couldn't speak but his eyes said "Why?"

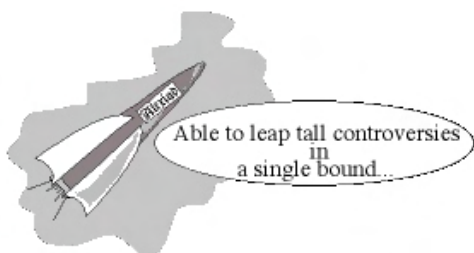
Then, one day, he grew tired. More tired than
was right.
His blood was weak, too weak.
This time, we could not call him back.

He will try the patience of Your saints,
Dashing through the pearly gates when they are
opened.

Bring him back. He should be there for Lisa.
Please?

— JTM

Letters, we get letters



From: **Dainis Bisenieks** September 30, 2006
921 S. St. Bernard Street, Philadelphia,
PA 19143-3310 USA

I soon got secondhand copies of the first two chronicles of young Patrick Leigh Fermor's grand tour: *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*, in their Penguin editions. These at least are exhaustively indexed, at whose instance I cannot guess. A few paragraphs describe the arrival of a Danube steamer; in the index we fine its name and that of the *Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft*, beloved of aficionados of the German language. (But I don't think any German would seriously tack a *kapitänswitwe* on to that.) I can only imagine that the index was meant to display the value of allusion — the exact principle on which I indexed Avram Davidson's "Unhistory".

So, is the "Danube Steamship Trip Company" all that hard to run together? Even to add "Captain's Widow"? It must have been interesting indexing *Adventures in Unhistory* (Owlswick Press; 1993).

In a recent issue of *The Economist* I found an obituary of György Faludy, whose remarkably full life reached quite an advanced age. His book *My Happy Days In Hell* has been on my shelves for about as long as anything. He was a spirited survivor of Communist jails who didn't let the bastards get him down.

Obituaries in *The Economist*, one per issue, are always worth reading; they are thoughtful and sometimes stylish and witty. The crocodile (and stingray) fellow got one. Most entertaining was the joint obituary for Mickey Spillane and the fellow (whose name will not burden my memory) who bought Hooters from its cash-strapped founders and took it national. It was done as a story, Mike Hammer entering a Hooters and ordering a meal.

The purely economic news in the magazine is outside my orbit, but the pop-culture news in *Newsweek* is even more so and deserves no serious attention at all.

Jasper Fforde's *The Fourth Bear* was duly bought and read; it was okay but had fewer things to which I responded with outright glee. One day I spotted the library copy at a librarian's desk and used the occasion to recommend other books that might be of

interest, such as *To Say Nothing of the Dog* and Marvin Kaye's "Umbrella" books. I have acquired, for a few books each, lending copies of the first three "Thursday Next" books. And is it not remarkable that I own a small drawing, by Giovanna Fregni, of nesting dodos? I think of it as my merit badge in dodo awareness. To Willy Ley's popular science books such as *The Lungfish*, *the Dodo and the Unicorn* I owe my knowledge of Baltic amber and of the woolly mammoth. It's really too bad, what happened to all those ugly chickens. . .

Amazing, what departing students will simply throw away; I came upon three big fat dictionaries, of which I am happily keeping the two dictionaries of French, the Robert and the Larousse (replacing the 1913 edition!); the French-Italian, It.-Fr. was good for a few bucks in trade at a bookshop. But I must (not from any immediate lack of space) get rid of an equal weight of books that have remained unread far too long.

Having at one time or another read all of the novels of Robertson Davies, I cheerfully spent ten bucks on a secondhand *The Merry Heart*, a posthumously compiled prose miscellany. His remarks on reading chime with my views: like, there are books that find you. Do I need to list the books which most notably found me? Contacts with fannish circles have been a great help, and I'm speaking here of books that are not actually fantastic literature; that kind of goes without saying.

Autres temps, autres moeurs. In Murray Leinster's *The Last Spaceship* (1949), the hero and heroine, having escaped a planet-wide tyranny in a museum-piece spaceship, think the time is ripe for them to be married. But they are momentarily stymied by the absence of anyone who could make it official. Counterexamples readily come to mind, foremost among them Marcus Didius Falco and Helena Justina.

Or, for something Jenkins could have found readily, Bowen Tyler and Lys La Rue (later Tyler) in *The Land that Time Forgot* (1918):

That night the clouds broke,
and the moon shone down upon
our little ledge; and there, hand
in hand, we turned our faces
toward heaven and plighted our
troth beneath the eyes of God.
No human agency could have
married us more sacredly than
we are wed.

That was about all the skiffy that came to me for proofing; its technically resourceful hero was, I suppose, the norm for those times. Typos, eye and hand not OCR, sometimes verged on the surreal . . .

November 24, 2006

Well now, the symbol or emblem of the swastika comes from India and environs, in the form depicted. In the 1914 first edition of *The Fates of the Princes of Dyfed*, it appears in the emblem of the Aryan Theosophical Press —

together with what we think of as the Magen David, though it need not have had that association. For that matter, in the period after WW I, it was (again in this level form) the mark of Finnish air force planes — and of Latvian ones, with what distinction of color, I know not. I don't suppose a war with the other was in the contingency plans of either country. Heck, we Balts have as good a claim to be "Aryans" as anyone. As for those upstart Germans — in 1946-6 I was in 3rd grade in Ruhpolding and got top grades, far better than the cloddish Bavarian peasant kids, who of course detested me. (Getting top grades at Saginaw High School was not exactly a happy experience, either.)

I have told that Ruhpolding was then and until his death the home of Fritz Braun, father of Eva. A man on whom history fell like a ton of bricks.

Proofreading work has brought me another short "novel" by Murray Leinster, a "fix-up" of four novelettes from *Astounding* of the mid-50s, typical technical fix stories with a veneer of characterization — the sort of thing, in short, which before long put me off science fiction. As usual, given no copy text, I am essentially emending a corrupt text, the correction being in 99.9% of cases perfectly obvious.

Which book?

I have seen parts, so far of a new book *not* titled *The Sandman Perplex*: about Neil Gaiman's work, anyway. It is to have an index, in which (if the indexer is at all thorough) I expect to find the entry "Duck, Donald" — that's who some joker, making up a fantasy cast with Disney characters, proposed for the Sandman himself. I will any propose inclusion of the entry, "Lupescu, Magda, see under Carol II, King of Romania". By the form of it, it does not actually require an additional entry for the King, nor any mention of either in the book. I have told of an actual reference book in which the entry "Peeping Tom" is followed by "See Lady Godiva". The discovery is one of the joys of my life.

But you could include Henry Hazlitt's limerick:

Said the beauteous Magda Lupescu
As she rode to Romania's rescue:
Tis a wondrous thing
To be under a King
Is democracy better, I ask you?

The joy of books has lately been shared with a woman considerably younger than myself. For years I'd been seeing her at intervals in connection with some local proofreading work; one day I showed her one of Jasper Fforde's books that I happened to have with me. These have now made a tremendous hit (the artwork in the books, too) and I look forward to continued exploration of the BookWorld. We are agreed on the merits of the late Sergei Dovlatov, whose fiction she can read in the original Russian. Next on the agenda from my side: Osbert Lancaster, who (like Mervyn Peake or Barbara

Ninde Byfield) is equally good as a writer and as an illustrator. A sampling of cartoon books has already met with approval: *Man in Apron* by Larry, *The Maestro* by Gerard Hoffnung, and *No!* by R. O. Blechman. What is the joy of books if not shared? And of course I recommend all these to the readers of *Alexiad*.

Who besides George Price knows what an "offog" is? (I do, but I'm not telling.)

Well, I had to in order to be able to cite it in the first place.

Later: completing work on the Gaiman book, I found that I had misremembered; it was Bugs Bunny. I proposed an entry for this but not any other. A correction I made, also in the text, was to make "Teilhard" the short-form name of the theologian. A *Petit Larousse* (1997 edition) that I recently found among other discarded books has been fascinating and useful. It gives pronunciations where there might be doubt, and it has lots of little portraits, mostly in color.

A bit of local color in one of the Leinster tales seemed dubious — a planet's inner moon rising in the east and moving rapidly across the sky. Well, it could do this — if it were retrograde. Phobos, as we all know, rises in the west; also, it gets eclipsed.

The November *Astronomy* has a piece on an Earth-crossing asteroid, measuring a few hundred meters, that could be a menace a couple decades down the line. In its calculated approach in 2029 there is imprecision, but if it passes through a calculated narrow slot, it will hit some years later. It is pointed out that a slight and feasible deflection beforehand — once the figures have been refined — will have large results at the critical time. Which makes me think that with sufficient precision, the right nudge could result in a series of gravitational deflections that would send the offending object crashing into the Moon. Or, more remotely, Venus. This is assuming we do not have the large energies so lightly wielded in science fiction which would let us capture the thing for our use.

Oh no: "Sir Isaac Newton" v. NASA, with a giant dragon waddling into a Florida courtroom.

I let this letter sit until after Philcon, which did not, however, yield a whole lot of subject matter. I thought came to me: Will any work of Robert E. Howard ever be included in the Library of America? It was startling to see HPL accorded that honor. And that reminds me — a license plate (NJ) seen on a recent outing read CTHULHU. My son and I were equally delighted. Just goes to show how rapport with the younger generation can occur.

That makes me feel all squamous and rugose inside. Why, it makes my brain want to deliquesce and flow out my ears. Iä! Iä! Shub-Niggurath! The Black Goat of the Woods With a Thousand Young!

— JTM

From: **Trinlay Khadro** October 13, 2006
Post Office Box 240934, Brown Deer,
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TRINLAY KHADRO

<http://store.s.ebay.com/sillykit>
ty

Sorry that it's taken so long for me to sit down and get this LOC going. I've fallen behind on almost everything.

Re: Night of Power Diaries: Minority religions under repression o f t e n go "underground" where they experience some odd transformations as a result. Some Hispanic families discovering that they are "crypto-Jews", or the way Christianity developing "underground" in Japan seems to have become a "Pureland" variety.

You mean the kakure kirishitan?

Re: "Coup Coup": a Starbucks on every corner?

Is it possible that a folklore version of "Don Quijote" preexisted both "Cardenio" and *Don Quijote*? (Or an even older, now long forgotten work?)

Re: Sinovia/Zinovia, Asimov/Azimov — Ellis Island effect, eh? KT had a classmate in High School, very non-fannish, who is Asimov's granddaughter. (KT is now at the local technical college figuring out what she wants to do for a living.)

Re: *Lost in Tibet*, one thing that seems to be a standard in harsh environments is a "law of hospitality"/traveller's aid. Who knows when the situation of "stranded traveller" might befall oneself. I might offer "Half of what I have is yours", realizing that half of nearly nothing is still something.

Philosophy/Religion-wise, at least in Vajrayana Buddhism, is that every being in existence has been or will be your mother and your child. Even those of us with difficult or awkward relationships with our parents can still wrap our heads around it. (As much as my mom can make me nuts, I love her: I make KT just as nuts too sometimes — especially when I'm trying not to.)

John Hertz: I think Rotsler is an excellent role model for fan artists . . . so much of his work is still being used. I hope that he was appreciate and given some of these egoboos during his life. An occasional expression of delight (or as appropriate) can keep an artist inspired.

Well, in 1996 he became the

first and I think only person to receive two Hugos for the same category at the same con (the Best Fan Artist Hugo and Retro-Hugo).

Janine: I think "Circus Peanuts" are "gross and styrofoamy" but KT LOVES them.

Darrell S: I don't know what I think of this whole "Gospel of Judas". It doesn't affect my world view at all.

Thinking of some of the orthodox Jews I know in Milwaukee, I don't think a Rabbi who didn't settle down and have a bunch of kids would be taken seriously at all. (Adam & Eve having been commanded to "Go forth and multiply.") Likewise, his kids would have large families right up until the Industrial Revolution and postwar trends towards having smaller families.

One of KT's friends became overexcited by *The Da Vinci Code*; she brought him back to earth with a ruler and a calculator, to disprove the idea of "golden mean" having much to do with human proportions. While medieval science is a good window to the medieval mind, it doesn't necessarily have much to do with reality.

Taral Wayne: I recall seeing something on TV (PBS, Discovery? TLC?) where scholars were working on reading and conserving Dead Sea Scrolls and used infrared imaging to scan well-blackened fragments.

Even if the library holds mainly cookbooks and dime novels it will provide a view of the period in which the library was consolidated. Historians will likely get more out of it than the literary world. If nothing else, it may tell us what people enjoyed reading.

Alexis: thing is, Uncle had a will, he just hadn't updated it to fit his wishes. He figured that just telling my mom, his sister, that they'd work out a way to do it. Because he hadn't put it in writing, meant the executor (my mom) didn't have the leeway to do that. Never mind that I spent seven years taking care of him. (The cousin who lives nearby, but could never be bothered to visit, let alone HELP, thinks she hasn't gotten her fair share <same as mine> . . . so this would have probably tied the family up in court.)

Evelyn: Willis O'Brien! Oops. Thanks for the correction.

Jeffrey Boman: Sherman Park and Kletch Park are favorites of Milwaukee fandom and crafters. They're 1930s and 40s art deco service stations converted into coffee shops. There are gradually more being fixed up this way with the small local chain.

Quaker Steak and Lube (the amusing but loud Ohio restaurant chain) is built in this fashion — however, we probably won't be eating there this time, since the new hotel for Holmes/Doyle is not in the neighbourhood of their Dayton outlet.

Re comment to me: I had some rough years 16-18 years ago following my divorce. I'm

doing much better now; in part from the emotional support and activity in local fannish life.

That my daughter needs me really saved my life back then.

Me: the cancer scare turned out to be a false alarm, but terrifying nonetheless.

Lisa Mason is recovering from chemo and finishing her radiation treatments. She's been a bit disappointed that she doesn't glow in the dark. I gave her some Halloween glow-in-the-dark nail polish and lip gloss. :-)

Currently, my medical stress is catching up on 3+ years of dental work . . . ouch. I've got about four teeth that need major work, either fillings falling out or teeth cracking and breaking. (Uncle had similar trouble with brittle teeth, but I've never found out why.)

Apsley Cherry-Garrard had his teeth **shatter** on the Worst Journey In the World, but the ninety-two degrees of frost (-60°F) may have had something to do with that.

My social security hearing seemed to have gone well, but I'm still waiting for the results. Held up, apparently, because one doctor's paperwork was missing.

Re: cats hogging beds: one afternoon while in bed with a shattering flareup of the fibro I noticed that if I moved and left space between me and Megumi, she would scoot over till she was touching me again. It was a real comfort to be awake enough to realize what she had done and how much she shows how much she loves me.

Re: my comment to Sheryl: I've noticed that Megumi prefers the female vet. I wish she would tell me why.

Sheryl B: The DVD for *Rome* will be out soon. We recently saw an ad for it on TV. It inspired a joyous response from KT. I think I know what to get her for solstice.

And season II begins in Ianuarius. Salve!

— Iosephus

Taras: Miyazaki Jr. is directing *Tales of Earthsea*; bits I've seen in promos look fantastic.

For more recent and better documented women warriors, I recently browsed a book titled *Amazons and Military Maids* though I didn't manage to remember the author's name. It included nice examples as early as the Revolutionary War and I think as recent as WWII.

Re comment EB: I had always heard that Hiroshima and Nagasaki were chosen for the bombs because they'd seen so little activity up to that point in the course of the war. Rather than the other way round.

From: **Taras Wolansky** October 19, 2006
100 Montgomery Street., #24-H, Jersey City, NJ 07302-3787 USA
twolansky@yahoo.com

Belated comments on the August issue.

Review of Bujold's *Paladin of Souls*: The idea of the Dowager Royina Ista leaving behind her servants and replacing them with miscellaneous strangers does not ring true in a medieval environment. I recall Princess Elizabeth Tudor's fierce battles to hold on to her servants during her sister's reign. A noblewoman wants people around her she can trust not to spy on her, steal from her, sell her out.

Darrell Schweitzer: Like *The Celestine Chronicles*, *The Da Vinci Code* is a book read by people who don't normally read books. Thus, they haven't yet built up a carapace of skepticism.

Taral Wayne: **"Imagine finding a treasure trove of [SF] a thousand years from now."** This would be much like how historians extract factual data from hints and asides in medieval theology.

Steven H. Silver: **"Goulart's presentation of Groucho [in *Groucho Marx, Master Detective*] wasn't that of the man, but rather of the character he portrayed"**. The difference between literary and popular fiction?

E.B. Frohvet: It would seem that the 9th and 10th Amendments would provide for a right of secession. Though a strong case could be made that, having participated in the election of 1860, the southern states could not secede until March, 1865.

Rodney Leighton: **"That area is polluted with bears."** Upstate New York is polluted with deer, which create a sort of botanical desert. Everything they can possibly stomach is eaten.

Rats with hooves, that is to say.

Dainis Bisenieks: Unfortunate that, for commercial reasons (I surmise), Piper had to include the Paratimers in the "Lord Kalvan" stories. Their presence tends to trivialize his achievements. I try to forget they're there!

They weren't in the original draft, "When In the Course". Also, Piper hadn't done a Paratime story since 1955 ("Time Crime").

November 30, 2006

Alexiad, October 2006: Excellent Rodford Edmiston piece on global warming (and cooling).

Review of John G. Hemry's "JAGs in Space" (as you call it) series: Probably the most realistic depiction of a space navy I've ever encountered. Too realistic for many readers, I suspect: Hemry is now starting a new, more conventional space opera series, as "Jack Campbell".

That's a pity. There's a lot of dramatic space to be found in the day-to-day running of a ship, i.e., "Allamagoosa". You can imagine Sinclair going through all the trouble to get a replacement offog

in a way that you can't see Honor Harrington or Nick Seafort doing.

"A running gag is that one officer is never to be found". Actually more a tragedy than a gag: this is an individual that could have been a good officer, if her superiors had given her the right kind of support and mentoring from the start. I once asked Hemry if this was based on somebody he knew, but he wasn't prepared to go that far.

Richard Dengrove: As Edmund Burke put it, "There's a lot of ruin in a country." On the one hand, the older generations always thinks the younger is ruining the country; on the other (as the water gradually heats up), we may not notice that a country was ruined until we look back, generations later. For example, the quiet and gradual destruction by a thousand cuts of patriotism by the public schools and big media.

Mussolini merely added nationalism to the socialist beliefs he always had. Political ideologies are multidimensional, so it's tricky sometimes to plot them on a one-dimensional, left-right spectrum. For example, socially liberal Rudi Giuliani is quite popular with conservative Republicans, and probably has the inside track for the 2008 Presidential nomination. (John McCain would have been there, had he not pandered to the media by attacking Christian conservatives.)



"Roosevelt's men . . . agreed with Churchill that even the Devil was better than Hitler, and Stalin was the Devil." Unfortunately FDR, grotesquely misinformed, acted as if he preferred Stalin to Churchill. That is, he thought Great Britain was an evil empire, but didn't even recognize that the Soviet Union was an empire.

"For those who consider religion just in our mind, I am sure one faith is as good as another." Refusing to make distinctions between religions is the mark of the irrational atheist. The rational atheist recognizes each faith as having its own ethical and social impact. For that impact to be the same for every faith would require, well, divine intervention.

"A teacher at a Baptist College was fired because he said the Bible didn't contain all knowledge." That story must have gotten garbled. Perhaps he said it wasn't the final authority on all subjects about which it speaks.

Janine Stinson: In particular, Wikipedia is unreliable where political topics are concerned. However, that applies to all reference books, alas. I remember reading about a new edition of

Bartlett's that left out Reagan's "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall" and the "Evil Empire" speech, but included quotes to make Reagan look silly. Recently, I stumbled upon the Microsoft Encarta article on Reagan: "after he did everything wrong, the Soviet Union mysteriously collapsed" was the gist of it.

There's always the Jules Feiffer cartoon about "That fool, Reagan".

— JTM

When I retire, maybe I'll spend all my time chasing down falsehoods on the Internet!

E.B. Frohvet: On dragons as good guys, Doc Smith's Worsel of Velantia goes back to the Thirties.

Applying common sense: "Well, there are important military targets in Hiroshima we should be bombing — but there's a speculative superbomb coming down the road, so let's set aside Hiroshima, because getting accurate scientific data is more important than winning the war." "For some reason, the Americans are not bombing Hiroshima — so let's move some of our most critical war production there."

Rodney Leighton: Obviously, I do skim and skip things I don't find interesting. However, I do find interesting the question of why people send in material like that. Note that I'm not saying there is anything wrong with that.

Darrell Schweitzer: Possibly John Atkins' *Tomorrow Revealed* had to leave Heinlein's stories out of its faux future history because Heinlein had an explicit future history of his own.

From: **Joy V. Smith** October 21, 2006
8925 Selph Road, Lakeland, FL 33810-0341 USA
Pagadan@aol.com
<http://journals.aol.com/pagadan/JoysJournal/>

I'd like to read *Sea Drift: Rafting Adventures in the Wake of Kon-Tiki*. Sounds interesting, and it's a great title. I enjoyed *Kon-Tiki* when I was a kid.

Yeah, I saw that *Jackass Number Two* was at the top of the list at one point; this was shortly after I saw some previews for it. Very disheartening.

The Thirteenth House sounds intriguing. (Worth reading despite its flaws?) Also *Warner's Beastie*. *The Master Plan: Himmler's Scholars and the Holocaust* is mindboggling.

Note to Lisa, I was in PetSmart the other day and admired the Breyer horses, including Hidalgo and Seattle Slew. Some of the horses had flowers — after a win obviously — draped over their shoulders. Btw, a neighbor has a Breyer horse that's the father of her own horse, Sundance. (I don't remember the horse's name.)

I will have to go to PetSmart payday weekend.

I have Slew and he came with Derby roses.

— LTM

Great article on global warming by Rodford Edmiston; I love the subtitle: Hot Time on the Old Globe Tonight. I also enjoyed the review of *After Dolly: The Uses and Misuses of Cloning*. Thanks to E.B. Frohvet for his review of *Crystal Soldier* and *Crystal Dragon*. I've read *Crystal Soldier*, but wasn't aware of *Crystal Dragon*.

I'm not crazy about raisins, but I'll give Dark Raisinets a try. Thanks for the heads up, Johnny. And thanks to Sue for the background on candy and oranges in the Czech republic and Slovakia.

I was so sorry to read of Elfing's passing. My sympathy to you both.

Thanks for the book reviews, the lists of fanzines and awards and thanks to all the LOCers for their contributions. (I always enjoy Sue Burke's reports from Spain.)

Thanks to Johnny Carruthers, I got some Dark Raisinets; they're very good. I don't think I ever ate the original Raisinets because I don't like raisins. I do love dark chocolate. Thank you, Johnny!

From: **Jason K. Burnett** October 21, 2006
4903 Camden Avenue North,
Minneapolis, MN 55430-3544 USA
BritHistorian@gmail.com

The arrival in yesterday's mail of the latest *Alexiad* called to my attention how remiss I've been in responding to you. I must attempt to do better in the future.

Noted with interest the item in random jottings about the impending publication of a novel-length *Narn i Hin Húrin*. Wonder if you'd care to elaborate/clarify what you meant by "If JRRT has [finished this] in his own lifetime, a lot of the utter tripe uttered about him would have been strangled in the cradle" for those of us who aren't really that up on the backstory here.

The belief that Tolkien could only write *Boys' Own Paper* style adventures with no sex; that he couldn't handle that sort of relationship, or anything else grown-up.

Oh, and Houghton Mifflin has announced that the book will be coming out in April 2007.

John Henry's books sound like something I'd enjoy. I'll have to check them out. As always, one of the best parts of your reviews is the snippet of pastiche at the beginning. I can easily imagine that these could easily take as much work as the rest of the review. In a way it rather reminds me of the little quotes that Robert Asprin put at the beginnings of chapters in the *Myth-Adventures* books, which he later said he regretted heartily, due to all the extra work they caused him in future volumes. Fortunately, you've been clever enough to condition your readers not to expect the extra snippet with every review, thus sparing yourself that source of stress.

Here in Minnesota, fall has firmly settled in

and winter is coming fast. We've already had our first snow of the year — not enough to really stick, but it was still pleasant to see the white stuff falling from the sky again. We're homeschooling Dylan again this year. He had wanted to go back to school this year, but apparently Minneapolis's response to school budget cuts was to not have every program available at every school, which leads to not every combination of programs being able to students in all parts of the city. We discovered (after a frustrating month spent dealing with some very nice people who just *weren't able* to help us) that there is no school service north Minneapolis with both gifted and autism spectrum programs. We could get one *or* the other, but not both (which he really needs). So we're hoping to move to the south of the city by next the start of next school year. Logan is two years old now and fascinated with Winnie the Pooh. Apparently if there's to be a next-generation fan from our household it will be him, as Logan has virtually no interest in fiction of any sort. I'm still commuting to the basement five days a week for medical transcription — it's tedious as ever, but at least it pays the bills.

A friend of our recently (almost forcibly) introduced Angel and me to *Firefly*. We are now hooked and I have gotten involved with the local Browncoats chapter. It just really frustrates me that thinks like that show with *Urkel* (can't remember the name — never watched it) will stay on the air for years and years and *good* shows like *Firefly* get cancelled. Hell, even *Enterprise* got a longer run than *Firefly*.



Jaleel White played Steve Urkel on *Family Matters* (1989-1998) — and three other shows!
Jaleel White
<http://us.imdb.com/name/nm0924918/>
Family Matters
<http://us.imdb.com/title/tt0096579/>

— JTM

I've been doing some freelance writing for *Knucklebones*, a new boardgaming magazine. I've had one article and four reviews published, have another article and some more reviews in the can, and have about half a dozen games staring at me reproachfully asking when I'm going to review them. It was quite the ego boost to go to a bookstore and be able to pick up a magazine with an article that I wrote in it!

Here's hoping you're doing well. Take care.

From: **Cuyler "Ned" Brooks** Oct. 21, 2006
4817 Dean Lane, Lilburn, GA 30047-4720 USA
nedbrooks@sprynet.com

Thanks for the October issue. I just mailed you my annual *It Goes On The Shelf*.

When I entered #5 into the inventory file, I noticed that there was no #4 — and when I checked the ABC stack of zines waiting to be filed, I discovered that I had gotten #3 twice, but no #4!

Do you want a copy of **Alexiad**
V. 1 #4 (WN 4)?

— JTM

I wonder if there is a Tibetan fan who could explain the "Swastika-Egg-Devil" — do you have the Dalai Lama's address?



From: **Alex Slate** October 18, 2006
Alexandria, Virginia

"Why don't teens do 'zines?" I think that there are a number of reasons, some of which you do hit on. But I think there's more to it than that. The net has a lot to do with it, but it has to be combined with the cost of doing 'zines. Something that can even put off an adult with a full-time job. "But doing a 'zine doesn't have to be expensive," is sure to be the cry. Let's leave out the cost of postage. Look at what has become of 'zines in our times. 'Zines have become more and more professional looking as a general rule — oh, this is due in good part to the common availability of computers. But the upshot of this is that hecto and mimeo and other low-end forms of repro just won't cut it. A lot of kids (teens) won't do anything unless they can make it look *good*. Now xerox and laser printing aren't expensive in small amounts, but in bulk the cost adds up.

But, then again, the internet is just so much easier? :-)

So, we can't tolerate crudzines any more, and snappy little fan mags set the bar too high?

Re: *The Da Vinci Code* discussion — leave alone some possible descendants of Christ coming forward and their difficulties with being believed — someone once posed the question

"Could Jesus come back today and actually be taken for anything but a madman?" Actually, most of my own take on Jesus is that he probably never actually claimed to be the messiah. That was done for him.

The Twix White Chocolate — after a few years of trying various confections with white chocolate, I have finally decided it's just not worth the hoopla. What difference there is doesn't make them taste any better. I think I'll just stick to dark or regular from now on.

Janine Stinson: It took me a couple of reads and a little time, but I finally realized that you weren't referring to real peanuts when you wrote about circus peanuts. I finally remembered what you were writing about.

I agree with you concerning Misty Lackey's Tregarde and Valdemar series.

Darrell Schweitzer: Sorry, but the Catholic counter-argument you raise really isn't one which avoids the issue of predestination. If "an all-knowing God" chose Judas "knowing that Judas would [freely] choose to betray Christ." I put the freely in brackets, because given the reminder then it really wasn't freely. If God did "choose" Judas, then that plays a lot of hob with the remainder of the idea of "God's plan". That might make an interesting timeline — you think — one where no one betrays Jesus and he isn't crucified?

E. B. Frohvet: Do you have an e-mail address? I have been visiting the DC area a lot and would like to meet you. Please send me your e-mail to aslate@satx.rr.com or alex.slate@brooks.af.mil.

Re the south being traitors. I think we can only say that because the north won. I once presented the south's side concerning succession in a debate and from my interpretation there was nothing explicit in the law that prevented the south from legally seceding.

Could they have won the war? Only if the north gave up their will to fight. A protracted affair definitely favors the north as you described.

JT (in response to Martin Morse Wooster) — all **male** descendants of Franz I and Maria Theresa and their children are Archdukes (or Archduchesses)" — really! I guess one of these male archduchesses are set for the next *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*? Sorry, I couldn't resist.

All the children of Franz & Maria Theresa were titled "Archduke" or "Archduchess" (*Erzherzog* oder *Erzherzogin*). All the children of their sons were titled "Archduke" or "Archduchess". All the children of their sons' sons . . . Which is why Mr. Dominic von Habsburg, architect, is *Erzherzog* Dominic von Österreich-Toskanien (or *Arciduca* Dominic di Austria-Toscana).

— JTM

Sheryl Birkhead: No, the Reese's cereal doesn't taste like candy — it tastes like PB Cap'n Crunch.

From: **E. B. Frohvet** October 20, 2006
4716 Dorsey Hall Drive #506, Ellicott City MD 21042-5988 USA

Heinlein's Children is an increasingly useful reference for me. On reading one of the books, I refer to your analysis. (Of Tex Jarman getting hammered on the mint juleps: The text doesn't say how large a teapot. It could easily have contained the equivalent of four shots of 80-proof liquor, or more. For a young and inexperienced drinker, on an empty stomach, ample to get him buzzed. We should count ourselves fortunate that Tex is a cheerful drunk.)

In *Three Against the Witch World*, Kyllan describes the horses of the Torgian breed, from the moors above the mysterious Fens of Tor: "They were not much to look at, being usually dun colored, with dark manes and coats which did not take a gloss no matter how carefully they were groomed. But for heart, stamina and speed they had no match." By speed he is referring to long, crosscountry riding, not the brief sprints of modern thoroughbreds.

I like to keep track of the royal Kents. Every tennis fan knows that H.R.H. the Duke of Kent is President of the All-England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, and gives out the awards at Wimbledon. The custom of having players and officials bow to the Royal Box was discontinued a few years ago, ostensibly at the Duke's request; I rather miss it.

One of the less improbable explanations advanced for the *Mary Celeste* disaster was hallucinations resulting from ergot poisoning.

I read *The Master Plan*. Some, possibly including Himmler, believed in its pseudo-science; in general it was a fraud to justify pre-planned policy goals. The intent to invade the Soviet Union and eliminate the Jews had been made far in advance of any "Aryan" pagan-theological underpinnings.

One respectfully declines to agree with Johnny Carruthers and Ye Editor: the Fan Funds have outlived their usefulness. (And TAFF has been taken over as a subscript of CorfluCult.)

Howard County public libraries have both *Crystal Soldier* and *Crystal Dragon*. I have not diverged from my theory that no one in the local library hierarchy knows anything about SF, and such few as they buy are picked randomly off publisher's lists. New readers to the Liaden TM universe should probably begin with either *Local Custom* or *Agent of Change*.

Ah, back in the Stone Age, when there was only one kind of Oreos . . .

Really. Worldcon in Denver, and not on Labor Day Weekend. I won't have the excuse of staying home to watch U.S. Open tennis. I'll have to come up with a new excuse for not going. Suggestions?

Altitude sickness?

I am sincerely sorry about the passing of your cat.

Richard Dengrove: "This is the dawning of . . ." Oh, that was ironic, wasn't it? Sorry. I'm reminded of the Peter Yarrow/Cynthia Weil song "Sweet Survivor", which laments the

indifference of the time to the liberal causes of the 1960's. You and I aren't so far apart on Nina Kiriki Hoffman, we're just approaching the same facts from different directions.

I'm still pleased to be on Robert Lichtman's good side.

John Purcell: In ignorance of what happened with Mercedes Lackey at Rivercon, I'll let that be. However, as one of the few who came into fandom primarily as a reader of SF, I would be a little defensive on behalf of readers. One who doesn't know the customs of fandom, your FWAC, should be educated. My experience suggests that most writers enjoy people who can talk knowledgeably about their work. (Once, as a sort of roving troubleshooter at a con, I came across the reading room as Hal Clement was coming in. I asked what he was reading from and he displayed a copy of *Iceworld*. "Ah, that hydrogen oxide — strange stuff," I said. Of course I knew him pretty well, as did many fans.)

Seeing the ongoing discussion (if you want to call it that) on the fmzfen list swirling around a new member who had the temerity or cluelessness to brag of having written some "sci-fi", one wonders if some people are going to even bother to educate. (See also Martin Morse Wooster's letter in the latest *Banana Wings*, and if someone asks, I'd like to reprint it.

— JTM

Brad Foster: Nice to see a mention of Real Musgrave, though he seems to have drifted away from fandom. The first piece of SF art I ever bought was his "Nymph and Unicorn on Chessboard" (1977), which I still have and still enjoy.

Henry Welch says, "There are sanctions for attorneys who bring frivolous actions." In theory. Henry's last sentence is the difference between law and equity. In the insurance business we frequently get claims from people (and their lawyers) that amount to, "Give me the money even if I'm not entitled to it." My attempts to get the company to deal with frivolous claims were ignored.

Martin Morse Wooster: I don't watch the Baltimore Ravens because it irritates me when they puke away games they have the talent to win. I don't watch the Washington Redskins because, well, I just don't. I don't watch the Indianapolis Thieves because they play in stolen and dishonored colors.

I may have attended a panel on which "Bob" Tucker appeared, but I can't recall ever having spoken with him.

P.S. Did I really write "Cameroon Islands" or was that a transcription glitch? Should have been "Comoro Islands".

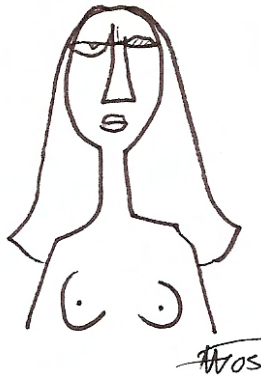
From: **Alexis A. Gilliland** October 25, 2006
4030 8th Street South, Arlington, VA
22204-1552 USA

Thank you for *Alexiad* #5.5, which arrived

with the usual assortment of good stuff, not all of which provided a comment hook. Back in 1978 we had Bob Tucker as the guest of honor for one of my Disclaves, and coming in he was very much concerned that being so far out of his Midwest stamping grounds he wouldn't know anybody. In the event it turned out that he knew lots of people, and had a great time schmoozing with old friends in a new location. He inscribed a copy of *The Lincoln Hunters* "For Doll and Alexis: Many, many thanks for a splendid weekend with you!" As I recall his GoH speech was a recitation of magazine statistics, with a background of kazoo bands, SCA mock battles, and so forth which Dolly set up for him. He was the treasurer of ChiCon I because he was the only con member over 21? Ah, the graying of fandom; these days it's hard to find one under 40.

A little more detail for one of your random jottings. Xena, as dwarf planet 2003 UB313 was tentatively named has been rechristened Eris, for the goddess of Chaos, and its satellite named Dysnomia, for the daughter of Eris, who was herself the goddess of Lawlessness — a tip of the hat to Lucy Lawless, the actress who played Xena.

SO WHEN I TOLD
MODIGLIANI I'D SUE
HIS ASS, HE HAD
DAUMIER DO MY LAWYER!



Other stuff. Dolly's piano, a six-foot baby grand moved to my nephew David's new condo out in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Years ago he, being a pianist, had expressed an interest in it when he had a place to put it, and since nobody was playing it, I said sure. Hit the fast forward button and first he was getting married, and then I get a call that they were buying a condo, one with room for the piano, and was the deal still on? I said yes, and in due time a couple of guys from Professional Piano Movers came by, and took a look at it, and decided they needed a third guy to take it up the five steps in the basement. They came back eventually with the necessary force, a big guy who stood around while the other two took the piano apart and wrapped it

for shipping. But they couldn't have got it out of the basement without him. Leaving behind a largish empty space in which we put bookcases (mostly filled already) and a small table. A couple of months later the piano arrived at David's place and he sent me a picture of it in its new setting. Red walls, dramatic lighting, and David seems very happy with it. I framed the picture and put it on the table where the piano used to be.

Lee put on a Man From U.N.C.L.E. convention the weekend of October 13th. It was small, being the first American convention in 38 years, but everybody had a good time. Saturday we took the subway to the Spy Museum, and Sunday there was a spy tour (walking, which Lee had to skip because of knee and hip problems aggravated by all the running around she was doing) conducted through Georgetown by Gary Powers Jr. — the son of the U2 pilot shot down over the USSR. The group met Madeline Albright, the former secretary of state going into her house when Powers, who knew her, introduced them. It turns out that she is an enthusiastic U.N.C.L.E. fan herself. There is good news and bad news. The good news is: They'd like Lee to do another next year. The bad news is, they want it in LA.

There was a *The Fugitive* convention here in Louisville recently. It had, oh, perhaps thirty attendees. They made it clear that it was neither the 2000 series nor the 1993 movie that they liked so.

The Fugitive [TOS]
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0056757/>
The Fugitive [The Movie]
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0106977/>
The Fugitive [TNG]
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0247097/>
— JTM

From: **Martin Morse Wooster** Oct. 27, 2006
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MD 20907-8093 USA
mmwooster@yahoo.com

Many thanks for *Alexiad* 29. **Robert Lichtman's** claim that 34 out of 45 TAFF winners "have published at least a partial report" is disingenuous. Here's a more objective claim: SCIFI donates \$500 to TAFF for every completed trip report it sees. Has SCIFI donated any money for any American TAFF winner in the past 25 years? I don't think so. By contrast, the British have done a better job. Rob Hansen, Martin Tudor, and James Bacon finished their reports. Peter Weston finished his nearly 25 years after he took the trip but he did in fact finish it. Even Tobes Valois, who I gather doesn't write very much, managed to come out with a trip report even if it only consisted of people interviewing him. None of the American winners could be bothered to write a trip report. Thus I confidently predict that Chris Garcia, should he win TAFF, will not only not produce a trip report within 30 days as he claims he will, but he will instead continue fudging and making

excuses about his duty just like every other American TAFF winner has.

Joe's comments about "Princess Frankopan" leads us to ask more about the Croatian monarchy. Was there ever a Croatian throne? How does "Ms. Frankopan" claim to be a princess? Is there a pretender to the Croatian throne?

The Frankopans were a Croatian princely family. There was a Croatian monarchy twice: The first time as part of Hungary and then Austria, the second time under the Italian occupation. This means that there are two Croatian pretenders: Otto von Habsburg and Aimone Duke of Aosta, whose father had been proclaimed king of Croatia.

As for Bob Tucker — I never had lengthy conversations with him, though I did do the "Smooth!" ritual when I was a Midwestern fan in the late 1970s. But I did have two email exchanges with him in the past few years. I bought a copy of the Detective Book club edition of *The Chinese Doll*, and wondered if it was abridged. Fan friends knew Tucker's email, and I received a response to the effect that since Tucker sold the rights to the book 60 years ago, he didn't remember everything, but he thought the book club edition was uncut. I also read in one of Darrell Schweitzer's interview collections a 1978 interview with Tucker where he said at the time he was working on a sf novel where fen take over the world. I wondered what happened to this book. Tucker said that he couldn't sell the book and in the late 1990s he loaned the ms. to another writer who promptly lost the manuscript! I wish Tucker had kept a copy; he could have sold it to Wildside, and I would have bought a copy (and so would many other fen).

It may have been torpedoed by *Falling Angels* by Gerrold, Niven and Pournelle, or by Flynn, Niven, and Pournelle.

— JTM

Johnny Carruthers's idea that there should be an exchange between Japanese and American fen is a good one, except that given that it took Japan 50 years to get organized enough for a Worldcon bid, I doubt that such an exchange could be maintained. Still, it's a good idea, even if an impractical one.

From: **Rodney Leighton** October 22, 2006
11 Branch Road, R. R. #3,
Tatmagouche, Nova Scotia B0K 1V0
CANADA

What a weird world! As a life long fan of the Montreal Canadiens I was rather disappointed when Hockey Night in Canada on the CBC became Hockey Night in Toronto (or wherever the damned Maple leafs happened to be.) But there was SRC . . . Societie Radio Canada . . . a

CBC french speaking production. They always ran Canadiens games on Saturday evening. Turned it on the first Saturday; paper had the games listed. Ottawa visiting Montreal. Calgary visiting Toronto. One would think that the "Canadian" Broadcasting Corporation would choose the game involving the team from the nation's capitol and the only team in the NHL with Canada in its name to show to the national audience. Guess what? Toronto vs Calgary was the game shown everywhere except Quebec and the Ottawa Valley. Flipped to SRC. Some sort of musical game show. What the hell? Tried at 8:30. Movie. Same thing last night. What in this all about? I have heard it might be political.

On the news this morning I heard some idiot politicians are referring to Quebec as a nation. Maybe the traitors known as the Bloc are responsible for me not being able to see any Canadiens games. But. They broadcast any game against Toronto which falls on Saturday. And the paper has 2 or 3 games against other clubs listed. Hard to figure out. But, you know what? Last week, when it became obvious that not even the blurry french language broadcast was available to me I became very despondent; it seems like every single thing I get any pleasure from is disappearing from my life. However, rather than just get even more depressed I decided to fight back; get off my ass and try to find work and money and get into a position in which I can afford a satellite dish or one of those damned computer things and internet or whatever it takes to be able to watch my team play once in awhile.

Did get some work on Monday; best going I have seen in ages. So what happens? Rain all the time; saw troubles and some sort of malaise in which I don't feel like working. Sigh.

Well, I got into rereading my Wolfe books after making that list for Bill. Then I reached a point in which I had read every book I had, I thought, that I had not read within the past year except for one huge anthology which has 7 novels in it. Hard to read and hold my pipe at the same time. I have quite a few books I have never read and about 20 books and a bunch of zines and magazines.

I was in some sort of frame of mind in which I did not want to read anything except Nero Wolfe novels. Well, I thought, if I could find a Parker (Robert B.) or a Sandford or a Greeley that I had never read. But with no money . . . trying without success to abandon the pipe, I wanted something to read. Nothing upstairs appealed to me. Well . . . there is a room here which has a shelf on one wall.

Back when I thought Dean Koontz was a great author I started saving novels by him by piling them on that shelf. Started saving some others as well. Zines and papers and things in front. So I took a notion to sort through those and see if I could find something of interest. Found a couple of Wolfe novels. Damn, duplicates. At one point I felt, and even wrote to *FOSFAX* that I thought *Lightning* by Koontz was the best book by a living author I had read; I seem to recall moaning about giving it away and regretting that decision. Bought a copy a couple of years ago for \$2; I was off Koontz

entirely but I thought I might want to try this one again someday. Of course I found the one I had thought I had given away. Read it recently. Why did I think that was such a great book? It's a science fiction novel! And when I read it the first time was before my intense interest in fate, destiny, hand of God type stuff.

I don't remember even noticing how much of that there is in this novel. I did enjoy reading it again and will keep the best one for awhile, barring homelessness, may want to read it again someday. Looking through the books on the shelf . . . Koontz; McBain; Christie; more Koontz; Saul; Stout! Found 5 I had forgotten I had and some I have forgotten entirely. *Where There's a Will* has an introduction by, you guessed it, Dean Koontz. Quite amusing. I have to try to read some of the unread Koontz books I have or reread some of the 15 or so novels and see if I can regain my faith in Dean as an author. I couldn't remember reading *Where . . .* at all. Just like finding a new one.

Funny thing about books. Some of these Wolfe novels, which I last read 8 or so years ago, are totally unfamiliar to me; I also found, in a box, a Goldsborough book, *The Missing Chapter*, which I must have read sometime in the past 6 years or so, which I couldn't remember; of the 6 Wolfe books, 3 were somewhat familiar; 3 not. On that same day, I found, near the bottom of the pile, 2 Stephen R. George novels. I thought I had all of Steve's novels upstairs in the bookcase with father's Louis L'Amour collection. I was pleased to find these and read them again, *The Forgotten* was published in 1991; *Dark Miracle* in 1989. I don't know when I got them but given where they were, I suspect I last read them 8 years ago. I enjoyed reading them again but I could recall much of them. I have reread a couple more since and am reading one now; I have memories of all of them. Why is that, I wonder? And while I was unaware of some aspects of *Lightning*, I could recall much of it. Does this have anything to do with the books, or the authors or is it simply a weird quirk in my so called brain?

I reviewed *The Missing Chapter*. Thought it was a self-referential novel. Wolfe is hired to solve the murder of a writer who had been continuing a series begun by another writer. The series bible says that each book has to have six different suspects, each with a motive and an alibi. There are six suspects in the case, each of whom has a motive and an alibi.

Oct.29. Back to standard time. Damned foolishness; I wish they would leave it at the same time all year. I suppose I could move to Saskatchewan. Last night Toronto visited Montreal so I got to watch. Most of the regular game was depressing for me; overtime was fun. Shootout was okay except the damned Leafs won. Probably should be at work but, well, weird feelings; sun is shining, washing clothes.

I know, who cares.

Took my saws to Truro to get fixed; went over to Staples to get a ribbon for this thing. None there, huh. Young guy showed me a bin. I had been buying No-Rec; they have switched to a Staples brand. But in the bin there were apparently discontinued items. Ribbons. Listed at \$4.97. He found 2; I found 2. Took all 4. Went to the checkout and the young woman put one in her computer thing and exclaimed "\$1.97!" Yup, reduced to that price, I got 4 ribbons for roughly the same amount as one would cost. If I am a bit careful they should take me to spring.

Thanks to Robert Lichtman for the TAFF. A very well known fan recently wrote to me: "Indeed, I don't believe any TAFF winner has published a trip report. But should we condemn them for that. What of you and I?" Well, I would never be a TAFF delegate, couldn't afford it for one thing, but if I were to try and promised to publish a report as I have seen a number of people do, I would damn well publish one. However, I am going to do my utmost to avoid controversy in fanzines and shall abandon the topic of TAFF forever. Hopefully.

Sheryl: Yeah, the Rodney Leighton in that dedication is me. Surely you wouldn't think there are more than one of us?!

Another aspect of my weirdness: I haven't followed baseball for 30 some years. Yet, hearing on the radio that the St Louis Cardinals had won the world series, I cheered and was excited and happy. I find baseball as boring as EBF finds soccer. Still, I was excited that my favourite team of 30 some years ago had won. Couldn't name a single player.

But I can remember a few of the players from the 60s, albeit not that well.

I got a big fat anthology in the mail awhile ago entitled *Legal Thrillers*. Published in Britain in 2001; chucked by a library in New Zealand and rescued by Lyn McConchie and shipped to me; truly a journey. Worked well in that I was attracted to the book; also I could read a piece of something else such as *Alexiad* or *The Match* and then read a tale about lawyers or murder or both. 39 stories; 560 pages. Well, the pieces by John Grisham and Scott Turow were excerpts from *The Partner* and *Pleading Guilty*. The Perry Mason story was different than any I had seen in which Mason is a detective; no courtroom scene at all. Lyn's story is #34 in the book but would be much higher if the stories were listed by value, in my mind; probably about 9. Unless the final one which I have yet to read blows me away or turns me off, I enjoyed reading all the 38 I have read, even the sf ones.

When I got *Visions of Paradise* #106 and learned it would no longer be available to me was kind of glad, because I was in one of my periodic spells of thinking I needed to discontinue responding to fanzines; to save money, this time. As I wrote to Bob, that leaves 3 or 4 fanzines, one of them published once or twice a year and I should be able to handle that, surely. A bit later, with some work, albeit it is short term, I started thinking about some sort of zine thing, partly because I sometimes can't

stand this machine, partly because I thought it might be cheaper and easier than writing locs and partly because I had a brief feeling that I would like to receive more zines.

On the other hand . . . although I really should go to work or else do some long neglected housework or something, I believe I will, shortly, go and sit in the chair and smoke the pipe and read . . . what? Got some zines; got lots of books. Another Steve George novel?

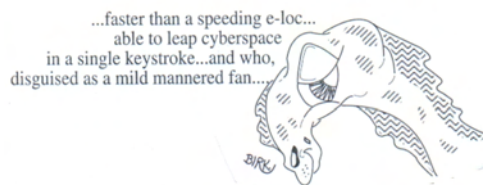
Actually, I went and looked at the shelf; noted *Strange Highways* by Dean Koontz. Hmm, I think this is an anthology. Yeah, it is. If I read something and the last story in *Legal Thrillers* and then alternate a story from this book with something else., perhaps I will regain my liking for Koontz writing. Then again . . . I haven't seen anything since *False Memory* that was worth a damn. Maybe the author's writing has changed rather than my perceptions.

What I remember most about Koontz was his arguments with Piers Anthony in the letter column of Bill Bowers's *Outworlds* over who was the better writer. Piers boasted that (even then) he was making a lot more money.

— JTM

Anyway, I am probably going to try to reduce my babbling and send letters which do not bore Taras or anyone else and also ones which do not aggravate anyone. Will possibly ignore the fanzine entirely, when writing.

From: **John Hertz** November 7, 2006
236 S. Coronado Street No. 409, Los
Angeles, CA 90057-1456 USA



As I've explained it, Rick Sneary didn't spell like that on purpose; largely self-taught, he never learned to spell, and hoped faneditors would correct him — this eventually led to my Uncle Manning adventure.

Thanks for mentioning HANA in *Alexiad* 5/5.

The first time I heard of raisins singing "I Heard It Through the Grapevine" I cracked up. Of course they would!

From: **John Purcell** November 11, 2006
3744 Marielene Circle, College Station,
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j_purcell54@yahoo.com

Joseph, many thanks for floating yet another issue my way. As always, most appreciated and enjoyable.

Russian spaceships into versions of

McDonald's, eh? This certainly puts an interesting spin on the phrase "fast food restaurants."

I really enjoyed reading Rodford Edmiston's essay on global warming. Even though mankind's industrial technology has made a definite impact on earth's climate, the geologic record shows that our little planet has gone through cycles of cooling and warming over the eons. History Channel's program on the Little Ice Age of 1300-1850AD was really well-done and very interesting. This is a solid article, and that time-line was cool! (Sorry. Sometimes I just can't help myself.) Temperature patterns are quite normal, geologically speaking. As a matter of fact, I remember reading a while back — a decade or so ago — that planet Earth is due for another magnetic polar flip Real Soon Now. Now *that* should make things interesting, you would think.

Candy reviews?!? Well, why not? Allow me to make a recommendation here: dipped pretzels. You know which ones I mean: those with the almond shell covering. They are quite yummy, and popular around the holiday season.

Pardon my ignorance — and unwillingness to look it up on the Internet at the moment — but where is Conglomeration held again? Your brief notes on the con make it sound like one that I would greatly enjoy. Besides, I haven't seen Ben Bova — that's Dr. Bova, now, by the by — since the late Eighties when he was a mainstay at Minicons, so it would be great to see him again. If I think of it, I will check out the Conglomeration 2007 website for info to see if attending is at all a possibility.

August 10-12, 2007 — the weekend after NASFiC. And just down the interstate from St. Louis, too.

So sad to hear about the passing of Elfling. We've lost pets over the years, being very pet-friendly folks, and it's always a great loss. My wife was exceedingly distraught when her beloved Raven passed at the age of 19 some years back. She was a great cat, completely black and incredibly sweet. Like your Elfling, one of our current cats adopted us a year and a half ago, Waldo. He goes in and out constantly, keeping the yard and block free of field mice, wood rats, and catches birds, too, when he's not being dive-bombed by them. Waldo's a youngster (only two years old, we figure, maybe three) and we look forward to many more years of his protection.

Timmy is our oldest pet right now, I believe. He's our miniature collie, and is 12 to 13 years old. We adopted him in early 1996 while living up in Iowa; he had been found tangled in a fence on someone's farm, so they then put an ad in the paper for him, and we took the poor thing in. Timmy's eyesight is now failing, but he is one of the sweetest dogs I have ever known in my life.

I will be very sad to see him go, which hopefully will be a few years off yet.

And on the show, the one thing

that Timmy never needed rescuing from was falling down a well.

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0046617/>

Boy, was I off on my Fan Hugo picks. Oh, well. Thank you for the kind words about my zines. It is an enjoyable hobby, one that you likewise obviously enjoy, too. Come on down for Corflu in Austin! I would love to meet you.

Nice cartoon by Paul Gadzikowski to wrap up the issue. We are just as bad naming our pets: a male dog that looks like a small Lassie, so we named him Timmy; a female border collie, Leakey Fossey, named after my wife's favorite anthropologists — and it's a god-awful pun, to boot; the smallest of our three dogs is named after a Stravinsky opera, Pulcinella; and our cats have equally odd-ball names: the aforementioned Waldo, Marmalade, Cucumber (brother and sister), Toulouse (former farm cat), Riley (the Maine coon cat), Allie (former farm cat), and Diphthong (a Siamese kitten that I, the English prof, named). Naming pets should be a fun event, and we firmly follow that principle here at the Purcell Petting Zoo. Now if only Sunny would stop that danged cage-humping we'd be doing very well. The fish tanks aren't a problem, but the platies pop out the babies so dag-nabbing fast that we don't bother naming them.

Of our brood:

C'Mell: after the Cordwainer Smith cat-person
 Delenn: after the **Babylon Five** Minbari ambassador
 Gemellus: Latin for "twin" because he looks like Delenn
 Red Wull: after the tailless dog in **Bob, Son of Battle** because he's tailless
 Sarang: after the seeing-eye tiger in **Sarang** by Roger Caras

— JTM

Off to school stuff. Thanks again for the zine, and I'll see you again in a month or so.

From: **R-Lauraine Tutihasi** Nov. 13, 2006
 29217 Stonecrest Road, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90275-4936 USA
lauraine@mac.com
<http://www.weasner.com/>

Am I really in the Alexiad lettercol...?



Thanks so much for sending me your zine. I noticed that most of it is LoCs. Is it usually this way? I'm not complaining, mind you. Most of

my zine participation has been in apas, so I'm all for LoCs. In fact my own FAPazine has become rather LoC-heavy lately; I post it online in PDF format.

I was happy to read Jeffrey Allan Boman's reaction to daylight savings time. It's one reason I have chosen to retire to Arizona. Though moving is not something I'm looking forward to, I welcome not having to upset my internal clock twice a year.

I'm sorry to hear his opinion of Ray Bradbury as a "crusty curmudgeon". He can certainly seem that way at times, but he is a really friendly and approachable fellow. Unlike Jeffrey, though, I have always liked Bradbury's work. My appreciation has increased as I have grown older.

I'm equally sorry that he found Robert Silverberg unlikable. He is one of the old guard of sf writers who started out as a fan and is still one of us. He uses sarcasm a lot, and that may be what put Jeffrey off.

He certainly has no world record as far as being behind in his reading. I have over a thousand unread books in my personal library; some of the books have been waiting decades for me to read them.

Trinlay Khadro mentioned fibromyalgia. I was diagnosed with it back in 1999. This year, after reading something that suggested it might, in some cases, be linked to caeliac disease, I had myself tested. The tests turned out negative, possibly because I was on a low carb diet and wasn't eating much gluten-containing food. I was encouraged by my doctor and others to try a gluten-free diet, so I did. I started the last day of June, which coincided with the first day of Westercon (well, actually the day before, but I think there were parties that night). I recently saw my rheumatologist near the end of October and tested negative for fibromyalgia. The first symptoms to go away, as would be expected, were the gastrointestinal ones. From having dyspepsia almost daily, I went to having it so infrequently that I have put away the ginger and peppermint capsules that I had in several rooms of our house. None of the fibromyalgia tender points were tender when my doctor tested them; in fact some of them were ticklish. Also the ringing in my ears has greatly diminished. It can take up to two years or so for all the symptoms to go away, so we'll see how much better I'm feeling then.

"Stupid annual tests" are always important for spotting problems before they become untreatable. When I first met my husband, he couldn't recall the last time he'd been to see his doctor; so I persuaded him to go in for a physical. That's when his low thyroid condition was discovered.

I hope Trinlay is doing okay healthwise.

My niece is having one test after another. Someday they will find something; meanwhile she has numbness and other unpleasant symptoms, including the pains of being tested and tested.

— JTM

I was interested to read Martin Morse Wooster's report that DNA hasn't published their magazines other than *SFC* recently. I guess that's why I never received anything for my subscription order for one of their fiction zines. They were also publishing a cat magazine, which they rescued from going under; but that hasn't come out in several years.

I'm interested in horses so enjoyed the "Horse Notes". The equestrian events are the only events I follow in the summer Olympics. Who has time to watch more than that? I'm grateful for recording devices that allow me to watch without staying up until all hours of the night.

I haven't been following the Olympic horses that much. I'll have to research the events. The impression I have and it may be false is that the events are mostly steeplechasing, which seems to be even harder on the horses than flat racing.

— LTM

From: **Christopher J. Garcia** Nov. 15, 2006
chris@computerhistory.org

Well, I'm glad I checked my Junk Mail folder or I really would have been missing out. *Alexiad* is one of those zines that I've heard about and until today, had never seen. Thanks for thinkin' of me and sendin' them along.

Let's start at the very beginning, shall we? I'm a big fan of the alternative use of historical objects, which is odd since I'm supposed to be a stuffy historian-type. I like the idea of turning a Russian Space Shuttle into a tourist restaurant considering that the alternative is likely having it dismantled and turned in for scrap. A few historic railway cars have been given this treatment and one of them, I think it's in Santa Cruz, has a lovely small exhibit about the old train lines.

It seems like every fanzine I read this month is opening up with a notice of Bob Tucker's passing. It's sad that I never got to meet him. He sounds like a guy I really would have liked . . . especially the Jim Beam Smooooothing part of him. I've read a lot of his work over the years, both the stuff that showed up in fanzines and the stuff that was pro. Good writer, damn funny too.

I'd love to go to a Doyle symposium, though I'm not nearly as well read on Holmes as I am on his other works. I do love Sherlockian films, though. I've seen at least 25 different ones over the years. It was *Young Sherlock Holmes* that hooked me young. It's never the best ones that get you; it's always the ones you see at that vulnerable time in your life when tastes are being formed.

The SH/ACD Symposium **always** has had non-Holmes stuff. The time when Greg Sullivan channeled Professor Challenger and ended up throttling himself in a Challenger-style fit of rage, for example. We will post advance notice.

You know, Princess Kiko visited out here to San Jose once a couple of years ago and I got to greet her with a bunch of local folks. It was quite nice. I've known many members of the Tongan Royal family, there are a lot of Tongan Royals in the South BArea, and Princess Kiko was every bit as nice as the Tongans I've known.

Which brings me to the death of Old King Tupou. The man was a legend among his people and a smart man too. I never met him, he seldom visited the family out here, but I've heard stories of him for years and years. The new King, back when he was Crown Prince, visited us here at the Computer History Museum on one of the first days I worked here. He had one of my friends from High School with him and we ended up spending the afternoon chatting and ignoring the fact that we were hanging out with the Crown Prince. I guess when he's your Uncle you don't notice, but I'm ashamed of being a commoner at times like that.

I love Harry Turtledove and whenever I'm on a panel with him, which is about one a year, I always pitch to him that he should do an Alt Hist about a world where New Coke took off and conquered the world. He still hasn't bitten but I'm betting he will. You can only milk WWII for so much.

The Lost Men: the Harrowing Saga of Shackleton's Ross Sea Party by Kelly Tyler-Lewis sounds like my kind of book. I did a lot of research on Shack a few years ago, right after my bout with George Mallory fever, and he was an odd but charismatic leader from what I understand. Very similar in many ways to John C. Frémont.

I read about Shack when Shack wasn't cool . . . I have *Shackleton's Valiant Voyage*, a trimmed version of Alfred Lansing's *Endurance*, which I got in 1964. I also have the original as well as a lot of other books by or about him.

You have to forgive me, but I know nothing of harness racing. I know the Thoroughbred's for about three weeks every year when I'm researching who to bet on for the Derby.

Very interesting stuff on Temp and Culture connections. I've seen similar theories but honestly, a lot of them go over my head.

Candyfreak. Oh Yeah! I've been working on my candy knowledge over the year and I'm a giant fan of some stuff. When I was a kid, we'd go to Oakdale, CA and tour the Hershey's plant there. I've toured the Necco Factory too. I'm a huge mark for anything with peanut butter. There's a place called Casa de Fruta along 152 out here in NorCal that does GIANT Peanut Butter Cups. They are so great. Kevin Roche and Andy Trembley rewarded me with four delightful Cups during the Hollister in 2008 party at LACon.

If you get a chance, give *The Drink Tank* a read on eFanzines.com. I'd say issues 100 or 102 are good places to start.

What a LetterCol! I'm damn impressed! It's always hard for me to comment on LoColumns,

but I gotta say, there are very few I've ever seen that are nearly this interesting.

Our loccers thank you.

November 17, 2006

Thanks for sendin' 'em along. I'll start on the August 06 issue.

Teens do do zines! John Coxon's *Procrastinations* is a fine zine that's had one very good issue and a second issue is on the way. He's a good writer and he's also an LJ regular, which is where a lot of the kids who would have been doing zines in the 1980s have gone for their expression. Still, we've proven that there's an area for young fans to come and put out good stuff. I'm betting we'll see more as eZines get more and more visible.

I didn't even know that the Italians still had remnants of their monarchic past. Interesting.

On *Kushiel's Scion*, a lot of her work reminds of David Mamet. Maybe it's the way she presents her dialog, but it's the only good thing I can say about her writing since I really haven't liked any of her books.

Now, Charlie Stross, there's a writer! I've had no problems reading any of his works, which is amazing since I'm a terrible reader. He's really turned my reading habits around. Well, Charlie and China Miéville.

Strange Angel! I've so wanted to read that book but timing has not given me the chance. He hung around with a wild crew and his exploits as a member of the OTO are very entertaining . . . at least as told from the OTO's point of view. I'm a big fan of the stories of him and Hubbard. There are a lot of really good ones (like the one about Parsons, a gun and a pack of playing cards being held by Hubbard)

I agree with a lot of your Hugo picks (How did Kelly Link not win?) but I do give you credit for saying that Dave Langford's not been the best fan writer since 1989. I can think of ten folks off the top of the head who are putting out great stuff and who deserve a rocket. That's not to say that Dave's not great, he certainly is and certainly deserved a few of those rockets without question, but there's no way he's better today than Claire Brialey, Cheryl Morgan, or Niall Harrison, who I have often said is the second coming of The Langford.

On the Feb Issue . . .

You know, I'm loving the Monarchist News. I've always loved reading about the Monarchs (you should see my bookmarks list) and one of the most interesting ruling houses is Norway's. There's a story about The Crown Prince going golfing in Germany and managing a hole in one by throwing the ball from the tee. I'm not sure if it's true, but it's a fun story if nothing else.

Now that's a Viking for you!

It's always sad to read that three such great names as Sheckley, DeVore and Bulmer all go at nearly the same time. They were all amazing people for different reasons. I really wish Howard had made it to his WorldCon. I had so many things I wanted to ask him. I'd talked to

him on the phone a couple of times and he was a real gentleman.

I'm really interested in *The World Hitler Never Made*. I'm an Alt Hist nut and I really would love to see it. It's a little pricey, but when you've got librarianism running through ya, it's never too far away.

The Grizzly Maze would make an excellent addition to my library of books which have documentary tie-ins. I loved *Grizzly Man*, more for Werner Herzog's direction than the subject matter, but it's pretty impressive.

On June 06, I have this to say . . .

I bet on Barbaro and I won one and then lost the next. I totally agree with your comments about the miners, which I considered to be the most irresponsible piece of journalism in years when they announced that 12 of the 13 miners had survived and then revising it to one survivor. The Media picking up on a single report and then turning it out to the world, and the families, that was just wrong.

You mention the concept of a wikicon. I think it's a great idea. I think it's called Year of the Teledu and it sounds like it'll be an interesting experience. I've been to a few cons where you really had to DIY, but they at least pretended to have programming.

You quote Borat. You magnificent bastard.

Jagshemash. I see that Mark Leeper not like **Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan**. He must be Uzbek. Good-Bye! Chenquie!

There's an excellent documentary about timecapules and specifically about one buried in Livermore, California. They had buried one in the 1940s and were supposed to dig it up in 2000. They lost it and couldn't find it. It was rather embarrassing, but they finally did find it about 10 meters away from the marker that had been laid denoting the location.

I like Ron Goulart and I love Groucho Marx. How could I just be hearing about this now?

Because St. Martin's Press doesn't do publicity worth diddly?

— JTM

I liked *Spin*, but to me it wasn't Hugo worthy. That's just me though. I really like Robert Charles Wilson's stuff, but *Spin* was just a little too . . . I think the word is heady.

Good to see the Stellas getting a little play. An important group they are and I'm always anxious to see what comes next.

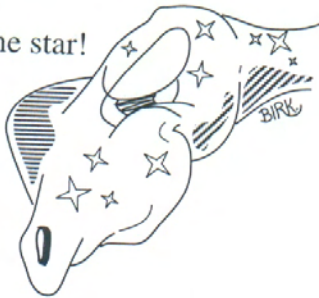
HUGE Reese's fan. I kinda liked the White Chocolate Reese's, but I'm a White Choc guy overall. The ones with the pieces of peanut in it were really good. I love chunky peanut butter, so it was Heaven for me. The Reese's Stick they have now are very different, but I like them a lot. I don't really enjoy the Nutrageous at all, and the one with Caramel aren't very good either, but the regulars, despite getting new wrapping, are still the best.

I love Coelacanths, as do many folks who

grew up going to the Steinhardt Aquarium. There was a model of one at the base of the giant 360 tank. It was bizarre looking and there was no glass around it so that kids could get their pictures with it. I have at least one with me holding it. In the game Animal Crossing, which is the fave of Evelyn the Seven Year Old terror I babysit, and if it's raining you can catch a Coelacanth. That's my favourite part of the game.

Great stuff that I know the folks in the fanzine lounge at BayCon will really enjoy.

I'm a fanzine star!



From: **Robert S. Kennedy** Nov. 17, 2006
1779 Ciprian Avenue, Camarillo, CA
93010-2451 USA
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Thank you for Vol. 5, No. 5. It arrived in only 3 days. Excellent service by the USPS.

I have now lost another nephew. One of my brother's sons died in 2004—Age. 38. My brother died in January—age 68. In October another of his sons died—age 45. I am now left with just one nephew and a niece (as well six grand nephews and a grand niece).

Our condolences.

Nice obituary for Oriana Fallaci. She will no doubt be missed by the Islamofascists/Nazis. (For anyone not familiar with Fallaci, that's sarcasm.)

Joe's reviews of John G. Hemry's Paul Sinclair series *A Just Determination*, *Burden of Proof*, *Rule of Evidence*, and *Against All Enemies* were very much enjoyed. I look forward to future novels in the series. At dinner one night during LAcon IV, the subject of this series came up. Taras Wolansky said the *Against All Enemies* was the fourth book in the series and I disagreed saying it was the third book. Later, after returning to my room, I determined that Taras was correct. (So much for my memory.) I left him a note telling him that he was correct. I here repeat that for the edification of the others present at the dinner.

I just finished reading *1635: The Cannon Law* by Eric Flint and Andrew Dennis (2006). I've read most of the books in this "series" and enjoyed them. One of the "forthcoming books apparently jumps back to 1634 which leaves me confused. Anyway, I look forward to the sequel to "The Cannon Law".

Rodford Edmiston: Outstanding article "The Joy of High Tech". You indicate: "About

thirty thousand years ago the climate began cooling again, in what is known as the Late Glacial Cold Stage, or Upper Pleniglacial. This reached its coldest between twenty-one thousand and *seventeen thousand years ago*. (Italics added by me.)

The Discovery Channel has at least twice presented the program "Ice Age Columbus: Who Were The First Americans". A spear point was found on the East Coast dating back seventeen thousand years. It was identical to those used by Ice Age Humans in what is now Southwestern France. Nothing was known about what happened to these Ice Age Humans until DNA testing of some Indians. They survived for thousands of years and eventually merged with Indians. The first humans on this continent were Ice Age humans from what is now Southwestern France and they predated the arrival of humans crossing the Bering Strait from what is now Siberia by some 6,000 years! I've obtained the DVD of the program. Obviously it is a fictionalized accounting since there is no way to know exactly who and why these Ice Age humans made the crossing. Nevertheless, it is an engaging presentation.

You continue in your article with: "The world is a complicated place and cause and effect are rarely clear." You concluded with: "So, is the Earth getting warmer? Almost certainly, at least for the short (that is, the next few decades to a couple of centuries) term. Are humans causing this? Probably not, but we may be accelerating the process." Your concluding paragraph will not make the Chicken Littles happy.

Richard Dengrove: You have friends who enjoyed *The Da Vinci Code* because it was a hoot? I like that.

Joseph T Major: Regarding the National Geographic DNA Study you asked: "How does one get into this? What are the Costs?" Here are the answers and the site for the National Geographic DNA project.

<https://www3.nationalgeographic.com/genographic/>

The cost (including shipping, etc.) is \$115.29 each for the Y-chromosome (Males Only) and the mitochondrial DNA (Males and Females).

You receive the results of how you tie into the National Geographic project. Once either of these has been done, you are also connected to Family Tree DNA, the company that actually does the testing. The above tests only do 12 genetic markers. This may match you up with a large number of people. But, your common ancestor can be a very long time ago. It is my understanding that for a reduced price Family Tree DNA will do a 37 markers (or more) that will make common ancestors/matches much more recent. Please note that these DNA tests will not furnish names for your family tree. Going through Family Tree DNA may furnish matches with living relatives.

I have my Y-chromosome and mitochondrial DNA results and have tied them in to Family Tree DNA. Matches have been received based on my Y-chromosome that are obviously a very long time ago for any common ancestor. I will see about 37 markers later. By the way, Family Tree DNA will keep your DNA for 25 years.

National Geographic gives you a personal code to access their system so you can see at what step the testing is and have a good idea of when the final results will be available. When the results are available you can print sheets indicating "Migration Routes", "Genetic History", and a "Certificate of Y-chromosome DNA testing" or "Certificate of mtDNA testing".

Thank you for the information.
Could All Fandom have a common ancestor? Maybe we could have a real Jophan Family Reunion.

— JTM

From: **Sue Burke** November 19, 2006
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In the main square of Dos Hermanas, a monument erected in 1983 features quotes from famous poems, depicts the local manifestation of the Virgin Mary, and is topped with a large cross. It honors "the sons and neighbors of this city who, fulfilling their duty, gave their lives in defense of their ideals" in the Spanish Civil War. They include the mayor and police chief, whose obituary I mentioned in the last letter.

It was a pretty little town, with oranges ripening on curbside trees, roses in bloom, ceramic tiles and iron-railed balconies decorating the homes, and palm trees gracing the parks. I was there from Nov. 3 to 5 for the Spanish national SF convention.

Actually I came a day early to do some tourism. Dos Hermanas is a suburb of Seville, which is home to the oldest royal palace still in use in Europe. Construction began in 1364 by order of King Pedro I, known as "the Cruel" to the nobility and "the Justice-Doer" to the peasants. You can guess why. The palace is comparable to the Alhambra in Granada, much smaller but still large, and I spent a couple of happy hours wandering lost in its splendid halls and garden.

Then I crossed the plaza to visit Seville's Cathedral, the largest in terms of surface area in Europe, where I admired Columbus's tomb, now opened to proudly display the gold urn which indisputably contains his bones. I climbed the 310-foot tall Giralda bell tower, formerly the minaret for the mosque that had been on that site. Up there, tourists from around the globe admired the view. Off to the southwest a black storm cloud was approaching. A huge clap of thunder boomed, and we looked at each other, no words necessary.

The rain in Spain falls invariably on HispaCons.

The convention was a success, with 170

attendees and 31 program items — a bit small by Spanish standards, but considering the short preparation time, everyone felt proud. HispaCon wanders much like WorldCon, and a book publisher in Cordoba was supposed to be organizing the 2006 convention, but it pooped out at the last minute. As a consequence, the 2007 convention has both an organizer and an emergency back-up organizer. A full report is on my website and will appear on the Concatenation website: www.concatenation.org.

A disappointing update on Columbus's DNA: Now that we know it's Chris, researchers are trying to figure out where he came from, a mystery he himself seemed to have created. Y-chromosomes were tested from 447 men in long-established families named Colón, Colom, and Columbo in eastern Spain, southern France, and northern Italy. No conclusive link was found.

Did they test it for the kohen gene (Cohen Modal Haplotype)?
— JTM

Thanks for sending the last issue. It's a pleasure to connect with English-speaking fandom and especially to enjoy the cartoons. The sense of humor here is fun but less subtle.

From: **Milt Stevens** November 22, 2006
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In *Alexiad* V5#5, Johnny Carruthers suggests the creation of a permanent fan fund between Japan and North America. Like most ideas, this has come up before. The first time it was done was in 1968 with TOFF (Trans Oceanic Fan Fund). This fund was intended to bring Takumi Shibano to the 1968 Worldcon. It was begun by John and Bjo Trimble as an adjunct to their bid for the 1968 Worldcon. Since they didn't think they had any competition, they probably spent more time promoting TOFF than promoting their bid. Back in those days, there were no voting memberships or mail in ballots. Everything was done by a show of hands at the business meeting one year in advance. Before the vote, Berkeley entered an almost pro forma bid. However, they got Harlan Ellison to do a gangbusters sales pitch at the business meeting. Berkeley won. This was totally against all reason. The previous Bay Area Worldcon run by the same guys in 1964 had engulfed all fandom in war. (The Boondoggle.) The fighting would go on for years more, and Bay Area fandom would never fully recover.

In the late sixties, you might say I was floating around Bay Area fandom. I was serving on an aircraft carrier out of Naval Air Station Alameda. Alameda is just down the street from Berkeley. I had visited the Shibanos and Tokyo fandom while I was out West. My part in TOFF effort was on the return trip from Berkeley to Japan. During Baycon, the Shibanos had acquired four cases full of books. These would have been taxed heavily if they had been

brought into the country by conventional means. So I transported the books. I picked them up in Berkeley and stored them in the crypto vault which I controlled. I gave them back in Yokosuka, Japan.

I know who E. Everett Evans was, even though he died two years before I entered fandom (1958). The LASFS still has an Evans-Freehafer Award that it gives out every year for service to the club. He was an active fan in the forties and fifties and had come west with the Slan Shack Group. He had one novel published posthumously, *A Man of Many Minds*.

I have read somewhere the E. E. Smith actually completed the novel after Evans had died. Evans also did some short stories which Forry Ackerman reprinted in the back of Perry Rhodan.

If you read "Ah Sweet Idiocy," you would know Evans was sent to prison during WWII for having homosexual relations with a teenage boy. Occasionally, people who want to beat on LASFS or worldcons make the accusation that we are honoring a child molester. Back then, having a gay relationship with an 18 year old was just as illegal as having a gay relationship with a 17 year old. However, nobody has ever said this was a molesting situation.

In other words, All Fandom Doesn't Go To War over the Evans-Freehafer Award.
— JTM

The Big Heart has always been Forry's personal award. Sometimes it reflected Forry's exact experience without much reference to fandom in general. There is now some theoretical provision about future recipients being chosen by the last three recipients, but we shall see whether that really happens or not.

In the letter column, Joseph isn't entirely correct about Buffy panels being the ultimate in skiffy. Not that Buffy panels aren't really cool. Of course, they are. However, the ultimate in exotic fannish experiences is a Buffy Sing-Along.

From: **George W. Price** November 24, 2006
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Richard Dengrove mentions the various versions of what happened in the 1948 Arab/Israeli war to produce the Arab refugees whose "right of return" is now so hotly disputed.

The story that I have heard — and never seen specifically disputed — is that when the Arab armies started to invade Israel, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem went on Radio Cairo. This gentleman (noted for his Nazi sympathies during World War II) was the most prominent Arab religious leader of the time. His broadcasts called for the Arab population of Israel (oops, I mean the Zionist Entity) to evacuate to neighboring Arab countries so as to give the oncoming Arab armies a clear field of fire. As I recall, he also promised that when the Jews had been ejected or exterminated, the refugees could

return and claim whatever they wanted of the property the Jews would no longer be occupying. And a hundred thousand or so Arabs did as he bade them. (No doubt the Jews also chased out some Arabs, but most left voluntarily. Those who didn't leave became Israeli citizens.)

Alas, the war didn't turn out quite the way the Grand Mufti expected.

Which brings us to the second phase. The Arab countries to which the refugees had fled did nothing whatever to absorb them. To the absolute contrary, they put the refugees into squalid camps and discouraged all attempts to assimilate. The obvious purpose was to keep the refugees as a running sore whose plight would gain the world's sympathy in the struggle against the wicked Zionists. And of course the new generations of refugees give a steady supply of terrorist and guerrilla recruits. They're on about the third generation now, and the number of "refugees" (most of whom are too young to have ever lived in Israel) is now so large that even if they were peaceable the Israelis wouldn't dare let them return, for obvious demographic reasons.

More to the point, the number of Arab refugees from Israel was about equal to the number of Jewish expellees from Arab countries who went to Israel. I guess **they** don't count.

— JTM



* * * * *

Rodford Edmiston's essay "Hot Time on the Old Globe Tonight" is an excellent discussion of global warming. In fact, I noticed only one very minor error. He says "Bermuda has the same latitude as southern New England." On my globe, Bermuda is much farther south than that, about level with Savannah, Georgia. But this doesn't affect his main argument.

Recently we have been loudly told that the debate is over, and global warming is quite real — all the scientists say so. This is flatly untrue — for starters, check out S. Fred Singer and Richard Lindzen — and impresses me as simply an attempt to shut off debate.

Still, I would reject the Kyoto restrictions even if I were completely certain that global warming is human-caused and will have the dire effects predicted. My position is that it would be grossly immoral to condemn most of the human race to permanent poverty. Which is what will happen if we prevent the Chinese and Indians and Africans from raising themselves to something approaching the Western standard of living.

Yes, I know the Kyoto protocols exempt developing nations, but that is a transparently meaningless evasion. We're talking about more than half the human race here; if they start burning enough fuel to bring themselves up to our level, then any reductions Westerners might make would be overwhelmed. We would hurt ourselves without significantly reducing the problem. And of course they would never accept any attempt at suppressing their growth in energy usage. I conclude that Kyoto is a recipe for endless conflict and maybe even all-out war.

In the end, I am afraid that if human action really is responsible for changing climate and weather patterns, rising ocean levels, and so on, then this is the price we must pay to bring the rest of the human race up to a decent standard of living.

I think it will be worth it.

From: **Sheryl Birkhead** November 16, 2006
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Somehow it all seems all so wrong to be spreading the news that the *Smooth Uncle* is gone. It felt as if he would be there forever . . . the bigger loss for those yet to come to fandom. Sigh.

Next year's memorial service at WorldCon will be particularly poignant.

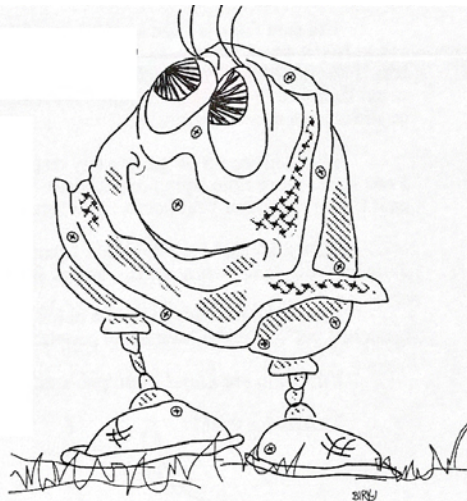
Johnny(Carruthers) — you are absolutely correct about the absence of funds for fen to and from Japan — but, this year there is a oneshot fund to send *John Hertz* to Japan and this upcoming Worldcon. Agh — if I had just read the comments to you, I would have seen that there is an editorial blurb with the appropriate information. I was unaware of the acronym *HANA* — very catchy. It will be interesting to see what fandom, worldwide, brings away from the first Japanese worldcon.

Since my first visit to a cardiologist things have changed — candywise. I am fighting **not** to take a statin drug and the only thing I can do is to follow, meticulously, his directions and see if that will lower my *Idl* enough (but since he refuses to say how low is low enough, this is dicey and I am guessing I will end up with the

drug anyway . . . sigh). Because I do **not** have high cholesterol to start with, it is difficult to follow the directive — as low as possible . . . So, for the past month or two no chocolate of any kind (along with a lot of no others). The Dr. had trouble coming up with things for me to change since I am already a vegetarian and exercise daily — he had to find things for me to change — and he did. Agh — those dark chocolate covered raisins sound tasty. Maybe, if I have to give up and give in to the drugs I'll add back some things . . . I was a coward — called and left a message that I had decided not to take the drug he had given me — after researching it. Now that I have had some time, I have two other statin drugs I would prefer over the one he picked — then the negotiations begin. Oh yeah, the reason for this is that plaque build up in the carotids was a major part of cause of death for my mother and I finally got my GP to listen to me after I paid for a test and then she heard a murmur — so they checked out my carotids and . . . yeah — it's starting.

Johnny — the only place, so far, that I have found the dark chocolate covered raisins is at the local Walmart — but only in the big bags. That's one I'll keep looking for and see if I can rationalize a "taste".

I see eight out of the fifteen zines listed — not too bad . . .



**Egoboo is the currency of fandom ...
be a Bhig Spender!**

The non-Labor Day date for worldcon is good for some and not good for some. I am guessing that the dates are more likely to be earlier in the summer rather than later (i.e. when school is most assuredly in session). Of course anyone short on vacation days and needing to take advantage of the holiday would be out of luck. Out of curiosity, when out of the US — any idea how a date is determined? Does each (any?) country have another holiday to utilize or what?

RIP Elfling. Right now I only have two cats. One is trying to die and my knowing what she needs does not help at all. Her kidneys are

failing and she refuses to eat the right diet (sound like some humans?) — there are now two new nutraceuticals that seem to really help — but since she now refuses to eat at all, there is no way to get anything into her. I have just started force feeding kidney diet — but am not home long enough to give all that much. No idea if this time it is for real since this has happened before, but never for this long. The other cat also has failing kidneys and a faulty thyroid (first cat already was treated for hyperthyroidism) — but SHE is eating the additives. I have to get creative — first it was make a butter pill and now it is use the protein digest (BAD for kidneys, but usually good for taste to the cat) off a can of food (then toss the food as a no-no). Cat number one is not a good candidate for hospitalization or subcutaneous fluids — no matter how right I feel that is for treatment. It makes it tough for me to accept, but . . . I know her well enough to know that if I hospitalized her and did IV fluids she still would not eat. She has never been a good eater and now it is coming back to haunt me. I actually bought chicken livers — the last time I bought them was when another of my cats was dying from the same disease — but she ate the livers, at least for a while. The butcher smirked, but gave me two tiny slivers of beef — but she wouldn't go near it. Sigh.

The *new AAFP* vaccination guidelines (I have only scanned them) suggest distemper vaccination only every seven years. That is just an update for those interested. I need to take some time and read them over in detail.

Lisa — I went back to try to figure out the bred with the tremendously long feathers — I know it is not a Clydesdale — and the pictures I recall were stark in that the long flowing hair was shockingly white against black and that does not quite fit with the Fresians. But of those two it would have been Fresians. I had never heard of this breed and just kept scrolling through the site — but never bookmarked it — so . . .

Horse Feathers? Without looking it up, sounds like a Marx brothers movie and if it is, then somewhere along the line I have seen it — if not, then no . . . more information, please.

Harpo! ["The Man Who Came To Dinner" reference] You got it.
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0023027/>

Rodney — out of curiosity, if someone were to offer you a computer free, would you want one? As I say, just curious.

About the kitten mortality — the females of several species will kill +/- eat their young when stressed — the species I am fairly certain of are — pigs, rabbits, and cats. It is known that a tomcat may kill (again +/- eat) kittens — as far as I know this is thought to be only of kittens sired by other toms (not sure how he knows . . .) — allowing for his own get to proliferate. Stallions, as noted in the wild, may drive off or kill foals (usually I see reports of colts — not sure if that is a words choice or if colts and fillies are **both** savaged) for, presumably, the same "reason". A queen that is socialized and

around people a lot (especially a queen that has had a litter before) often tolerates and even seems to want human contact for her kittens. I'm not an authority, but that is what I have seen/read.

I have watched the PBS show that documents mankind's movements by historical DNA mapping. It was very interesting, mainly because the presumed routes and relationships were not what they found when they looked at the genetic groupings. Again, very interesting. Sorry I cannot recall the actual name of the show.

Joe — you mention some trufans who consider *Buffy* to be the ultimate in skiffy — I have often been surprised at which fen have fallen head over (proverbial) heels with the show but that means I am also showing my personal lack of interest. I have watched the show and enjoyed it — year one more than any other. But, it was not a show I worked hard to make sure I didn't miss an episode. This could be generalized into many areas, reading genres not being left out. Media (um . . . er . . . using the current meaning) has simply taken over the numbers.

It struck me as just another sitcom — clever, talented, stylish, elegant young women; dull-witted, oafish, sloppy, crude boys; and clueless adults. The occult stuff was the ostensible cause but *Buffy* and associates could just as easily be habitués of the Central Perk coffee shop.

— JTM

Interesting to note that it never takes that many nominations to make the Hugo ballot and if zines got separated into electronic versus paper (never mind how to handle those that appear in both venues) we would probably still be back with the problem of getting readers of "paper zines" to become worldcon members so they could nominate — or accept the numbers from the wider circulation zines — just as it always has been . . . In our times it is still circulation just that now the specter of internet circulation can insure a larger audience than any paper zine ever contemplated.



From: **Marty Helgesen** December 1, 2006
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Huzzah! (and Hizzah! too, of course). I recently found all four uncommented-on issues of *Alexiad* and gathered them from the various places in which they had hidden themselves. I don't have time to comment on all of them before the deadline, but I'll comment on the earliest two now and do the others later.

The e-mail account I used since around 1990 was shut down a while ago and I have new ones. I can be reached at:

mnhccatcunyvvm@gmail.com

In the April issue you mention the writer Wen Spencer and ask, "When are we going to meet her brothers Karbunkle Spencer and Wart 'Arthur' Spencer?" On Wednesday.

Your mention of the group Mili Vanilli reminded me of a letter to the editor I saw when their lip-syncing became known. Commenting on the young people who burned their Mili Vanilli records the writer observed that presumably they had bought the records because they enjoyed listening to them. How could knowing that the people they were listening to weren't the people they had thought they were listening to affect their enjoyment of the sound?

Alexis Gilliland favorably reviews the book *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* by Bart D. Ehrman. Using mostly an academic database to which my library subscribes I found a number of reviews by scripture scholars on the web that had a different opinion. They pointed out a number of weaknesses in the book. Even to summarize them intelligibly would take more space than appropriate for a letter to a fanzine so I'll quote only one that is short enough: "An example of how Ehrman fails to grasp context as a problem solver is illustrated in his exercise on page 48 in which he presents the reader with the run-on word

'lastnightatdinnerisawabundanceonthetable'.

He asks rhetorically if this was 'a normal or a supernatural event' and pretends that problems like these exist in the Biblical text (but gives no examples from there of an actual problem because of this). Let us further help Ehrman with his problem in thinking critically: You might be able to figure out which reading is right by checking context. If the sentence is by itself, there's no reason for us to check any further either way. But if it is followed by,

'unclehenrytriedtostabitwithhisforkbutthenitdidthewatusi', or by

'therewerelotsofmeatsandcheesesandbreads',

then your reading problem is solved. Is that clear?"

Anyone who wants to read more is welcome to write to me and I'll forward them (or print some of them if you don't have e-mail).

I turned on the radio in the library computer room a few minutes after the *Challenger* explosion to listen to the news. Instead of the

routine program I had expected I heard people talking about something terrible that had happened. I listened until someone mentioned what had happened, then I turned the radio off. I can't stand listening to broadcasters filling time with speculation when something has happened that is so important they think they have to stay on the air but they have no new factual information.

Robert S. Kennedy says of some Oscar winners, "The Academy needs to add a line to their ballots — None of the Above." The problem with "None of the Above" on ballot is that, unlike the Academy Awards, somebody has to win. Somebody has to be mayor, governor, congressman, senator, president, etc. Having a new election with completely different candidates in "None of the Above" got the most votes could lead to "None of the Above" getting the most votes again. Also, appalling as it may be, the first group of candidates might be the best available candidates.

Some of them were even saying that there should be a second option: "Abolish This Office".

Jeffrey Allan Boman says he used to forward Ebay phishing mail to spoofof@ebay.com, but just got the same form mail and lack of results so now he just deletes them. Ebay presumably gets a large number of reports so sending only a form acknowledgment is a reasonable response. And if even if they identify and successfully prosecute or sue a lot of phishers, there are always new ones. With spoofof@ebay.com and spoofof@paypal.com in my Names file it's easy enough to forward the spam and hope that at least some of the spammers pay for their crimes.

Brad W. Foster quotes, with amusement, "the sound on the other hand". I live on Long Island so I could refer to the ocean on one hand and the sound on the other hand.

Milt Stevens asked about living veterans of World War I. The November 26, 2006 *Los Angeles Times* reported

Ernest Charles Pusey, one of the United States' longest-living World War I veterans, died at his home in Bradenton, Fla., on Nov. 19, a little more than a week after he was honored with a medal for his service to the country, family members said. He was 111.

Pusey's death left fewer than 25 living U.S. veterans of World War I of nearly 5 million who served, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. ...

For his 111th birthday celebration in May, he hired belly dancers to perform. A few years back his family treated him to a motorcycle ride on his birthday.

And that's why WHAS radio here in Louisville did an interview with Robley Rex.

Rodney Leighton wonders why *The Da Vinci Code* caused such a furor. The reason is that it is a work of fiction that pretends to be

based on fact and claims that historic Christianity — Catholicism in particular — is based on a hoax. There are a number of articles on the web pointing out flaws in the book (URLs available on request) and several excellent books, including *The Da Vinci Hoax Exposing the Errors in The Da Vinci Code* by Carl Olson & Sandra Miesel (a (former) fan, pro, and sf critic), which can be found in many libraries.

And was reviewed in *Alexiad*, Volume 3 #4.

Once I was driving on very icy streets — I think I was going to an Army Reserve meeting — and stopped for gas. When I arrived at the training center I noticed the gas cap sitting on the trunk of the car. I had forgotten to put it back on when I finished gassing up and it hadn't fallen off during the rest of the trip. Driving very slowly because of the ice probably helped.

Trinlay Khadro mentions Kafka's "Metamorphosis". I'm pretty sure I saw the line, "You won't believe the size of the bug I squished up in Gregor's room," in a *New York Magazine* Competition but I don't remember what the competition was about.

Some years ago at Minicon Jane Yolen had a Cliff Simak Notes Competition, seeking summaries, written to be devoid of any literary merit, of well known science fiction or fantasy stories. She emphasized that the name was not intended to imply that Cliff Simak wrote the kind of thing she was looking for, but to make sure everyone knew she was NOT talking about Cliff Simak. That thought never entered her mind. I won second prize in the fantasy category with, "Gregor was a kid. His parents bugged him. They really bugged him. Then he showed them." Dave Romm won first prize with a summary of *The Lord of the Rings*: "A short, hairy good guy gives the bad guy the finger."

In my letter I referred to Bon Ami's slogan and logo but didn't say what they were. The drawing showed a just-hatched chick. The slogan was, "Hasn't scratched yet". Some time after I wrote that letter newspapers here had a two-for-one coupon for Bon Ami. Apparently the company was moving back into this market area. I checked supermarkets and they had it, so I bought two containers. I'm not a connoisseur of cleanser so I can't comment on whether it's better than the brand I was using, but without the coupon it's a little more expensive so I think I'll stick to what I've been using.

Moving on to the June issue I checked and my library is one of the many that has a copy of *The Book of Record of the Time Capsule of Cupaloy*. It's 51 pages long. I glanced at it but it didn't look particularly interesting.

The True Stella Awards is an excellent and important book. The author also publishes a free e-mail newsletter of lawsuit abuses. The web site <http://www.StellaAwards.com> has a form for subscribing. One also can subscribe to the free This Is True newsletter, which publishes strange news stories. (People who insist on sending him money can get the expanded

version of This Is True, but there's no pressure to do so.)

When I have time I intend to send him an additional suggestion for alleviating the situation. I thought of it some years ago, before he started the True Stella Awards, but never bothered writing it up because I couldn't think of any reasonably likely way of getting it widely read.

Richard Dengrove says we should not judge the Bible on the basis of factual accuracy, saying, "The criteria is whether it gets us close to the divine, which is in our heart; and that is how we have to judge the Bible's truth or falsehood. I disagree. Factual accuracy is essential. That does not mean reading it with a hyperliteralism that ignores poetry, parables, etc. For example, when Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan everyone who heard it knew it was a parable, not an account of a real event. No one thought that if he checked with all the inns between Jerusalem and Jericho he would find the one where the Samaritan took the injured man. Also, I would speak of getting close to God, not close to "the divine", which seems to me to be vague and ambiguous.

Alexis Gilliland writes of the Gospel of Judas which was a Gnostic text — or, to borrow a phrase a fan used in MINNEAPA some years ago, gnostic gnonsense. A large number of often contradictory Gnostic gospels, etc. were written around the middle of the second century, well after the canonical gospels were written.

Mary Sue gospels? I knew the "Gospel of Judas" was gnostic when someone quoted a reference in it to "Ialdabaoth". In some gnostic doctrines, Ialdabaoth was the incompetent demiurge who created the material world. Given that gnosticism then identified Ialdabaoth with the Jewish deity, one wonders if these wonderful gnostic worlds (i.e., Stephen Leigh's *The Abraxis Marvel Circus* (1990)) would be all that wonderful for the devotees of the demiurge, or would they be resettled in the east?

— JTM

Alexis says Judas was the "alpha apostle, the first among equals", but that's not what the New Testament says. Ronald Knox, in his classic *The Belief of Catholics*, wrote, "There is one apostle whose name occurs in some sixty contexts scattered over the four Gospels (no other achieves more than twenty-five mentions); one apostle who is constantly, you might say invariably, the spokesman of the rest, who takes the initiative at every crisis, who is distinguished (Mark xvi.7) by our Lord himself as holding, somehow a unique position, and was actually the first apostle to whom he appeared after his Resurrection. Whatever else is certain about the Gospel tradition, it is certain that the name of Simon Peter is deeply embedded in its structure."

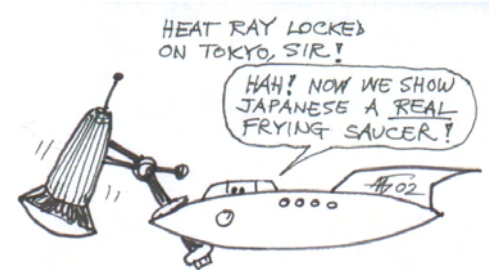
Alexis says, "In *Saint Joan* one of Shaw's bishops defines a miracle as an event that

inspires faith, the mechanics of the event being less important than the faith it inspired, as in the use of phenolphthalein to turn water into wine." Shaw was raised as an Anglican but abandoned Christianity for atheism. After years as an atheist he rejected atheism for what sources describe as some kind of mysticism. He is not the most reliable source of information about Christian belief.

A miracle is something that is impossible according to the laws of nature but happens because God overrides His laws in a special case.

I had never heard of phenolphthalein, but surmised it was a chemical that gave water the color of wine. Chemistry web sites confirm that guess but the one I looked at refers to "a simpler way to do the trick that is just as convincing — so long as no one insists on tasting the 'wine' or the 'water'". When Jesus turned water into wine people did drink it. When the master of the feast tasted it he said to the bridegroom, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." (John 2:10, NIV)

Alexis says we learn from the Bible that Judas used the 30 pieces of silver to buy a potter's field. However, every Bible I've seen says, "When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. 'I have sinned,' he said, 'for I have betrayed innocent blood.' 'What is that to us?' they replied. 'That's your responsibility.' So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the coins and said, 'It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.' So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners." (Matt. 27:3-7; NIV).



I don't think anyone thinks that the Roe Effect, which George W. Price mentions, is automatic and guaranteed. However, the Roe Effect involves more than people having or not having abortions. Speaking in general terms, pro-life people tend to have different, more positive attitudes towards families and children than do pro-abortion people.

From: **AL du Pisani** December 1, 2006
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I am still well, and still looking for another job. I keep on being told that there are people out there, looking for somebody like me, but as yet I have had no bites. If the people I interview at can just come back to me and tell me to drop dead, it would be an improvement.

At least they didn't make you drive three hundred kilometers and then say that they weren't interested in **you**, but could you tell them about anyone you knew who wanted to change jobs?

I was not aware that L Ron Hubbard lived in South Africa for a while, in the 1960/1961 time frame. Until recently, when the L Ron Hubbard Foundation invited us to the house he lived in while he was here. A nice house on Linksfield Ridge, with a very nice view over eastern Johannesburg. They have renovated the house to look as it probably looked when he was in the country.

Not did I know that he penned a constitution for South Africa, on the basis of one man one vote, which he them handed over to the government of the day. I never found out what they did with it, as they could not pass it on to the Minister for Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

We also went out to a meeting of some true believers in UFO's. At that meeting they read from an overwrought missive they penned to the State President, in which they asked him to please tell them what the state of the government's meetings with extraterrestrial visitors are. Mr Mbeki wrote back to thank them for their interest, and told them that he referred it to the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk.

The UFO guys were so thankful for this attention that are being paid to them.

Leading into politics: Mr Tony Leon, leader of the Opposition Democratic Alliance has announced his intention to resign as party leader, and a three way race for his job is currently underway.

It is not known how many people are interested in succeeding Thabo Mbeki, but his successor should be appointed at the ANC's congress in middle next year. Part of the problem is that Mbeki is in many ways a second rate leader, surrounding himself with third rate people, none of which is much of a leader anyway. The default option left, is Jacob Zuma, and there is so much opposition to him internal to the ANC, that we are hearing about committees to make sure he does not get his hands on power.

A lot of ANC leaders spent some time in jail, and it look as if the new generation is following in their footsteps. This time for corruption, and not for politics.

Now you're getting into Kentucky style politics. You folks need to learn the mores of buying votes.

Which leads to the very interesting position our Commissioner of Police is in: He is known to be a good friend of somebody suspected of murdering a businessman with close ties to the ANC. The police investigation of that murder is known to have been botched, and it is suspected that it was on orders of the top guy himself.

Which makes the whole problem of Crime in South Africa a bit more difficult to fix. Our church invited the previous Commissioner of Police to come and give his impressions about what is happening on the crime front to us, and it was interesting.

His basis outlook is that crime can only be managed in four separate areas, where we as a church can assist in creating a moral environment.

Some interesting statistic he mentioned, was that although ordinary crime (example: stealing of washing from the line) was at a similar level to other countries, violent crime was very much higher. And nobody has as yet given an acceptable reason why.

I am planning to see my family for a week over Christmas and New Year, and am looking forward to it.

Have a very good Christmas, and a happy New Year.

Merry Christmas to all (even those to whom it is on 4th Tevet 5767 this year, and Happy Chanukah to them) and to all a good night.

— JTM

WAHF:
Lloyd Daub, with various items of interest.

And the ark rested on the slopes of Ararat, and the rain drained away, and the animals went forth to multiply, and Noah set about his own ways.

And the LORD commanded that he inquire into the animals; and he hearkened unto the words of the LORD.

And he went to and fro in the world, and up and down in it, and found that the animals did multiply, as the LORD did command.

And he came unto a small grove, and found two small serpents, who were alone, and had no other of their kind.

And he did declare unto them, Wherefore hast thou not multiplied? For the word of the LORD hast gone forth.

And the serpents did say, Do cut down some trees, that we may be fruitful, and bear young.

And Noah did cut down the trees, and he left the serpents unto their own deeds.

And Noah did go about and return unto his own fig tree and vine.

And when the ages had passed, the LORD declared unto Noah, Go thou and look upon My beasts, the serpents, that they have been fruitful and multiplied.

And Noah went unto the place where the serpents had been, and lo, they were a multitude.

And Noah said unto the serpents, I see that thou hast obeyed the command of the LORD.

Wherefore didst thou need trees, cut and toppled, that thou might bring forth thy young? And the elder of the serpents declared unto Noah . . .



Adders we are, and need logs to multiply.

Manned Spacecraft Center
Houston, 20. Juli 1969

To the People of Texas and All Americans in the World –

Fellow Citizens and Compatriots:

I am besieged with a thousand or more of the Luddites under Proxmire. I have sustained a considerable Slander and debate for 24 hours and have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded surrender at discretion, otherwise the garrison is to be put to the RIF, if the fort is taken. I have answered the demand with a rocket launch, and our flag still waves proudly from the administration building. I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism, and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days. If this call is neglected I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a rocket boy who never forgets which is due his honor and that of his country.

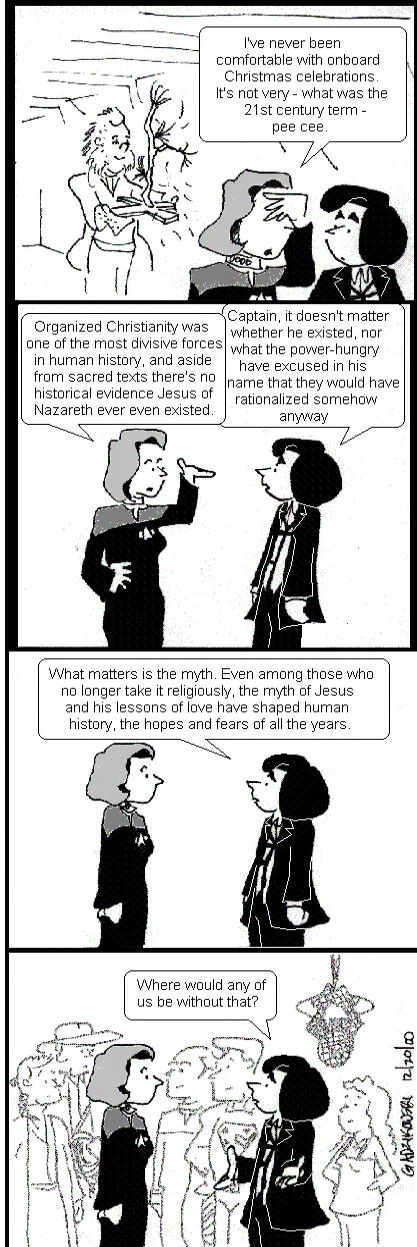
SIEG ODER TOD.

Wernher von Braun
Oberstleutnant, Befelshaber der Raumschiffe

P.S. Gott Mit Uns — When the enemy appeared in sight we had not three kegs of beer — We have since found in deserted houses 80 or 90 barrels & got into the walls 20 or 30 bottles of wine. v. Braun

THE APPARENT AND THE REAL

by Paul Gadzikowski



THE SIX MILLION CREDIT SITH

The office of OSI; behind his desk, OSCAR GOLDMAN, the director, pushes the intercom.

OSCAR: Are they here? Come in, then.

Colonel STEVE AUSTIN and JAMIE SITH, his two top agents, enter.

STEVE: This is pretty damn quick.

JAMIE: Yeah, don't you know we've got lives? And jobs?

OSCAR: I know. I know. But we've got a very important new task. We've got to coordinate with a new bionic adaptee from . . . abroad.

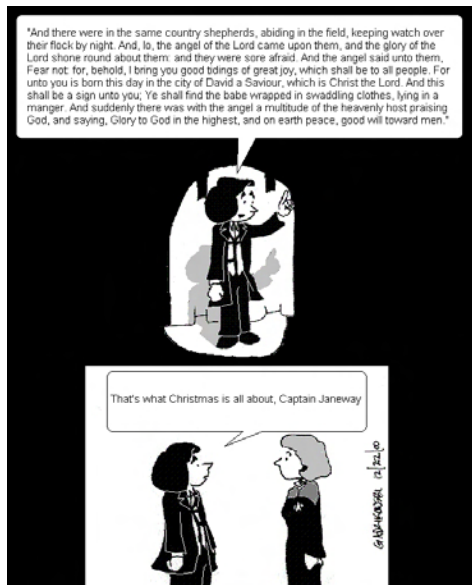
STEVE: I didn't know Russia had the technology.

OSCAR: No. Not any of our allies, not China. Someplace . . . else.

CUT TO (SOLARIZED):

A barely human form being lifted from a lava pool. Only one arm remains attached to the torso and head.

CHANCELLOR (v.o.):
 We can rebuild him
 We have the technology
 We have the capability to remake him
 Better than he was before
 Better, stronger, faster.



CUT TO

OSI office.
The door swings open. A great dark form, in helmet, mask, and cloak, monitoring devices on his body armor, fills the doorway. His bionic lungs are rasping heavily as he breathes.

SITH THIS IS WHERE I REPORT

OSCAR: Yes. These are our two lead bionic persons, Colonel Steve Austin and Jamie Sommers. They will get you acquainted with our project and our methods.

JAMIE And what do we call you?

SITH YOU MAY CALL ME LORD VADER

Co-Editors: Lisa & Joseph Major
 Co-Publishers: Joseph & Lisa Major
 Writers, Staff: Major, Joseph & Major, Lisa

Art: What we are mainly looking for is small fillos. Your fillo will probably be scanned in and may be reused, unless you object to its reuse.

Contributions: This is not a fictionzine. It is intended to be our fanzine, so be interesting.

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