

LEFTOVER QUOTATIONS

PART SIX

Leftover Quotations is one of an occasional series of selections from my collection of interesting and useful quotations — alternate title, *The Song That Never Ends* — and as such is an exercise in even-more-than-usual egotism. It is published by Jeffrey Copeland for the Southern Fandom Press Alliance and selected others on 18 February 2003 at Bywater Press, 3243 165th Ave, SE, Bellevue, Washington.

This chapbook exists because of conversation in SFPA about the boxed quotes that I use there for filler material. Surprise was expressed over the length of this collection, even though I've been gathering these for at least sixteen years, from a variety of sources that reflect my particular political and intellectual biases and interests — sometimes more the former than that latter.

This section includes about ten pages of quotations I've adopted from the collections of Arthur Hlavaty and Kristin Buxton. As T S Eliot pointed out, "Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal." (See page 28 of volume 1 in this set.)



The great tragedy of Science — the slaying of a beautiful hypothesis by an ugly fact.
— T H Huxley

There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance — that principle is contempt prior to investigation.
— Herbert Spencer

The ultimate result of shielding man from the effects of folly is to people the world with fools.
— Herbert Spencer

The theory of a free press is that truth will emerge from free discussion, not that it will be presented perfectly and instantly in any one account.
— Walter Lippman

The foundation of all mental illness is the unwillingness to experience legitimate suffering.
— Carl Jung

To do evil a human being must first of all believe that what he's doing is good. ... Ideology — that is what gives devildoing its long-sought justification and gives the evildoer the necessary steadfastness and determination. That is the social theory which helps to make his acts seem good instead of bad in his own and others' eyes, so that he won't hear reproaches and curses but will receive praise and honors.
— Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*

That there are men in all countries who get their living by war, and by keeping up the quarrels of nations, is as shocking as it is true; but when those who are concerned in the government of a country, make it their study to sow discord, and cultivate prejudices between nations, it becomes the more unpardonable.
— Thomas Paine, "The Rights of Man"

Beware the leader who bangs the drums of war in order to whip the citizenry into a patriotic fervor, for patriotism is indeed a double-edged sword. It both emboldens the blood, just as it narrows the mind. And when the drums of war have reached a fever pitch and the blood boils with hate and the mind has closed, the leader will have no need in seizing the rights of the citizenry. Rather, the citizenry, infused with fear and blinded by patriotism, will offer up all of their rights unto the leader and gladly so. How do I know? For this is what I have done. And I am Caesar.
— Julius Caesar

This has appeared quite a bit during Bush II's Iraqi saber-rattling, but what's the actual source and reference?

There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old system and merely lukewarm defenders in those who would gain by the new one.

— Niccolò Machiavelli

It is impossible to guard all potential targets, because anything and everything can be subject to attack. Palestinian suicide bombers have shown this by murdering at random the occupants of pool halls and hotel meeting rooms. Horrible as these incidents are, they do not risk the lives of thousands of people, as would attacks on critical parts of the national infrastructure: nuclear-power plants, hydroelectric dams, reservoirs, gas and chemical facilities. Here a classic defense is available: tall fences and armed guards. Yet this past spring the Bush Administration cut by 93 percent the funds requested by the Energy Department to bolster security for nuclear weapons and waste; it denied completely the funds requested by the Army Corps of Engineers for guarding 200 reservoirs, dams, and canals, leaving fourteen large public-works projects with no budget for protection. A recommendation by the American Association of Port Authorities that the nation spend a total of \$700 million to inspect and control ship cargo (today less than two percent of container traffic is inspected) has so far resulted in grants of just \$92 million. In all three proposals most of the money would have been spent on guards and fences.

— Charles C Mann, “Homeland Insecurity”, *The Atlantic*, Sept 2002

The trick is to remember that technology can’t save you.

— Bruce Schneier, quoted by Charles C Mann in “Homeland Insecurity”, *The Atlantic*, Sept 2002

Broad surveillance is a mark of bad security.

— Bruce Schneier, quoted by Charles C Mann in “Homeland Insecurity”, *The Atlantic*, Sept 2002

The universal law of sex is: Sex shall not be unregulated.

— Robert Anton Wilson

pointed out by Arthur D Hlavaty

Liberals are, in my estimation, just not bright people.

— Well-known intellectual congressman Dick Armey

There is an evil which ought to be guarded against in the indefinite accumulation of property from the capacity of holding it in perpetuity by corporations. The power of all corporations ought to be limited in this respect. The growing wealth acquired by them never fails to be a source of abuses.

— James Madison

I am more than ever convinced of the dangers to which the free and unbiased exercise of political opinion — the only sure foundation and safeguard of republican government — would be exposed by any further increase of the already overgrown influence of corporate authorities.

— Martin Van Buren

When the way of nature is observed,
all things serve their function;
horses drawing carts, and pulling at the plough.
But when the natural way is not observed,
horses are bred for battle and for war.

Desire and wanting cause discontent,
whilst he who knows sufficiency
more easily has what he requires.

— *Tao Te Ching* by Lao Tzu, trans by Stan Rosenthal, ch 46

When the Tao prevails in the land
The horses leisurely graze and fertilize the ground.
When the Tao is lacking in the land
War horses are bred outside the city.
Natural disasters are not as bad as not knowing what is enough.
Loss is not as bad as wanting more.

Therefore the sufficiency that comes from knowing
what is enough is an eternal sufficiency.

— *Tao Te Ching* by Lao Tzu, trans by Charles Muller, ch 46

When a nation follows the Way,
Horses bear manure through its fields;
When a nation ignores the Way,
Horses bear soldiers through its streets.

There is no greater mistake than following desire;
There is no greater disaster than forgetting contentment;
There is no greater sickness than seeking attainment;
But one who is content to satisfy his needs
Finds that contentment endures.

— *Tao Te Ching* by Lao Tzu, trans by Peter Merel, ch 46

Stephen Hawking...found it tantalizing that we could not remember the future. But remembering the future is child's play for me now. I know what will become of my helpless, trusting babies because they are grown-ups now. I know how my closest friends will end up because so many of them are retired or dead now... To Stephen Hawking and all others younger than myself I say, "Be patient. Your future will come to you and lie down at your feet like a dog who knows and loves you no matter what you are."

— Kurt Vonnegut, Jr, in the introduction to the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of *Slaughterhouse Five*. Quoted by Ted Chiang in his introduction to "Story of Your Life" in his volume of collected short stories *Stories of Your Life and Others*

I always wanted to live to the Twenty-First Century, when there would be enough to go around and the machines do all the work, so everyone can be nice to each other. I still do.

— Arthur D Hlavatyin `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 7 Oct 2002

Subject: Re: 60

Message-ID: <ohs2qu4mdjt3nkv6bebjtdl88nda3jumac@4ax.com>

Beware of bugs in the above code; I have only proved it correct, not tried it.

— Donald E Knuth, "Notes on the van Emde Boas construction of priority dequeues: An instructive use of recursion," private communication to Peter van Emde Boas, 29 March 1977

The following are closings from Hugo-award-winning (and nominated) short fiction:

So that was what got me started traveling. What brings you to Benares?

— Lawrence Watt-Evans, "Why I Left Harry's All-Night Hamburgers"

– 1988 hugo short story winner (1989 nebula nominee)

At last there was no doubt about it: It was dawn. Jehan fingered her father's dagger and felt a thrill of excitement. Strange words flickered in her mind. "The Heisenty uncertainberg principle," she murmured, already hurrying toward the mouth of the alley. She felt no fear.

— George Alec Effinger, "Schrödinger's Kitten"

– 1989 hugo novelette winner (1989 nebula novelette winner)

"You know, this whole thing is really your fault, Mom! If you'd told me about the pain part in the first place, none of this would have happened. Viola's right! You never tell us *anything*!"

— Connie Willis, "Even the Queen"

– 1993 hugo short story winner (1993 nebula short story winner)

I thought of the radiation that must have sleeted over the far side of the world and wondered if our children would colonize Europe, or Asia, or Africa.

— Larry Niven, "Inconstant Moon"

– 1972 Hugo short story winner

... somehow I must warn the rest of us, who have lived in harmony for almost five millennia.
It's not over.

— Mike Resnick, “Seven Views of Olduvai Gorge”

– 1995 hugo novella winner (1995 nebula novella winner)

He swept out the dust and leaves that had blown in the open door across the polished wood floor, and set Enhemon’s mattress and blanket in the sun to air. “I’ll stay here a while,” he thought. “It’s a good place.” After a while he thought, “I might keep some goats.”

— Ursula K LeGuin, “The Bones of the Earth”

– 2002 hugo short story nominee

They used cunning. They used guile. They used treachery. They used Raoul Mitgong, but he didn’t help much.

— Harlan Ellison, “‘Repent, Harlequin!’ Said the Ticktockman”

– 1966 hugo short story winner (1966 nebula short story winner) ... from the middle

“Uh, excuse me, sir, I, uh, don’t know how to uh, to uh, tell you this, but you were three minutes late. The schedule is a little, uh, bit off.”

He grinned sheepishly.

“That’s ridiculous!” murmured the Ticktockman behind his mask. “Check your watch.” And then he went into his office, going *mrmeee, mrmeee, mrmeee, mrmeee*.

— Harlan Ellison, “‘Repent, Harlequin!’ Said the Ticktockman”

– 1966 hugo short story winner (1966 nebula short story winner)

There is a season for all things: for birth, for growth, for death. There is unquestionably a season for Utopia, but it will have to wait.

For the season of Uhuru is upon us.

— Mike Resnick, “Kirinyaga”

– 1989 Hugo short story winner (1989 Nebula novellette nominee)

“Nope. He’s taking six of their people on the Mars expedition, though. They paid their share of the cost in fusion bombs for propulsion.”

— Larry Niven, “The Return of William Proxmire”

– 1990 Hugo short story nominee

For New Years, I have made two solemn vows.

One is that on this date I will not worry about my chest, I will not be self-conscious, even if the guy stares.

The other is, I’ll never eat another dog.

— Suzy McKee Charnas, “Boobs”

– 1990 Hugo short story winner (1990 Nebula short story nominee)

He put the gold piece back in the box and closed it. Then he lifted the box and handed it back to Laborian.

— Isaac Asimov, “Gold”

– 1992 hugo novелlette winner

She turned to me. “Have you ever thought about going to the stars?”

“No,” I said.

Kamala put her hand to my face. “It changes everything.” I could feel the prick of her long nails — claws, really. For a moment I thought she meant to scar my cheek the way she had been scarred.

“I know,” I said.

— James Patrick Kelly, “Think Like A Dinosaur”

– 1996 hugo novелlette winner (1995 nebula novелlette nominee)

She said, I want to go to the river with you. I’m seven thousand years old, and I want to learn to swim.

— Greg Egan, “Border Guards”

– 2000 hugo novelette nominee

At the door, he glanced back and saw the granddaughter tearing her linen napkin into little bits and eating the shreds, delicately washing them down with sips of wine.

— Michael Swanwick, “Ancient Engines”

– 2000 hugo short story nominee (also nebula nominee)

“We are partners, are we not? Remember that antique wisdom that whenever a door closes, another opens? For every city that burns, another beckons. To France, then, and adventure! After which, Italy, the Vatican Empire, Austro-Hungary, perhaps even Russia! Never forget that you have yet to present your credentials to the Duke of Muscovy.”

“Very well,” Surplus said. “But when we do, *I’ll* pick out the modem.”

— Michael Swanwick, “The Dog Said Bow-Wow”

– 2002 hugo short story winner

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— Michael Swanwick, “The Dog Said Bow-Wow”

– 2002 hugo short story winner (pithy bit)

There are things I can control and things I can't, things I know and things I am trying my damndest not to know. I'm just one man, and I'm not responsible for saving the world.

But I am responsible for me — and from the day I left the farm, I've been a vegetarian. It's a small step, but you've got to start somewhere.

— Mike Resnick, "Old MacDonald Had a Farm"

– 2002 hugo short story nominee

Before he knew it, he found himself echoing the announcer at those last games he had finally gotten around to seeing.

"Do you believe in miracles? *Yes!*" Dozens of staring eyes, from family and strangers, fell on him. "Never mind, you kids," he said, his ebullience undiminished. "It's before your time."

— Shane Tourtellotte, "The Return of Spring"

– 2002 hugo novelette nominee

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— Shane Tourtellotte, "The Return Of Spring"

– 2002 hugo novelette nominee

And though it's been many years that he has been in Hell, beyond the awareness of God, he loves Him still. That is the nature of true devotion.

— Ted Chiang, "Hell is the Absence of God"

– 2002 hugo novelette winner

No time like the present to begin. Titus gazed thoughtfully at the other man's little machine, lying beside his plate. "Lash ... what time is it?"

— Brenda W Clough, "May Be Some Time"

– 2002 hugo novella nominee

Lee watches as the silver-blue curvature of the Earth gracefully drifts past the command deck windows. No one says anything; the bridge team falls silent as they look upon their home world for the last time. For a moment, there is only the silence of the stars.

Peace. Liberty. Freedom.

— Allen Steele, "Stealing Alabama"

– 2002 hugo novella nominee

The date was February 25, 2102, GMT. The rest of the flight went smoothly, without further incident.

— Allen Steele, "The Days Between"

– 2002 hugo novelette nominee

“Here’s the problem, Chief,” Aksyonov murmured. “Here, *this* is the best design for the solar arrays, in terms of fuel efficiency. Mounted like so, on the service module. So far, so good. But there are other considerations. For example...”

Aksyonov’s papers slid one over the other. His chair creaked. Tight-lipped, with ruler and pen, he drew a true line. He laid his plans all through the night, until dawn.

— Andy Duncan, “The Chief Designer”

– 2002 hugo novella nominee

The tendency has always been strong to believe that whatever received a name must be an entity or being, having an independent existence of its own. And if no real entity answering to the name could be found, men did not for that reason suppose that none existed, but imagined that it was something particularly abstruse and mysterious.

— John Stuart Mill

The wish of the Nobel Committee has always been to fulfill its task and its obligation, namely, to reward work for peace — that and nothing else. And the Nobel Committee has been able to do so because it is totally independent. It is not answerable to anyone, nor do its decisions commit anyone other than itself.

In awarding this year’s Nobel Peace Prize to Carl von Ossietzky we are therefore recognizing his valuable contribution to the cause of peace — nothing more, and certainly nothing less.

— Fredrik Stang, chairman of the Nobel Committee, Presentation Speech 10 Dec 1935, awarding the Peace Prize to Carl von Ossietzky, German journalist and pacifist. Ossietzky was one of the first to report on the Weimar Republic’s rearmament efforts, and was unable to attend the ceremony: he had been arrested on 28 Feb 1933, the morning after the Reichstag fire, and was being held in Esterwegen-Papenburg concentration camp.

... and as a committee of the Norwegian parliament they had to realize they were annoying a heavily-armed fascist country 500 km away

In a situation currently marked by threats of the use of power, Carter has stood by the principles that conflicts must as far as possible be resolved through mediation and international co-operation based on international law, respect for human rights, and economic development.

— pointed conclusion to the press release of the Norwegian Nobel Committee announcing the awarding of the 2002 Peace Prize to Jimmy Carter on 11 Oct 2002, the day after Congress authorized George W Bush to use force against Iraq

The city, for the first time in its long history, is destructible. A single flight of planes no bigger than a wedge of geese can quickly end this island fantasy, burn the towers, crumble the bridges, turn the underground passages into lethal chambers, cremate the millions. The intimation of mortality is part of New York now; in the sounds of jets overhead, in the black headlines of the latest editions.

All dwellers in cities must live with the stubborn fact of annihilation; in New York the fact is somewhat more concentrated because of the concentration of the city itself, and because, of all targets, New York has a certain clear priority. In the mind of whatever perverted dreamer might loose the lightning, New York must hold a steady, irresistible charm.

— E B White, *Here is New York*, 1949

If this is terrorism, it's worked on me. I'm sitting here shaking, fighting back tears.

I was on my way to work – literally right across the street from both towers. The first sign was the cornball people looking up – I had my headphones on and so didn't hear anything – the pure blue sky was filled with an awful brown gray smoke – strangely there were what looked like pieces of papers floating everywhere in the smoke – it looked like a horrific version of one of those ticker-tape parades they have for the Yankees – I walked a bit further and the full scope of the first horror became clear – the top floors of the north side of the north tower – maybe ten floors completely collapsed in – flames roaring from all sides of the tower – that awful brown gray smoke – omigod I thought – then a guy on the street reported the incredible – that he had seen a plane plow into the tower – omigod – shades of the Empire State Building – stunning – a few more blocks to work – faces, stunned turned skyward – almost getting run over as I crossed the street – a strange silence – no sirens – too soon to even grasp what had happened – the entrance to our building – people gathered outside, looking up at the awful smoke and flames – I take the elevator to the 7th floor, I'm the first one in, I open the office ...

Suddenly another huge blast, outside the windows shit is flying everywhere – glass, huge shards of metal – omigod – I literally think the tower is falling – or will fall – i run for it –

down seven flights and out of the building – cops are screaming at people to run run run people are screaming in horror staring blanking looking up stunned

i remember i've left everything in my office i stupidly make one feeble attempt to go get it and get my head chewed off by one fucking wound up cop and i decide i have to head home my family will be scared shitless i have to call them i try to find a pay phone but every one of them all the way up broadway for over a mile every pay phone has ten people lined up finally i get home i manage to get through to my mother in seattle my i can't get hold of others i can't get out of manhattan my brother calls we are watching tv together when i learn the first tower has fallen omigod – apart from all the other horrors – my building my job i'm sorry for such selfish thoughts – but i probably don't have a job – well fuck it I'm Alive – we watch the other tower fall live on T.V. I start crying, sobbing, my brother trying to calm me down ...

yeah ok terrorism works i'm sorry to say it but it does...

Ok. I'm better now. OK. It will be OK.

— Michael R Weholt in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 11 Sept 2001

Subject: Re: WTC Disaster

Message-ID: <Xns911973C6678A0awnbreelpanix@166.84.0.240>

And by the way. The unearthly plume of dust and debris from the epicenter keeps blowing over the part of Brooklyn we live in. It has been refreshed by the subsequent collapse of 7 World Trade Center; it appears a couple of other buildings in the immediate vicinity, including the Marriott, will shortly go as well.

The plume is full of pieces of paper.

Teresa just went up the street to get beer and soda. (Right now our house contains us, Velma, Scraps, and Avram Grumer.) She returned with a page from a mass-market paperback book, charred on all sides, which floated down from the sky.

It's from a novel by Jack Higgins. The title is *A Season in Hell*.

— Patrick Nielsen Hayden in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 11 Sep 2001

Subject: Re: WTC Disaster

Message-ID: <slrn9pt7uu.9vn.pnh@pnh-1.athome.foo>

Sasha says to say he sends good thoughts to everyone, but he thinks crying because people are safe is silly. He says he's going to remember today for all his life, and that it's the worst thing he's known happen in all his born days. I think he's right, and he may even be right for all cfmine.

It is certainly the worst thing I have ever seen.

Velma and I managed to make our way across the East River, not to Brooklyn but to Queens, and we walked from a 7 station to a G station. ... On the G platform we fell into conversation with a tired-looking but friendly young black man in his stocking feet, carrying his dress loafers. He had walked all the way there from the WTC, even walking across the 59th Street bridge. He said "I haven't seen it yet on TV, but I just know they won't show what I saw. People jumping. People clutching each other and jumping." Things like that could make you want to take your eyes out with a spoon.

— Jo Walton's comments and Patrick Nielsen Hayden's response in
`rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 11 Sep 2001

Subject: Re: WTC Disaster

Message-ID: <1000232842snz@bluejo.demon.co.uk> (Jo)

Message-ID: <slrn9pt798.9vn.pnh@pnh-1.athome.foo> (Patrick)

Mid-afternoon yesterday I was writing a short piece for the Nebula anthology on why SF is still relevant in these SFnal times. I'd come up with an argument that science fiction never does become science fact. Around 3.30 my mother rang and told me what had happened. I went downstairs and turned on the television. I said to my daughter "This is Pearl Harbor." Then I started sobbing and she did too.

This is the most shocking thing I've ever seen. Not the worst thing, but the most shocking. I hope the US response is more shocking.

Capitalism and barbarism can no longer live in the same world. Barbarism isn't cruelty, it isn't fascism or some other kind of oppression. It's a socio-political system which exists in Saudi Arabia as much as in Afghanistan. And now it's doomed.

What began at Pearl Harbor ended at Nagasaki. I don't mean that nuclear weapons will necessarily be used, but I do know that there is only one way this can end: with the kind of defeat that makes a people feel that their preachers have lied to them, their leaders have deserted them, that the world is against them and that God is dead.

— Ken MacLeod in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 12 Sep 2001

Subject: Re: Living in Infamy

Message-Id: <YU9+MFAQGBo7EwHh@libertaria.demon.co.uk>

This is the saddest part... as I turn and start up 1st toward the Dunkin' Donuts, I start seeing Those Little Posters. They are taped to the glass reader boards of the phone (dubiously named) booths. They are attached to Post Office drop-boxes. They are taped to store windows. You've seen them: a picture of the smiling Family Member, often holding one or two of the kids, sometimes the description and contact information are printed neatly in bold, magic-marker type print. Sometimes the information is desperately scrawled. These are obviously people From The Hood. We are a mile or so from Ground Zero. It seems unlikely the hope in posting these in the Hood is that a Dazed Survivor would be wandering around here and thereby be recognized from his/her poster.

I must tell you that these posters are very difficult to look at. The vast majority of those who put them up are obviously in desperate straits at the moment, and things, for most of them, will only get worse for their broken hearts over the next few days or weeks. I hope each of them gets the best of luck, but I think most of them won't.

— Michael R Weholt in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 13 Sept 2001

Subject: Re: The Streets of Manhattan.

Message-ID: <Xns911B6B11F5CF1awnbreelpnix@166.84.0.240>

I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People For the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger in their face and say "you helped this happen."

— Jerry Falwell to Pat Robertson, 13 Sept 2001

I want to express my personal gratitude to those people around the planet who have taken the time today, September 14, 2001, to show their sympathy for the citizens of New York City, Washington DC, and others of my fellow USAns.

Naturally, one is most especially appreciative of the support of one's immediate neighbors and so I want to nod particularly in the direction of our friends to the north, the Canadians.

As I watched that Mountie (I believe he was a Mountie) singing my national anthem there in Ottawa, I had occasion to think back a little bit in time. Back, actually, to the circumstances surrounding the composition of that very anthem.

I don't know what name the British and the Canadians have for it, but in this country we call it the War of 1812. In 1814, two years into that war, elements of the British army marched into Washington, chased out branches of our federal government, and then set fire to most or all of our government buildings . . . the Capitol, the building we now call the White House, and so forth. Oh, it was a nasty business.

Well, nasty being a relative term, of course, inasmuch as the torching of Washington, DC by the British Army was not a thing they just thought up on the spot, but was rather a bit of planned retribution — revenge for the burning of York, the burg now called Toronto, which the American army had earlier perpetrated on the Canadians. Only, of course, the Americans had not confined themselves to simply burning government buildings, but had burned and looted all of York, civilian homes and businesses included.

A few days later, the British were moving on Baltimore, guarded by Fort McHenry, above which a giant American flag flew. On the night of September 13–14, 1814, British forces bombarded the fort, which bombardment being observed by one Francis Scott Key, Esq, who, by the dawn's early light of September 14, 1814, saw that his nation's flag was still there. . . that the fort and therefore Baltimore itself had survived the British bombardment.

Whereupon Mssr Key was moved to compose a poem, 187 years ago today.

SF Fantastic Visions of the Future: 187 years from now, an American tenor singing the national anthem of some nation we are, at this moment, getting ready to flatten — singing in honor of the deep and abiding friendship between our two peoples.

— Michael R Weholt in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 15 Sept 2001

Subject: The Sweepings-Up of History.

Message-ID: <Xns911CD2951A725awnbreelpnix@166.84.0.240>

Yesterday they moved the no-go line south from 14th Street to Canal Street. So after staying late at work (Tor closed early, but we had stuff to finish), Teresa and I decided to walk as far south as we could, and wound up going all the way to Canal Street, from which we could actually see the destruction and the immense efforts under way.

And everywhere we went there were little clusters of New Yorkers holding candles and flags in little vigil groups. All looking toward where the towers used to be. Some softly singing, some softly crying, some just bearing witness. One large group was gathered around the entrance to the fire station on Sixth Avenue just south of Houston, and every time a fire vehicle went in or out, the crowd let out a round of cheers and applause.

Just up Sixth there was another group. Downtown types. Village and East Village youngsters, hip New Yorkers with pierced this and that. They were holding little flags and singing “America the Beautiful.”

We had no trouble determining how genuine they were.

— Patrick Nielsen Hayden in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 15 Sep 2001

Subject: Re: Just figured it out

Message-ID: <slrn9q6tuo.qo4.pnh@panix3.panix.com>

I had a brief moment cf paranoia last night, realizing that were I running a conspiracy trying to drum up support for a big war, I'd have spent the last few years saturating the culture with books and movies about how wonderful the people who fought in WW2 were.

Ecuw.

I'm going to just tiptoe away from that and pretend you never pointed it out. I've got my fingers in my ears and I'm going la la la la la.

— Avedon Carol's observation and Patrick Nielsen Hayden's response in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 18 Sep 2001

Subject: Re: Idiot!

Message-ID: <aa6fqtogc8irkta79qavcqnl40bm530k3b@4ax.com> (Avedon)

Message-ID: <slrn9qfh0b.irj.pnh@panix3.panix.com> (Patrick)

I've been in the office twice since the Event. It's difficult because you have to arrange a police escort past the National Guard detachment that still mans the barricade across our street. The first time we went in, the two cops escorting us discovered they could get access to the roof of the building next door by going out onto our fire exit. We had to wait around for a half an hour or so while the two of them walked the roof-top, kicking at the soot and crap and building debris.

“So what are you guys looking for, anyway?”

“Body parts.”

Sorry I asked.

— Michael R Weholt in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 2 Oct 2001

Subject: Re: More of my high-rise smoke/fire obsession.

Message-ID: <Xns912E139C6161awnbreelpnix@166.84.0.240>

But on the bright side, it occurred to me today that those bastards are dead. Yes, they took almost 6,000 good and innocent people, 6,000 people if you can believe such a thing could happen, every one of those 6,000 with more value in their pulverized little fingers than those bastards could muster in an entire lifetime on this Earth. Those bastards lived short and twisted lives and ended them in the ugliest manner possible. Or, hell, I don't know, maybe they lived lives of unparalleled richness. I doubt it, but anyway I don't care. They are dead.

We're alive. We can walk out on the streets this chilly fall evening and stop at the deli for a cup of joe. We can get Chinese take-out. We can stop by and visit with an old friend. Our sisters can phone for help with their computers. Our brothers can call and joke about the flight they had to take this morning. Our cats can bug the crap out of us because we're late already with their dinner. We can put on our coats and go up onto the roofs of our buildings and look up into the night sky and spot Vega.

Yeah, that's pretty much what I thought about today. We're alive and they're dead. Stupid asshole motherfuckers.

— Michael R Weholt in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 2 Oct 2001

Subject: Re: More of my high-rise smoke/fire obsession.

Message-ID: <Xns912E139C6161awnbreelpnix@166.84.0.240>

..... I guess you can understand how it is that sometimes an entire nation will abandon democracy in favor of oligarchy or dictatorship.

Because it's the same process. We get disgusted by all the petty little things and compromises and horse-trading and back-stabbing, and pretty soon we're blaming those things on the democratic process itself, and imagining that a more authoritarian setup would put a stop to it, would make us all better people, would make it less embarrassing to be what we are.

Democracy is no better than we are; and worse, unlike more showy systems of human organization, it rarely manages to *look* like it's better than we are. So watching democracy at work, it's hard to avoid noticing our own incorrigible imperfections. The longing for men on white horses is, in a real sense, a desire to be convincingly lied to about what kind of people we are.

You know this; I don't mean to be lecturing you. I'm thinking out loud. I'm increasingly fascinated by what I see as a multi-front attack on democracy in modern American culture. It's increasingly fashionable, assumed even, that smart modern Americans disdain democratic practice, not just in politics and government but also in the organization of voluntary activities. The image of (for instance) a model railroaders' club having a business meeting to elect officers and decide future plans has gone from an being an icon of vigorous grass-roots democracy to being the subject of contempt and comedy. When, in fandom, we talk about people who are into Robert's Rules of Order, we associate the whole business with authoritarianism, with would-be Secret Masterhood. And so forth.

I think a great deal of America is like you: we've been "soured" by relatively trivial annoyances, so much so that we're almost willing to give up some major birthrights. Not, of course, that there might be any large and powerful forces in society in whose interest this all might be, perish the thought.

— Patrick Nielsen Hayden in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 18 Aug 1999

Subject: Re: This Week's Shooting

Message-ID: <8E264F77Cizzard@news.panix.com>

In situations like these you probably have an opening line that does all right. Same here.
“I write for a magazine.”

It works all the time. Feel free to use it yourself. Really, there’s no crime in impersonating a journalist to get women — Geraldo [Rivera]’s been doing it for 20 years.

— Greg Gutfeld, “The Wild Kingdom”, *Men’s Health* magazine,
Aug 1999

THIS NEXT SET are selections from a list forwarded by Liz from her quiltart mailing list, 18 April 2000:

From: patsy/cliff monk [pcmonk@gte.net]
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2000 9:04 PM
To: quiltart@quilt.net
Subject: quotes to make you think ... (maybe)

We forfeit three-fourths of ourselves in order to be like other people.
— Arthur Schopenhauer

The most popular labor-saving device is still money.
— Phyllis George

Were it not better to forget / Than but remember and regret?
— Letitia Elizabeth Landon

Regret for the things we did can be tempered by time; it is regret for the things we did not do that is inconsolable.
— Sydney J Harris

Regret is an appalling waste of energy; you can’t build on it; it is good only for wallowing.
— Katherine Mansfield

Nothing is interesting if you’re not interested.
— Helen MacInness

It takes a lot of courage to show your dreams to someone else.
— Erma Bombeck

If you do not find peace in yourself, you will never find it anywhere else.
— Paula A Bendry

People are either born hosts or born guests.
— Max Beerbohm

Big shots are only little shots who keep shooting.
— Christopher Morley

No one can build her security on the nobleness of another person.
— Willa Cather

Real happiness is cheap enough, yet how dearly we pay for its counterfeit.
— Hosea Ballou

If only we'd stop trying to be happy, we'd have a pretty good time.
— Edith Wharton

Look at a stone cutter hammering away at his rock, perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred-and-first blow, it will split in two, and I know it was not the last blow that did it, but all that had gone before.
— Jacob A Riis

Never let yesterday use up today.
— Richard H Nelson

If you see a snake, kill it. Don't appoint a committee on snakes.
— H Ross Perot

Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God.
— Leo Buscaglia

Winning isn't everything. Wanting to win is.
— Catfish Hunter

END quilt art set

It is absurd to divide people into good and bad. People are either charming or tedious.
— Oscar Wilde

(contrast with Beerbohm on hosts and guests above)

The price of reliability is the pursuit of the utmost simplicity. It is a price which the very rich find the most hard to pay.
— Sir Antony Hoare, 1980

quoted by Edsger W Dijkstra in EWD memo 1304, 19 Nov 2000; later published in *Communications of the ACM*

If you can't write your idea on the back of my calling card, you don't have a clear idea.
— David Belasco (1853–1931), American playwright and producer

If you've got a message, use Western Union.

— Sam Goldwyn

No matter how imperfect things are, if you've got a free press everything is correctable, and without it everything is conceivable.

— Tom Stoppard, *Night and Day*, 1978

The English mob preferred their calendar to disagree with the Sun rather than agree with the Pope.

— Voltaire

pointed out at www.calendarists.com in errata to *Calendrical Calculations*

“And the wheel,” said the Captain, “what about this wheel thingy? It sounds a terribly interesting project.”

“Ah,” said the marketing girl, “well, we’re having a little difficulty there.”

“Difficulty?” exclaimed Ford. “Difficulty? What do you mean difficulty? It’s the single simplest machine in the entire Universe!”

The marketing girl soured him with a look.

“All right, Mr Wiseguy,” she said, “you’re so clever, you tell us what color it should be.”

— Douglas Adams, *The Restaurant at the End of the Universe*

Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired.

— Robert Frost

I always thought one of the best elements about being human was that we were smart enough to use what’s at our disposal.

— Frank DeFord, “Use Instant Replay More to Help Umpires”,
commentary on NPR’s *Morning Edition*, 16 Oct 2002

compare to Thomas Carlyle and Mr Natural

In many of the more relaxed civilizations on the Outer Eastern Rim of the Galaxy, the *Hitchhiker’s Guide* has already supplanted the great *Encyclopedia Galactica* as the standard repository for all knowledge and wisdom, for though it has omissions and contains much that is apocryphal, or at least wildly inaccurate, it scores over the older, more pedestrian work in two important respects.

First, it is slightly cheaper; and second, it has the words DON’T PANIC inscribed in large friendly letters on its cover.

— Douglas Adams, *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*

“What is it?” asked Arthur.

“*The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*. It’s a sort of electronic book. It tells you everything you need to know about anything. That’s its job.”

Arthur turned it over nervously in his hands.

“I like the cover,” he said. “‘Don’t Panic.’ It’s the first helpful or intelligible thing anybody’s said to me all day.”

— Douglas Adams, *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*

The tendency of the best typography has been and still should be in the path of simplicity, legibility, and orderly arrangement.

— Theodore Low de Vinne

I’m deeply concerned about a leader who has ignored all — who ignored the United Nations for all these years, has refused to conform to resolution after resolution after resolution; who has weapons of mass destruction.

— George W Bush, 10 Sep 2002, responding to press questions about Iraq, and inadvertently pointing at himself

The work that is truly productive is the domain of a steadily smaller and more elite fraction of humanity.

— Vernor Vinge, “The Singularity”

It is more probable than not that, within the twentieth century, an ultraintelligent machine will be built and that it will be the last invention that man need make.

— I J Good, “Speculations Concerning the First Ultraintelligent Machine”, *Advances in Computers*, 1965

quoted by Vinge in “The Singularity”

The best way to fix a bad martini is to have several more bad martinis.

The same cannot be said for dating.

— (unknown)

Coming together is the beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

— Henry Ford

compare David Starr Jordan below

Wisdom is knowing what to do next; skill is knowing how to do it; and virtue is doing it.

— David Starr Jordan

compare Henry Ford above

Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprise.

— Demosthenes

Religion is goodness with its sleeves rolled up.

— Magnus Ratter

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

— Winston Churchill

We're fighting a twenty-first century war using twentieth century methods. The nation state is almost irrelevant to this conflict. Our enemy is not a tyrant bound by geography, a group of people who pledge allegiance to a particular flag. Nor is our enemy some sort of James Bond organization of supervillains, not at this point. What we seem to be dealing with now are small groups of angry people scattered all over the globe, people consumed by that unfortunate basic human desire to inflict destruction and generally *fuck shit up*. In other words, we're dealing with criminals. Contemptible, pathetic, sick in the head *criminals*.

— Tom Tomorrow, on the prospects of war with Iraq even though we haven't defeated al Qaeda, www.thismodernworld.com, Fri 18 Oct 2002

Though it's cold and lonely in the deep, dark night / I can see paradise by the dashboard light. / Ain't no doubt about it, we were doubly blessed, / 'cause we were barely seventeen and were were barely dressed.

— Jim Steinman, Meatloaf, "Paradise by the Dashboard Light", *Bat Out of Hell*, 1977

To the "C" students, I say, you too can be president of the United States.

— George W Bush, discounting the effect of his father's friends and his brother's assistance on his career path, Yale commencement address, 20 May 2001

There is nothing — absolutely nothing — half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.

— Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*

Dear Editor —

I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Great Cthulhu. Papa says, “If you see it on alt.horror.cthulhu, it’s so,” Please tell me the truth, is there a Great Cthulhu who will rise from the watery depth of the Pacific to clear the Earth of all living things?

— Virginia Marsh

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the fever of enlightenment given to them by a so-called “enlightened” age. They do not believe in anything unless it carries the weight of scientific authority. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. Reality is that which can be cataloged and measured, to be spooned out in rational doses to the common people. All minds, Virginia, whether they be adult’s or children’s, are little. In this vast chaos we laughingly call the universe, man is a mere insect, a bug, whose intellect has as much chance of grasping the whole truth, as an ant has of understanding non-Euclidian geometry.

Yes, Virgina, there is a Great Cthulhu. He exists as certainly as the cold unfeelingness of the cosmos exists, and you know that this meaninglessness abounds and gives to your life its highest absurdity. Alas! how comfortable would be the world if there were no Cthulhu! It would be as comforting as if a Santa Claus truly did care and reward children for doing good. There would be childlike faith then, a world of sweet believable poetry and romance to make existence idyllic and appealing. The external light with which childhood fills the world would never end.

Not believe in the Great Cthulhu! You might as well not believe in Hastur or the Necronomicon. You might get your papa’s science books and Skeptical Inquirers to see if Cthulhu is mentioned in any historical contexts or if R’lyeh truly does rest under the Pacific Ocean, but even if you did not find either mentioned in your “holy” books, what would that prove? Nobody sees or knows of Cthulhu, but that is no sign that there is no Great Cthulhu. The most real things in the world are those that we can not know through the senses. Can the headache of your friend be felt by you? No, but his pain affects your life regardless. Do you feel the angst of living a life you never wanted through any of your five senses? No, yet the despair remains. Yet if such realities are known but are never seen, then why should other’s ignorance of the unseen lead us to share in their blindness. By what right have they earned your obedience? Nobody can conceive of the inconceivable, including your leaders of thought.

You tear apart the rattle of a baby to see what lies inside to make such noise, but the tiny balls there can not explain or illustrate the fear of a hostile world, that makes that baby clutch and shake that rattle so. Only reaching for insanity can push aside the curtain of our hopes and view with stark madness the emptiness that lies beyond. Is that reality? Is that the truth? To give an answer is to replace the curtain with but one more. And it is this, that makes the Great Cthulhu as true and as real as any veil we place on the chaos beyond. If one must create a meaning, why not the Great Cthulhu. At least the choice is free.

Thank Azathoth! The Great Cthulhu lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to await the time when the stars are right again. For with those which eternal lie, with strange eons even death may die.

(From Editorial Page, Arkham Advertiser, 1928)

— Steven Harris, in alt.horror.cthulhu, April 1996, reprinted
in rec.humor.funny 14 Jan 1997

Subject: Yes, Virginia, there is a Cthulhu

Message-ID: <Sa94.74c1@clarinet.com>

compare and contrast Virginia O’Hanlon to Frank P Church

Pourquoi nous haïr, nous sommes solidaires, emportés par la même planète, équipage d'un même navire. Et s'il est bon que des civilisations s'opposent pour favoriser des synthèses nouvelles, il est monstrueux qu'elles s'entredévorent.

(Why hate each other, we are interdependent, taken by the same planet, crew of the same ship. And if it is good for civilizations to oppose each other in order to facilitate new syntheses, it is monstrous that they fight one another.)

— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *Terre des Hommes*, 1939

Quantum mechanics is God's way of saying "Trust me."

— (unknown)

compare Albert Einstein and Stephen Hawking on dice

I am not going to talk about religious beliefs but about matters so obvious that it has gone out of style to mention them. I believe in my neighbors. I know their faults, and I know that their virtues far outweigh their faults.

Take Father Michael down our road a piece. I'm not of his creed, but I know that *goodness* and charity and loving kindness shine in his daily actions. I believe in Father Mike. If I'm in trouble, I'll go to him.

My next-door neighbor is a veterinary doctor. Doc will get out of bed after a hard day to help a stray cat. No fee — no prospect of a fee — I believe in Doc.

I believe in my townspeople. You can knock on any door in our town saying, "I'm hungry," and you will be fed. Our town is no exception. I've found the same ready charity everywhere. But for the one who says, "To heck with you I got mine," there are a hundred, a thousand who will say, "Sure, pal, sit down."

I know that despite all warnings against hitchhikers I can step to the highway, thumb for a ride and in a few minutes a car or a truck will stop and someone will say, "Climb in Mac — how far you going?"

I believe in my fellow citizens. Our headlines are splashed with crime yet for every criminal there are 10,000 honest, decent, kindly men. If it were not so, no child would live to grow up. Business could not go on from day to day. Decency is not news. It is buried in the obituaries, but it is a force stronger than crime. I believe in the patient gallantry of nurses and the tedious sacrifices of teachers. I believe in the unseen and unending fight against desperate odds that goes on quietly in almost every home in the land.

I believe in the honest craft of workmen. Take a look around you. There never were enough bosses to check up on all that work. From Independence Hall to the Grand Coulee Dam, these things were built level and square by craftsmen who were honest in their bones.

I believe that almost all politicians are honest. . . there are hundreds of politicians, low paid or not paid at all, doing their level best without thanks or glory to make our system work. If this were not true we would never have gotten past the 13 colonies.

I believe in Rodger Young. You and I are free today because of endless unnamed heroes from Valley Forge to the Yalu River. I believe in — I am proud to belong to — the United States. Despite shortcomings from lynchings to bad faith in high places, our nation has had the most decent and kindly internal practices and foreign policies to be found anywhere in history.

And finally, I believe in my whole race. Yellow, white, black, red, brown. In the honesty, courage, intelligence, durability and goodness of the overwhelming majority of my brothers and sisters everywhere on this planet. I am proud to be a human being. I believe that we have come this far by the skin of our teeth. That we always make it just by the skin of our teeth, but that we will always make it. Survive. Endure. I believe that this hairless embryo with the aching, oversize brain case and the opposable thumb, this animal barely up from the apes will *endure*. Will *endure* longer than his home planet — will spread out to the stars and beyond, carrying with him his honesty and his insatiable curiosity, his unlimited courage and his noble essential decency.

This I believe with all my heart.

— Robert A Heinlein, "This I Believe", recorded for Edward R Murrow's radio show of the same name in 1952. Reprinted in *Requiem: New collected works by Robert A Heinlein and tributes to the grand master*, Tor, 1992, edited by Yoji Kondo

He lived an interesting and involving life. He married one of the more admirable human beings. They made each other rich. Josef Stalin may have influenced more people directly, but in the long run Robert Heinlein may have had a greater effect on the future. He was admired and envied for more than half a century, by the brightest human beings on Earth.

His death was not sudden or unexpected. He was not cut off in his prime.

So why were most of the Science Fiction Writers of America acting like we'd been shot?

Well, it just seemed — just this once — Death would make an exception. This was *Heinlein*.

— Larry Niven, afterword to “The Return of William Proxmire” for
*Requiem: New collected works by Robert A Heinlein and tributes
to the grand master*

And one day [Mom] handed me a magic talisman. A small card with my name on it. “Take this down to the library next to the candy store,” she said, “and tell them to give you a book.” I walked to the library (this was back when it was safe for six-year-olds to walk the streets unsupervised on Long Island) and there was taken in hand by a librarian. I do not remember her face or name, and have since been unsuccessful in trying to trace her, but I owe her a large debt of gratitude.

— Spider Robinson, “Robert” in *Requiem: New collected works by
Robert A Heinlein and tributes to the grand master*

But I vividly recall the awarding of the Grand Master Nebula itself.

When it was announced, the entire room leaped to their feet as one and applauded for six solid minutes, the longest standing ovation I have ever witnessed. By the time they let him speak, Robert's cheeks were wet. “My brother, Major General Lawrence Heinlein,” he said, his voice full with emotion, “once told me that there are only two promotions in life that mean a damn: from buck private to corporal, and from colonel to general officer. I made corporal decades ago... but now at long last I know what he meant about the other. Thank you.” And we applauded him for another three minutes...

— Spider Robinson, “Robert” in *Requiem: New collected works by
Robert A Heinlein and tributes to the grand master*

compare Neil Gaiman accepting his Hugo for *American Gods*

We will not walk in fear, one of another, we will not be driven by fear into an age of unreason, if we dig deep in our history and our doctrine, and remember we are not descended from fearful men. Not from men who feared to write, to speak, to associate, and to defend causes that were for the moment unpopular.

The actions of the junior Senator for Wisconsin have caused alarm and dismay amongst our allies abroad, and given considerable comfort to our enemies. And whose fault is that? Not really his. He didn't create this situation of fear, he merely exploited it, and rather successfully. Cassius was right: the fault dear Brutus is not in our stars, but in ourselves.

— Edward R Murrow on Joseph McCarthy

[W]e must remember that America cannot lead in the world unless here at home we weave the threads of our coat of many colors into the fabric of one America. As we become ever more diverse, we must work harder to unite around our common values and our common humanity. We must work harder to overcome our differences in our hearts and in our laws. We must treat all our people with fairness and dignity, regardless of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation and regardless of when they arrived in our country, always moving toward the more perfect union of our Founders' dreams.

— Bill Clinton, farewell address, 18 Jan 2001

I'll leave the presidency more idealistic, more full of hope, than the day I arrived and more confident than ever that America's best days lie ahead.

My days in this office are nearly through. But my days of service, I hope, are not. In the years ahead I will never hold a position higher or a covenant more sacred than that of president of the United States. But there is no title I will wear more proudly than that of citizen.

— Bill Clinton, farewell address, 18 Jan 2001

longer version of a passage quoted on an earlier page

Some have asked whether I have any regrets. And I do have one regret — that I didn't get the chance to stay and fight for the American people over the next four years, especially for those who need burdens lifted and barriers removed, especially for those who feel their voices have not been heard. I heard you and I will not forget.

I've seen America in this campaign and I like what I see. It's worth fighting for and that's a fight I'll never stop.

As for the battle that ends tonight, I do believe, as my father once said, that no matter how hard the loss, defeat may serve as well as victory to shake the soul and let the glory out.

— Al Gore, 2000 Presidential concession speech, 13 Dec 2000

When you who are in your forties or younger look back with curiosity on that dark time, as I think occasionally you should, it will do no good to search for villains or heroes or saints or devils because there were none; there were only victims.

— Dalton Trumbo on the McCarthy witchhunts

quoted by Vaughn as an epigram in *Only Victims*

We give most attention to the protection of individual speech and thought afforded by the First Amendment of the Constitution. But the operation of the amendment protects the whole of society as well. It prohibits any small group from deciding, on behalf of the whole, what ideas should be allowed free expression and consideration as we seek solutions to pressing national problems.

In a society which bases its decisions on democratic process, full expression is not only desirable, it is essential. The very root of our political system is the premise that an informed people can govern themselves better than even a benevolent elite claiming the right to know and think for them.

Thus Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Cardozo wrote in 1937 that freedom of speech is “the matrix, the indispensable condition, of nearly every other form of freedom.” Further, according to Justice William O Douglas in 1949, one function of free speech “... is to invite dispute. It may indeed best serve its high purpose when it induces a condition of unrest, creates dissatisfaction with conditions as they are, or even stirs people to anger.”

It can be said fairly that the creation and operation of an agency to chill the expression of unpopular views is itself dangerously un-American. Free speech and thought are eminently American, not because all words and ideas are correct or even deserving of much attention, but because a democratic system cannot operate otherwise. HUAC’s [The House Un-American Activity Committee’s] behavior was an exercise in stifling the very essence of democracy.

The answer is not to find scapegoats for national problems but to undertake a serious search for their solution, drawing on all of the intellectual power and energy we can find. The answer is not restrictions on the right for its damage to others, but leadership which encourages the expression of all points of view.

In sum, the priority aim of government should be to invite more freedom of speech, not less, and to instill widely the understanding that those who espouse the unusual are not only exercising legitimate rights but performing a patriotic obligation to share the truth as they see it.

— George McGovern, Foreward to *Only Victims* by Robert Vaughn, 1972

While many of our citizens prosper, others doubt the promise, even the justice, of our own country. The ambitions of some Americans are limited by failing schools and hidden prejudice and the circumstances of their birth. And sometimes our differences run so deep, it seems we share a continent, but not a country.

We do not accept this, and we will not allow it. Our unity, our union, is the serious work of leaders and citizens in every generation. And this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity.

— George W Bush, inaugural address, 20 Jan 2001

Some seem to believe that our politics can afford to be petty because, in a time of peace, the stakes of our debates appear small.

But the stakes for America are never small. If our country does not lead the cause of freedom, it will not be led. If we do not turn the hearts of children toward knowledge and character, we will lose their gifts and undermine their idealism. If we permit our economy to drift and decline, the vulnerable will suffer most.

We must live up to the calling we share. Civility is not a tactic or a sentiment. It is the determined choice of trust over cynicism, of community over chaos. And this commitment, if we keep it, is a way to shared accomplishment.

— George W Bush, inaugural address, 20 Jan 2001

The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake: America remains engaged in the world by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom. We will defend our allies and our interests. We will show purpose without arrogance. We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength. And to all nations, we will speak for the values that gave our nation birth.

— George W Bush, inaugural address, 20 Jan 2001

Either democracy must be renewed, with politics brought back to life, or wealth is likely to cement a new and less democratic regime — plutocracy by some other name.

— Kevin Phillips, *Wealth and Democracy*

quoted by Paul Krugman below

Kevin Phillips concludes his book *Wealth and Democracy* with a grim warning: “Either democracy must be renewed, with politics brought back to life, or wealth is likely to cement a new and less democratic regime — plutocracy by some other name.” It’s a pretty extreme line, but we live in extreme times. Even if the forms of democracy remain, they may become meaningless. It’s all too easy to see how we may become a country in which the big rewards are reserved for people with the right connections; in which ordinary people see little hope of advancement; in which political involvement seems pointless, because in the end the interests of the elite always get served.

— Paul Krugman, “For Richer”, *The New York Times Magazine*, 20 Oct 2002

Democracy is a device that ensures we shall be governed no better than we deserve.

— George Bernard Shaw

... I refuse to spoil things for you; *From Russia with Love* must be seen to be disbelieved, and I advise you to go at once, choosing your seat in the theater with some care. SPECTRE is everywhere.

Besides Mr Connery, whose combination of savoir-faire and tireless lust has its own peculiar wholesomeness, the cast includes Daniela Bianchi, Lotte Lenya, Pedro Armendariz, and Robert Shaw. The direction, which is by Terence Young, is often incoherent, and I wouldn't want it otherwise.

— Brendan Gill, review of *From Russia with Love*, in *The New Yorker*, 18 Apr 1964

Real futurism means staring directly into your own grave and accepting the slow but thorough obliteration of everyone and everything you know and love.

— Bruce Sterling, *Wired*, Jan 1996

pointed out by Paul F Deitz in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`

Subject: Re: Charles Sheffield R.I.P.

Message-id: <ucycnVeX0rqH7FigXTWc3g@dls.net>

compare Vonnegut comments about Hawking remembering the future

... terrorism is open-source war...

— Srinivas Kumar at `www.unamerican.com`, 20 Sep 2001

[T]he difference between the Selma marchers and Unibomber may be a difference only of degree, but it is a degree difference roughly equal to the temperature inside my oven while I'm baking bread, and the temperature at the heart of the sun. Which is to say, it is a difference in degree so great as to make the comparison meaningless in the real world.

Now... I'm not saying it's the same with every march. Nor am I saying it isn't irritating as all hell to be caught in the traffic resulting from a march, legal or illegal. And maybe it *is* just a difference in degree.

But if, in the real world, the only really important consideration is this question of degree, then we'd all still be subjects in this country rather than citizens.

— Michael R Weholt in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 1 Nov 2002

Subject: Re: Ending the War: Squeeze for Peace

Message-ID: <Xns92B93A9F9D90Aawnbreelpnix@166.84.1.69>

The judge used one of Pitt's Dungeon Dolls that was purchased by Mattel's counsel to make her determination. The Dungeon Doll's dress, which Pitt described as "'Lederhosen-style' Bavarian bondage dress and a helmet in rubber with a PVC-mask and a waspie," convinced Swain that the product was sufficiently different in design from a typical Barbie-related toy.

"Defendant's 'touch-ups' of the dolls plus the setting she creates for them transform, to put it mildly, the original doll to an extent beyond merely supplanting it," Swain wrote. "A different analysis would apply if Defendant had, for example, dressed Barbie dolls in a different style of cheerleader outfit than those marketed by Mattel. To the Court's knowledge, there is no Mattel line of 'S&M' Barbie."

— John Woods in *New York Law Journal*, 7 Nov 2002, reporting on Judge Laura Taylor Swain denying summary judgement in Mattel's copyright infringement lawsuit against Susanne Pitt, who sold "dungeon dolls" made partly from Mattel's SuperStar Barbie

<http://www.law.com/jsp/article.jsp?id=1036542840163>

Composer Frank Zappa left for his final tour just before 6pm Saturday.

— Complete text of press release by Zappa's widow and children on his death, 4 Dec 1993

What is a cynic? A man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing.

— Oscar Wilde

see H L Mencken on flowers and coffins

But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

— *The Bible's* directive to use only binary numbers: Matthew, chapter 5, verse 37

This next lump are extracted from Eric S Raymond's collection of (mostly) gun-nut and libertarian quotes. See <http://www.tuxedo.org/~esr/guns/quotes.html>

The saddest life is that of a political aspirant under democracy. His failure is ignominious and his success is disgraceful.

— H L Mencken

We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.

— T S Eliot

He who joyfully marches to music in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would fully suffice.

— Albert Einstein

Love your country, but never trust its government.

— Robert A Heinlein

Experience should teach us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purposes are beneficent. . . The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well meaning but without understanding.

— Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis

The state calls its own violence “law”, but that of the individual “crime”.

— Max Stirner

Today, we need a nation of Minutemen, citizens who are not only prepared to take arms, but citizens who regard the preservation of freedom as the basic purpose of their daily life and who are willing to consciously work and sacrifice for that freedom.

— John F Kennedy

Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.

— John F Kennedy

The difference between death and taxes is death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets.

— Will Rogers

Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good.

— Mohandas Gandhi

The United States is in no way founded upon the Christian religion

— George Washington and John Adams, in a diplomatic message to Malta

This would be the best of all possible worlds, if there were no religion in it.

— John Adams, in a letter to Thomas Jefferson

The day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus by the Supreme Being as his father, in the womb of a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter.

— Thomas Jefferson, 1823

I do not find in orthodox Christianity one redeeming feature.

— Thomas Jefferson

The Bill of Rights is a literal and absolute document. The First Amendment doesn't say you have a right to speak out unless the government has a "compelling interest" in censoring the Internet. The Second Amendment doesn't say you have the right to keep and bear arms until some madman plants a bomb. The Fourth Amendment doesn't say you have the right to be secure from search and seizure unless some FBI agent thinks you fit the profile of a terrorist. The government has no right to interfere with any of these freedoms under any circumstances.

— Harry Browne, Libertarian presidential candidate 1996

The direct use of physical force is so poor a solution to the problem of limited resources that it is commonly employed only by small children and great nations.

— David Friedman

Still, if you will not fight for the right when you can easily win without bloodshed, if you will not fight when your victory will be sure and not so costly, you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance for survival. There may be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no chance of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves.

— Winston Churchill

The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary.

— H L Mencken

The whole of the Bill [of Rights] is a declaration of the right of the people at large or considered as individuals... It establishes some rights of the individual as unalienable and which consequently, no majority has a right to deprive them of.

— Albert Gallatin, 7 Oct 1789

False is the idea of utility that sacrifices a thousand real advantages for one imaginary or trifling inconvenience; that would take fire from men because it burns, and water because one may drown in it; that has no remedy for evils except destruction. The laws that forbid the carrying of arms are laws of such a nature. They disarm only those who are neither inclined nor determined to commit crimes.

— Cesare Beccaria, as quoted in Thomas Jefferson's Commonplace book

end extracts from Eric Raymond's list

A major function of the mass media is to deflect envy away from those with power to those with ability. The way most people use the word elitist shows how well it's working.

— Arthur D Hlavaty, *Derogatory Reference* 100, Nov 2002

... the life of the arts, far from being an interruption, a distraction in the life of a nation, is very close to the center of a nation's purpose—and it is the test of the quality of a nation's civilization.
— John F Kennedy, 1962

We must never forget that art is not a form of propaganda; it is a form of truth.
— John F Kennedy, speech at Amherst college, 26 Oct 1963

... victory has 100 fathers and defeat is an orphan...
— John F Kennedy, Press Conference after the Bay of Pigs invasion, 21 Apr 1961

Dante once said that the hottest places in hell are reserved for those who in a period of moral crisis maintain their neutrality.
— John F Kennedy, speech in Bonn, 24 Jun 1963

The Federal budget can and should be made an instrument of prosperity and stability, not a deterrent to recovery.
— John F Kennedy, "Special Message to Congress: Program for Economic Recovery and Growth," 2 Feb 1961

A nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces but also by the men it honors, the men it remembers.
— John F Kennedy, remarks at the dedication of the Robert Frost Library, Amherst College, 26 Oct 1963

Full use of your powers along lines of excellence.
— Greek definition of happiness, quoted by John F Kennedy, 23 Oct 1963

... we must think and act not only for the moment but for our time. I am reminded of the story of the great French Marshal Lyautey, who once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow-growing and would not reach maturity for a hundred years. The Marshal replied, "In that case, there is no time to lose, plant it this afternoon."
— John F Kennedy, University of California, Berkeley, 23 Mar 1962

Today every inhabitant of this planet must contemplate that day when this planet may no longer be habitable. Every man, woman and child lives under a nuclear sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment by accident or miscalculation or madness. The weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us.
— John F Kennedy, United Nations General Assembly, 25 Sep 1961

We can help make the world safe for diversity. For in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.

— John F Kennedy, Commencement Address at American University, 10 Jun 1963

Never before has man had such capacity to control his own destiny, to end thirst and hunger, to conquer poverty and disease, to banish illiteracy and massive human misery. We have the power to make this the best generation of mankind in the history of the world—or make it the last.

— John F Kennedy, United Nations General Assembly, 20 Sep 1963

My fellow Americans, let us take that first step. Let us...step back from the shadow of war and seek out the way of peace. And if that journey is a thousand miles, or even more, let history record that we in this land at this time, took the first step.

— John F Kennedy, Radio and Television Address to the American People on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, 26 Jul 1963

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena—whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood. . . who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions—and spends himself in a worthy cause—who at best if he wins knows the thrills of high achievement—and if he fails at least fails while daring greatly—so that his place will never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory or defeat.

— Theodore Roosevelt, “Citizenship in a Republic”, speech at the Sorbonne, 23 Apr 1910.

There's no sense in being precise when you don't even know what you're talking about.

— John von Neumann

The following clump are from a list of short quotes published by Arthur D Hlavaty in *Derogatory Reference* 94, Nov 1999 — from which list we've cribbed earlier.

The abandoned infant's cry is rage, not fear.

— Robert Anton Wilson

Anything worth doing is worth doing badly.

— G K Chesterton

Backward ran sentences until reeled the mind.

— Wolcott Gibbs on *Time* magazine

Bipartisan usually means that a larger-than-usual deception is being carried out.

— George Carlin

Catching a fly ball is a pleasure; knowing what to do with it is a business.
— Tommy Henrich, New York Yankees outfielder

Cats would rule the world if they had longer attention spans.
— Arthur D Hlavaty

Chastity may not be the weirdest or nastiest perversion, but it's the least fun to watch.
— Arthur D Hlavaty

Country music and soap opera have been greatly underrated because they appeal to dumb white people and housewives.
— Arthur D Hlavaty

The Devil made me do it the first time. The second time I done it on my own.
— Billy Joe Shaver

Do they seriously expect me to be the first Prince of Wales in history not to have a mistress?
— Charles, the Prince of Wales

Everything anyone says is true. The trick is finding out what it is true of.
— George A Miller

The first secret of getting what you want is knowing what you want.
— Arthur D Hlavaty

God is a comedian whose audience is afraid to laugh.
— H L Mencken

He leaned her over the desk and mentored her till dawn.
— Christopher Buckley

He owes his success to his first wife, and his second wife to his success.
— Jim Backus

He rises above the rest of his group like a middle finger protruding from a fist.
— Arthur D Hlavaty

He's so homophobic he can't even touch himself.
— (unknown)

He's the kind who'll kiss your ass to your face and spit in your eye behind your back.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

compare Julius Nasso on toes and asses

How old would you be if you didn't know how old you was?

— Satchel Paige

I was so unpopular in prep school that I had to teach myself how to masturbate.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

I was told to respect my elders, and by now I'm getting to the point where I don't have to respect anyone.

— George Burns

If he had an Italian last name, they would've electrocuted him.

— John Gotti on Bill Clinton

If Tab Hunter was an actor, it was a secret known only to him.

— Jack Warner

If they enforced the sex laws, they'd have to freeze me to give me any hope of paying my debt to society.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

If walking were taught in school, we'd be a nation of cripples.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

If you want something for nothing, go jerk off.

— Bob Weir

Imagination and memory are the two best marital aids.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

In loyalty to their kind, they cannot tolerate our minds; in loyalty to our minds, we cannot tolerate their obstructions.

— John Wyndham

Insanity is repeating the same actions and expecting different results.

— Narcotics Anonymous slogan

It is not certain that everything is uncertain.

— Blaise Pascal

contrast with Einstein on God playing dice with the universe

It is the duty of the artist to survive: Sometimes genius is 90% respiration.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

It takes a lot of money to look this cheap.

— Dolly Parton

Jazz critics liked me better when they thought I was black and dead.

— Steve Allen

The less money you get from government, the more trouble you have getting it.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

... living off his pension and his wits, both hopelessly inadequate...

— Spike Milligan

A lot of people out there still think *Easy Rider* had a happy ending.

— P J O'Rourke

Love your enemies, return good for evil, tell them the whole truth: These are the three best ways to drive them nuts.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

contrast Kennedy: Forgive your enemies...

Marx said the purpose of philosophy is to change the world, rather than to understand it, and his followers have spent 150 years changing what they don't understand.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

Most people appreciate hard work, particularly when they are paying for it.

— Franklin P Jones

My favorite sex fantasy is becoming president, so I can do it to two hundred million people at once.

— Gore Vidal

No one has ever had a fantasy about being tied up and sexually ravished by someone dressed as a liberal.

— P J O'Rourke

Not to be used for the other use.

— Japanese product instruction

One symptom of impending nervous breakdown is the belief that one's work is terribly important.

— Bertrand Russell

Paranoia is better than no imagination at all.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

Paranoia is the delusion that your enemies are organized.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

Philadelphia merely seems dull because it's next to exciting Camden, NJ.

— Robert Anton Wilson

A picture had better be worth a thousand words because it takes up more disk space.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

S&M: Letting someone hurt you who you know would never hurt you.

— Madonna

A scholar's ink lasts longer than a martyr's blood.

— Irish proverb

Screw the war and racism; the issue is now prison reform.

— Abbie Hoffman, on his way to prison

Shari Lewis was so nice I didn't hate her for being vivacious.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

She got her good looks from her father. He's a plastic surgeon.

— Groucho Marx

Smart people believing in authoritarian religions are like dolphins caught in a tuna net.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

Socialists know the value of everything and the price of nothing.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

see also Oscar Wilde on cynics

Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go.

— Oscar Wilde

contrast Max Beerbohm on guests vs hosts

Something completely original would not be understood.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

There's no money in poetry, but there's no poetry in money.

— Robert Graves

There's one in every crowd. For crying out loud, why was it always turning out to be me?

— Billy Joe Shaver

Things are more like they are now than they ever were.

— Dwight D Eisenhower

To gain social respectability, one first must be socially respectable.

— Allen Ginsberg

We are all co-authors of our lives.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

contrast with his observation about nouns and verbs in `rec.arts.sf.fandom` 27 Aug 2002

We are a nation of laws, poorly written and randomly enforced.

— Frank Zappa

We have buried the putrid corpse of liberty.

— Benito Mussolini

We live in our fantasies and endure our realities.

— Robert Anton Wilson

We need a knob on the TV to turn up the intelligence. There's one called "brightness," but it doesn't work.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

... wearing so much makeup she risked being arrested for impersonating a drag queen.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

When a person can no longer laugh at himself, it is time for others to laugh at him.

— Thomas Szasz

You Don't Have To. Not even if it's fun.
— Arthur D Hlavaty

You know you've been in fandom too long when you see *The Shining* and find yourself evaluating the function space.
— George Flynn

You know you've outgrown *Mad* when ... you know what #@&% stands for.
— *National Lampoon*

end Hlavaty cribs

Ad astra per aspera — “to the stars through difficulties” or “through our efforts, the stars.”

The following are culled from Kristin Buxton at www.kbuxton.com/Quotes

It is not disbelief that is dangerous to our society; it is belief.
— George Bernard Shaw

There is no such thing as a moral or immoral book; books are well written or badly written.
— Oscar Wilde

Books won't stay banned. They won't burn. Ideas won't go to jail. In the long run of history, the censor and the inquisitor have always lost. The only weapon against bad ideas is better ideas.
— A Whitney Griswold

The modern world is filled with men who hold dogmas so strongly that they do not even know they are dogmas.
— G K Chesterton

Gods — or their equals — don't get to opt for therapy or medication, though one can see how such things might do wonders for the Judeo-Christian God.
— Mikal Gilmore

You live and learn or you don't live long.
— Robert A Heinlein

That so few now dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of our time.
— John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*

Religious reverence for one's own job, even if the job is worth doing, is a sexual turnoff.
— Nancy Kress, *Beggars and Choosers*

The profound thinker always suspects that he is superficial.

— Benjamin Disraeli

Books are like lobster shells, we surround ourselves with 'em, then we grow out of 'em and leave 'em behind, as evidence of our earlier stages of development.

— Dorothy L Sayers

The pleasure of all reading is doubled when one lives with another who shares the same books.

— Katherine Mansfield

Love is as necessary to human beings as food and shelter; [but] without intelligence, . . . love is impotent and freedom unattainable.

— Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.

— Sir Richard Steele

but I've also seen this credited to Joseph Addison

Magazines all too frequently lead to books and should be regarded by the prudent as the heavy petting of literature.

— Fran Lebowitz

You define a good flight by negatives: you didn't get hijacked, you didn't crash, you didn't throw up, you weren't late, you weren't nauseated by the food. So you're grateful.

— Paul Theroux

I figured if Allah had wanted us up that early, He wouldn't have invented noon.

— George Alec Effinger, *The Exile Kiss*

Books were made for use, and not for ostentation, . . . in vain do they boast of full libraries that are contented to live with empty heads.

— Sir William Waller

compare Fry about books not being holy relics

Personally, I would rather assemble a fifteen-hundred piece puzzle of a Jackson Pollock painting than slog through *Finnegan's Wake*

— Tom Raabe, *Biblioholism*

The wages of sin are death, but by the time taxes are taken out, it's just sort of a tired feeling.

— Paula Poundstone

Censorship is more depraving and corrupting than anything pornography can produce.

— Tony Smythe

Our principal task as their host is to provide books with the shelves on which they will make themselves at home. Shelves should be high enough and deep enough to let air circulate freely around them. Beyond that, there is only one useful rule for them: provide more than you expect to need. If you build them, the books will come. And if you don't, they will come anyway.

— Philomena Friedman in *House Beautiful*

Science Fiction is the jazz of literature.

— David Brin, during a talk at Powells Bookstore

On the Beach, *Soylent Green* and *1984* plumbed frightening depths. *Brave New World*, *The Screwfly Solution* and *Fahrenheit 451* posed worrying questions. In contrast, *Oedipus Rex* is about as interesting as watching a hooked fish thrash futilely at the end of a line. You just want to put the poor doomed King of Thebes out of his misery — and find a way to punish his tormentors.

— David Brin

Great dancers are not great because of their technique; they are great because of their passion.

— Martha Graham

Excess on occasion is exhilarating. It prevents moderation from acquiring the deadening effect of a habit.

— W Somerset Maugham

Later, he was to decide that Andrew's life had been fractally weird. That is, you could take any small piece of it and examine it in detail and it, in and of itself, would turn out to be just as complicated and weird as the whole thing in its entirety.

— Neal Stephenson, *Cryptonomicon*

[I]t is the fate of operating systems to become free.

— Neal Stephenson

Therefore, no matter how the world makes out in the next few centuries, a large class of readers at least will not be too surprised at anything. They will have been through it all before in fictional form, and will not be too paralyzed with astonishment to try to cope with contingencies as they arise.

— L Sprague De Camp

I would be most content if my children grew up to be the kind of people who think decorating consists mostly of building enough bookshelves.

— Anna Quindlen

There are worse crimes than burning books. One of them is not reading them.

— Joseph Brodsky

Usenet is like a herd of performing elephants with diarrhea — massive, difficult to redirect, awe-inspiring, entertaining, and a source of mind-boggling amounts of excrement when you least expect it.

— Gene Spafford, 1992

It's as if the Library of Congress had exploded in midair. There's all kinds of information strewn over the countryside, approximately laid out according to its logical relationship. If you want a particular piece of information, it's probably not there, although some corpses of data have landed intact. And the professional librarians haven't arrived yet to sort out the mess.

— David Brooks on the world wide web

If quantum mechanics hasn't profoundly shocked you, you haven't understood it yet.

— Niels Bohr

compare to Einstein on dice

Profanity is the one language that all programmers understand.

— (unknown)

All great truths begin as blasphemies.

— George Bernard Shaw

Art is either a plagiarist or a revolutionist.

— Paul Gauguin

contrast with Eliot as quoted by Tufte

Great art is an instant arrested in eternity.

— James Huneker, *Pathos cf Distance*

I hold it to be the inalienable right of anybody to go to hell in his own way.

— Robert Frost, address at Berkeley, 1935

I never think of the future. It comes soon enough.

— Albert Einstein

contrast with Marcus Aurelius

Music is the best means we have of digesting time.

— W H Auden

The pendulum of the mind alternates between sense and nonsense, not between right and wrong.

— Carl Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*

We are faced with the paradoxical fact that education has become one of the chief obstacles to intelligence and freedom of thought.

— Bertrand Russell, *Skeptical Essays*

Science is a differential equation. Religion is a boundary condition.

— Alan Turing

end of Kristin Buxton cull

Star Wars is adolescent nonsense; *Close Encounters* is obscurantist drivel; *Star Trek* can turn your brains to puree of bat guano; and the greatest science fiction series of all time is *Doctor Who*! And I'll take you all on, one-by-one or all in a bunch to back it up!

— Harlan Ellison

pointed out by John McMullen

Families, when a child is born
Want it to be intelligent.
I, through intelligence,
Having wrecked my whole life,
Only hope the baby will prove
Ignorant and stupid.
Then he will crown a tranquil life
By becoming a Cabinet Minister

— Su Tung-p'o

pointed out by John McMullen

When I was crossing the border into Canada, they asked if I had any firearms with me. I said, "Well, what do you need?"

— Steven Wright

pointed out by John McMullen; contrast with Marty Adelman on his grandmother emigrating to the US

If you can spend a perfectly useless afternoon in a perfectly useless manner, you have learned how to live.

— Lin Yutang

pointed out by John McMullen

A guy with Peaceable Texans for Guns called me the other day to say he was going to kill me.

— Keith Oakley, Texas State Representative

pointed out by John McMullen; compare Glen Maxey's interaction with George W Bush

Now I've laid me down to die
I pray my neighbors not to pry
Too deeply into sins that I
Not only cannot here deny
But much enjoyed as life flew by
— Epitaph of Preston Sturges

pointed out by John McMullen

BOY, *n.*: a noise with dirt on it.
— *Not Your Average Dictionary*

pointed out by John McMullen

A world where most men prefer sex with little children to sex with grown women, mostly allegedly Christian parents secretly engage in bloody Satanic rituals and every third person has suffered anal, genital and other harassments by demonic dwarfs from outer space makes as much sense — and just as little sense — as a world where the universe is ruled by the ghost of a crucified Jew and George Bush had rational reasons (which no one can now remember) for bombing Iraq again two days before leaving the White House.
— Prof. T F X Finnegan, Trinity College, Dublin

pointed out by John McMullen

There were honest people long before there were Christians and there are, God be praised, still honest people where there are no Christians. It could therefore easily be possible that people are Christians because true Christianity corresponds to what they would have been even if Christianity did not exist.
— G C Lichtenberg (1742–1799), German physicist, philosopher

pointed out by John McMullen

A pretty girl is better than a plain one. A leg is better than an arm. A bedroom is better than a living room. An arrival is better than a departure. A birth is better than a death. A chase is better than a chat. A dog is better than a landscape. A kitten is better than a dog. A baby is better than a kitten. A kiss is better than a baby. A pratfall is better than anything.
— Preston Sturges' rules for a successful comedy

I sometimes speculate that 1968 was a branching point of alternate histories, and I picked the boring one. In a book of photos of SF writers, the late Karl Edward Wagner chose as the caption for his, "Shortly after 1970 our world ended and with it any hope for intelligent life on Earth. Let there always be some refuge from time where it is eternally the autumn of the 1960s." (I hope he has found it.) Perhaps that is the world I missed out on. That world would still have cheap sex and cheap paperbacks, perhaps even evolving to that ultimate combination: 50s music, 60s sexndope, 90s computers. I express this thought by saying that I live in the fallen universe: the one where Janis Joplin, rather than Lou Reed, OD'd.
— Arthur D Hlavaty, *Derogatory Reference* 100, Nov 2002

In 1966, I dreamed I had dropped acid (which I had not yet done in waking reality). Someone said, “It will start working *now!*” whereupon I awoke. I think I’m still on that one.

— Arthur D Hlavaty, *Derogatory Reference 100*, Nov 2002

A civilized society would have an obscene word for one who *doesn’t* give oral sex.

— Arthur D Hlavaty, *Derogatory Reference 100*, Nov 2002

The problems of victory are more agreeable than the problems of defeat, but they are no less difficult.

— Winston Churchill

contrast Al Gore’s concession speech, 13 Dec 2000

As long as I have any choice in the matter, I shall live only in a country where civil liberty, tolerance, and equality of all citizens before the law prevail.

— Albert Einstein, press conference at Caltech announcing he would not return to Germany, 11 Mar 1933. The Long Beach earthquake struck as the press conference was breaking up.

The intelligent pattern of protoplasm that had been Robert L Forward ceased coherent operation on September 21, 2002.

— opening of Forward’s obituary

see also Frank Zappa’s obit

... most top computer programmers over the age of 30 have developed an emulation program that allows us to fake being normal human beings most of the time. I’ve gotten mine tuned to the point where it only crashes once or twice a week.

— Robert J Woodhead

usenet signature quote used by Bill Higgins at FermiLab (higgins@fnal.gov)

If the world really looks like that I will paint no more!

— Claude Monet, rejecting a pair of glasses to correct severe astigmatism

contrast Jo Walton’s observation about Monet

Singin’ in the Rain may not be musically brilliant, but it’s a brilliant musical.

— Alan Prince Winston, in “The Little Naked God” for LASFAPA 317

Let me see if I got this. The third story on the news tonight was that someone I didn't know thirteen years ago when I wasn't president participated in a demonstration where no laws were being broken in protest of something that so many people were against, it doesn't exist anymore. Just out of curiosity, what was the fourth story?

— Michael Douglas as President Andrew Shepard reacts to a news story about his girlfriend protesting the Vietnam War, *The American President*

Temporis filia veritas; cui me obstetricari non pudet.

(Truth is the daughter of time, and I feel no shame in being her midwife.)

— Johannes Kepler, in his account of observing the four satellites of Jupiter

However, “Temporis filia veritas” seems to have been originally someone else’s observation: it’s quoted by Aulus Gellius (who died in 180 AD) as coming from an earlier poet.

Geometria una et aeterna est in mente Dei refulgens: cuius consortium hominibus tributum inter causas est, cur homo sit imago Dei.

(Geometry is one and eternal shining in the mind of God. That share in it accorded to men is one of the reasons that Man is the image of God.)

— Johannes Kepler, “Dissertatio cum Nuncio Sidereo” (that is, “Conversation with the Sidereal Messenger,” an open letter to Galileo Galilei), 1610

Fuck, I got a Hugo.

— Neil Gaiman’s remembrance of the last thing he said in his acceptance speech for his *American Gods* Hugo

I got a fucking Hugo.

— The end of Neil Gaiman’s Hugo acceptance for *American Gods* as reported by folks present at the ceremony

compare with Robert A Heinlein’s more genteel speech on being named SFWA Grandmaster

If you haven’t found something strange during the day, it hasn’t been much of a day.

— John A Wheeler

One of my favourite phrases from psychoanalysis and literary studies is “polymorphous perversity.” I’ve never been too sure *exactly* what it means but I’ve got a feeling that it’s something worth aiming for.

— Jason Rutter, University of Manchester

usenet signature quote used by Manny Olds (oldsma@pobox.com)

This communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects, for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in half.

— Francis Bacon

compare with frequently quoted notion at Spider Robinson's Callahan's saloon

If — at least for a while — we got all ukulele players to start playing “Amazing Grace,” and all bagpipe players to play “Tiptoe through the Tulips,” we would have a more interesting set of musical cliches.

— Bill Higgins in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 22 Nov 2002

Subject: A Musical Proposal

Message-ID: <Pine.SGI.4.31.0211221717460.80503-100000@fsg101.fnal.gov>

Results! Why, man, I have gotten a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won't work.

— Thomas Edison

The Court of Review's action revolutionizes our ability to investigate terrorists and prosecute terrorist acts.

— John Ashcroft, on a recent court ruling that gives the Justice Department rubber-stamp approval to surveil Internet traffic, 19 Nov 2002

<http://www.newsday.com/news/nationworld/nation/-ny-usjust193009334nov19,0,3710395.story>

pointed out (with commentary) by Owen Thomas at www.ditherati.com

Why, then, should we grant government the Orwellian capability to listen at will and in real time to our communications across the Web?

— John Ashcroft, inveighing against government surveillance five years ago, *USIA Electronic Journal*, Oct 1997

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itgic/1097/ijge/gj-7.htm>

pointed out (with commentary) by Owen Thomas at www.ditherati.com

I wanna hear a poem where ideas kiss similes so deeply that metaphors get jealous, where the subject matters so much that adjectives start holding pro-noun rallies at city hall.

— Steve Coleman, poem from *Def Poetry Jam on Broadway*

quoted on NPR's *Morning Edition*, 4 Dec 2002

I don't know if I'm a bottom because it turns me or if it's because I'm lazy.

— Margaret Cho in her concert film, *Notorious C H O*

I urge you all today — especially today, in these times of terrorism and chaos — to love yourselves without reservation and to love each other without restraint. Unless you're into leather, then by all means use restraints.

— Margaret Cho in her concert film, *Notorious C H O*

When I was going through puberty, I learned the meaning of the word “nymphomaniac.” I remember thinking to myself, “Well, they have a name for it — I guess that means I’m not the first.”

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

Why is it that a boy who can kill 300 alien mutants in five minutes on an Xbox can’t hit the toilet bowl when he pees?

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

The last man alive ran to the telephone, his little black book in his hand and a manic gleam in his eye. Dialing the number, he thought, “Now let’s see if Diane Johnson will reconsider!”

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

I was wondering: Is there a life after the afterlife? Because, y’know, I always try to think ahead.

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

The thing I like best about fantasy is that I can afford it.

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

One of the most important attributes of being a first-rate ghost hunter is to have a partner who won’t suddenly turn off the lights and scream, “Boo!”

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

If loving you is wrong, then baby, it goes a long way towards explaining the concussion and crushed left testicle.

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

When I was a kid, we walked 10 miles to school every day, sometimes in the rain or snow. Man, did we feel stupid when we found out there was a bus.

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

I can only assume the guy who named Viagra didn’t think of “Peniscillin” first.

pointed out by Ron Leming (www.bonestructure.net), via John McMullen.

Our world has sprouted a weird concept of security and a warped sense of morality. Weapons are sheltered like treasures and children are exposed to incineration.

— Bertrand Russell

from quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca, 2 Dec 2002

If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world.

— J R R Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

from quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca, 3 Dec 2002

Not being able to govern events, I govern myself.

— Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592)

from quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca, 8 Dec 2002

Because, if you ask me, when I start out to make a film, when I'm in my bedroom writing it, I always think that this is going to be the greatest film in the world, this is gonna be my *Citizen Kane*. And then, I actually start to make the film and, as my friend Marshall Brickman says, the truck with compromises pulls up every day, and by the time I'm finished with the film and I start editing it, I just pray to God that I'm saved from humiliation.

— Woody Allen

You know why conservatives love the Saudi government? Because it stands for everything they do. It oppresses women, it forces religion down people's throats, and it loves money above everything else. Those are the three fundamentals of conservatism.

— James Carville, *Crossfire*, 25 Nov 2002, on US "conservatives"

from quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca, 10 Dec 2002

I am not infallible when I choose my snuff.

— Pope Pius IX's comment on papal infallibility

from quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca, 11 Dec 2002

Fascism should more properly be called corporatism, since it is the merger of state and corporate power.

— Benito Mussolini

quoted by Molly Ivins in her column of 21 Nov 2002

I want to say this about my state: When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over all these years, either.

— Mississippi Senator Trent Lott, at a 100th birthday party for South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond in Dec 2002

from quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca, 12 Dec 2002

For those who are unfamiliar with the 1948 US election, Thurmond, as governor of South Carolina, ran for the White House in what was dubbed the Dixiecrat Party, which stood for segregation of the races. "All the laws of Washington and all the bayonets of the Army cannot force the Negro into our homes, our schools, our churches," Thurmond said during his campaign against Harry Truman and Thomas Dewey — in which he won four states.

— Howard Katz, *Washington Post* columnist, on Strom Thurmond's presidential election platform

from quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca, 12 Dec 2002

Given enough eyeballs, all bugs are shallow.

— Eric S Raymond

Life was simple before World War II. After that, we had systems.

— Adm Grace Murray Hopper

In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is.

— Yogi Berra

I remember the relief I felt when GUIs reached the point where you could put the mouse on top of the pictogram and it would tell you what the thing was in actual verbal language. Ah, we've passed the ancient Egyptians!

— Arthur D Hlavaty, in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 13 Dec 2002

Subject: Re: Interesting tech support problem

Message-ID: <akkjvusomm5n65apkuhd12uc7b15dgb2sk@4ax.com>

The ancient Egyptian written language is not pictographic.

Thank you. I seem to have misremembered. Permit me to apologize to any ancient Egyptians I offended by saying they were no more advanced than the original Mac.

— Arthur D Hlavaty, `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 14 Dec 2002, responding to Kevin J Maroney

Subject: Re: Interesting tech support problem

Message-ID: <hu8mvu0bka69kpuvu561rmmetr8fkpjkn@4ax.com>

Too many victories weaken you. The defeated can rise up stronger than the victor.

— Muhammad Ali

from `quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca`, 15 Dec 2002

I die with the conviction, held since 1968 and Catonsville, that nuclear weapons are the scourge of the earth; to mine for them, manufacture them, deploy them, use them, is a curse against God, the human family, and the earth itself.

— Anti-war activist Philip Berrigan before his death from cancer on 13 Dec 2002

[I]nstead of entering a millennium of peace, the world is now, in many ways, a more dangerous place. The greater ease of travel and communication has not been matched by equal understanding and mutual respect.

— Jimmy Carter, Nobel Peace Prize lecture, 10 Dec 2002

It is clear that global challenges must be met with an emphasis on peace, in harmony with others, with strong alliances and international consensus.

— Jimmy Carter, Nobel Peace Prize lecture, 10 Dec 2002

I am not here as a public official, but as a citizen of a troubled world who finds hope in a growing consensus that the generally accepted goals of society are peace, freedom, human rights, environmental quality, the alleviation of suffering, and the rule of law.

— Jimmy Carter, Nobel Peace Prize lecture, 10 Dec 2002

War may sometimes be a necessary evil. But no matter how necessary, it is always an evil, never a good. We will not learn to live together in peace by killing each other's children.

The bond of our common humanity is stronger than the divisiveness of our fears and prejudices. God gives us the capacity for choice. We can choose to alleviate suffering. We can choose to work together for peace. We can make these changes — and we must.

— Jimmy Carter, Nobel Peace Prize lecture, 10 Dec 2002

There are some in the world who are prematurely resigned to the inevitability of war. Among them are the advocates of the so-called “preventive war,” who, in their resignation to war, wish merely to select their own time for initiating it. To suggest that war can prevent war is a base play on words and a despicable form of warmongering. The objective of any who sincerely believe in peace clearly must be to exhaust every honorable recourse in the effort to save the peace. The world has had ample evidence that war begets only conditions that beget further war.

— Ralph Bunche, Nobel Peace Prize lecture, 11 Dec 1950

quoted in part by Jimmy Carter in his Nobel lecture

When we were writing this bill we were thinking about Osama bin Laden and someone flying a plane into the Pentagon. To be honest with you, when we passed this law I never thought it would be used.

— David B Albo, of the Virginia House of Delegates, after sponsoring the Virginia anti-terrorism bill, clearly mis-understanding the purpose of passing legislation

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/17/national/17VIRG.html>, “Sniper Case Will Be First Test of Virginia Anti-terrorism Law”

Every now and then you'll see a tattered piece of 1950s signage, something exuberant that harks back to flash bulbs and frozen glamour. Most have been torn down now, replaced by brutal information boards stamped out in Helvetica, the official typeface of purgatory. Helvetica isn't designed to make you feel anything good, to promise adventure or gladden the heart. Helvetica is for telling you that profits are down, that the photocopier needs servicing, and by the way, you've been fired.

— Michael Marshall, *The Straw Men*, on the road to Santa Monica
from quotationoftheday@yahoo.ca, 18 Dec 2002
