

**OXBRIDGE DICTIONARY
OF MISPLACED QUOTES**

PART FOUR

Oxbridge Dictionary cf Misplaced Quotes is one of an occasional series of selections from my collection of interesting and useful quotations — alternate title, *All The Quotes That Didn't Fit Anywhere Else* — 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 8 July 2002 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, for a variety of sources that reflect my particular political and intellectual biases and interests. I've previously used some of the quotes in SFPA, LASFAPA, and my column in *Server/Workstation Expert*.

Each time I calculate how many more installments of this series there will be, I discover that I am wrong, since it seems to be growing at an exponential rate: between the publication of parts one and three, the total collation grew by 34 pages; in the month since then it's grown by 23 to 220 without the index. Therefore, I'm publishing this ahead of actually expecting to run it in SFPA to save printing time later.



On my twenty-first birthday my father said, “Son, here’s a million dollars. Don’t lose it.”
— Larry Niven, on the best advice he ever got

I’d rather have a five-inch hard than an eight-inch floppy.
— Arthur D Hlavaty

God gave us our memories so that we might have roses in December.
— Sir James M Barrie

It is all very well to be able to write books, but can you waggle your ears?
— Sir James M Barrie to H G Wells

Never ascribe to an opponent motives meaner than your own.
— Sir James M Barrie

from the same speech as the work quotation above in Arthur’s collection

It is not the symphony of voices in sweet concert that I enjoy, but the cacophony of democracy, the brouhahas and the donnybrooks, the full-throated roar of a free people busy using their right to freedom of speech. Democracy requires rather a larger tolerance for confusion and a secret relish for dissent. This is not a good country for those who are fond of unanimity and uniformity.

— Molly Ivins, “United We Stand... Divided and Durn Proud of It,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 5, 1992, reprinted in *Nothin’ But Good Times Ahead*

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We shall not pretend that there is nothing in his long career which those who respect and admire him would wish otherwise.

— *The (London) Times* on the accession of King Edward VII, referring to his lifestyle, Jan 1901

As a military man who has given half a century of active service, I say in all sincerity that the nuclear arms race has no military purpose. Wars cannot be fought with nuclear weapons; their existence only adds to our perils because of the illusions which they have generated.

— Lord Mountbatten in a speech in Strasbourg, 1970

These next set of Andy Grove quotes are from *Esquire*, May 2000, p137

Technology is both an end in itself and a means to other ends. When you figure something out and make it work, there is pleasure and excitement. Not just because the technology is going to do something, but because you created something with its own inherent beauty, like art, like literature, like music.

— Andy Grove

It is a very important truism that immigrants and immigration are what made America what it is. We must be vigilant as a nation to have a tolerance for differences, a tolerance for new people.

— Andy Grove

The most powerful tool of all is the word *no*.

— Andy Grove

The same designers who brought you the videocassette recorder that you couldn't program, the digital watch that you couldn't set, and the stovetop controls that you couldn't learn will now bring you the fully automated house.

— Donald A Norman

SFFA215

The capture of accused serial killer Robert Lee Yates Jr is the kind of victory for capital-T Technology that makes you glad you're living at the end of the 20th century. I'm hard-pressed to find a downside to taking this monster down.

Yes, monster. Despite the wonderment of one *Seattle Times* reporter, a man with a house and a family and a basketball hoop in the yard indeed can be a monster; it just makes him a boring one. That's the tricky part about evil, how boring its practitioners can be — as local crime writer Ann Rule points out, if he'd been weirder he probably would have been caught faster.

— Angela Gunn, *Seattle Weekly*, 27 Apr 2000

Though I have been responsible for several innovations in the publishing business, I see now that each of them was intended to recapture the fleeting past. I am skeptical of progress. My instincts are archaeological. I favor the god Janus, who faces backward and forward at once. Without at vivid link to the past, the present is chaos and the future is unreadable. In our culture books form such a link, perhaps the main link.

— Jason Epstein, "The Rattle of Pebbles," *The New York Review of Books*, Apr 27, 2000

SFFA215

Greater literacy will not reduce the human capacity for mischief any more than Martin Heidegger's philosophical learning kept him from supporting the Nazis, a dilemma that philosophers might explore further. Nonetheless, the spread of learning is good in itself.

— Jason Epstein, "The Rattle of Pebbles", *The New York Review of Books*, Apr 27, 2000

SFFA216

It's not the voting that's democracy; it's the counting.

— Tom Stoppard

SFFA218 COLUMN7/00

Democracy is only an experiment in government, and it has the obvious disadvantage of merely counting votes instead of weighing them.

— William Ralph Inge

A majority is always the best repartee.

— Benjamin Disraeli

Operating systems no longer hold the strategic importance they once held in our industry.

— IBM CEO Lou Gerstner, nicking himself as he attempts to take a jab at Microsoft, News.com, 10 May 2000

pointed out (with commentary) by Owen Thomas at www.ditherati.com (Especially [says Thomas] if the operating system in question is OS/2.)

You don't live in the world all alone. Your brothers are here too.

— Albert Schweitzer

...under the First and Fourteenth Amendments criminal laws in this area are constitutionally limited to hard-core pornography. I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description; and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that.

— Potter Stewart in *Jacobellis v Ohio*, 1964

Meyer's interest in professional football is strictly pragmatic: unlike most vegetarian, yoga-practicing, Deadhead collectors of space-program memorabilia, he is a studious and enthusiastic gambler.

— "Taking Humor Seriously: George Meyer, the funniest man behind the funniest show on TV", by David Owen, *The New Yorker*, Mar 13, 2000

SFFA216

He hates advertising, which he views as a global force of destruction. ("I hate it because it irresponsibly induces discontent in people for one myopic goal, and then it leaves the debris of that process out there in the culture. And advertiser will happily make you feel bad about yourself if that will make you buy, say, a Bic pen.") This antipathy has made Meyer a connoisseur of brazen marketing; he is especially interesting in examples of ad copy in which the word-to-falsehood ratio approaches one. He once showed me a magazine advertisement for a butter substitute called Country Crock. "It's not from the country; there is no crock," he said. "Two words, two lies."

— "Taking Humor Seriously: George Meyer, the funniest man behind the funniest show on TV", by David Owen, *The New Yorker*, Mar 13, 2000

The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong — but that's the way to bet.
— Ring Lardner

Testing doesn't improve quality any more than stepping on the scale lowers your weight.
— Kevin Cohen

kevin@mapquest.com

As it turned out, he couldn't spare the time, because he was writing a novel set in the summer of America's "purity binge, when terrorism—which had replaced Communism as the prevailing threat to the country's security—was succeeded by cocksucking."

— David Remick, quoting Philip Roth in "Into the Clear," *The New Yorker*, May 8, 2000

It was the summer in America when the nausea returned, when the joking didn't stop, when the speculation and the theorizing and the hyperbole didn't stop, when the moral obligation to explain to one's children about adult life was abrogated in favor of maintaining in them every illusion about adult life, when the smallness of people was simply crushing, when some kind of demon had been unleashed in the nation and, on both sides, people wondered "Why are we so crazy?," when men and women alike, upon awakening in the morning, discovered that during the night, in a state of sleep that transported them beyond envy or loathing, they had dreamed of the brazenness of Bill Clinton. I myself dreamed of a mammoth banner draped dadaistically like a Christo wrapping from one end of the White House to the other and bearing the legend a human being lives here. It was the summer when—for the billionth time—the jumble, the mayhem, the mess proved itself more subtle than this one's ideology and that one's morality. It was the summer when a president's penis was on everyone's mind, and life, in all its shameless impurity, once again confounded America.

— Philip Roth, in *The Human Stain*, quoted in *The New Yorker*

[Q]uality isn't really a free variable. The only possible values are "excellent" and "insanely excellent," depending on whether lives are at stake or not. Otherwise you don't enjoy your work, you don't work well, and the project goes down the drain.

— *eXtreme Programming eXplained*, Kent Beck

Addison-Wesley, 2000, ISBN 201-61641-6
COLUMN9/00

What is it that we want to get out of code? The most important thing is learning. The way I learn is to have a thought, the test it out to see if it is a good thought. Code is the best way I know of to do this. Code isn't swayed by the power and logic of rhetoric. Code isn't impressed by college degrees or large salaries. Code just sits there, happily doing exactly what you told it to do. If that isn't what you thought you told it to do, that's your problem.

— *eXtreme Programming eXplained*, Kent Beck

Addison-Wesley, 2000, ISBN 201-61641-6 compare and contrast with Knuth on code

People always say “Oh, money can’t make you happy.” But if you’re already happy, money can make you happier.

— Jay Leno, AP story, Jul 10, 2000

Like everything Ulrika writes, it was as cute as Pikachu and Hello Kitty cavorting in a happy meadow, juggling sticks of crystallized dynamite. And like everything Ulrika writes, it was as funny as Pikachu and Hello Kitty cavorting in a happy meadow, juggling sticks of crystallized dynamite.

— Ray Radlein’s koan-like description of Ulrika O’Brien’s writing, 12 Jul 2000.

Message-Id: <396D643E.D2A56F70@learnlink.emory.edu>

I have always wished that my computer would be as easy to use as my telephone. My wish has come true. I no longer know how to use my telephone.

— Bjarne Stroustrup

Lord, I know that I always said that I’d never involve you in a baseball game. Always seemed silly. And you’ve got enough to do. But if there’s any way that you can make this pain in my shoulder go away for about ten minutes. . .

— Billy Chapel’s prayer to level the playing field in *For Love of the Game*

I asked Bonnie Dunbar, an astronaut who has completed five missions in space, if she would go to Mars. “Absolutely,” she said in a gleeful voice. “I think of my grandfather who came from Scotland. He had a dream to come to America, took a rickety boat across the sea, and went west into the wilderness. Did he stop because of the risks? I’ll be fifty-one this year. I’ve spent my life training to go into space. If my life ends on a Mars mission, that’s not a bad way to go.”

— “Medicine on Mars,” by Jerome Groopman, *The New Yorker*, Feb 14, 2000

I’d move to Los Angeles if Australia and New Zealand were swallowed by a huge tidal wave, if there was a bubonic plague in England, and if the continent of Africa disappeared from some Martian attack.

— Australian actor Russell Crowe

SFFA219

There are three ways, I suggest, for a determined actor to deal with critics. The first, most sensational, slightly dangerous but highly successful if carried out with sincerity, is to hit them.

— Alec Guinness

I don’t know what my part is about. Take my name: Obi Wan Kenobi. I haven’t a clue what it’s meant to mean.

— Alec Guinness

This quartet represents the most extraordinary collection of festering resentments and seething jealousies and co-dependent plotting that has ever darkened the White House — with the possible exception of when Richard Nixon dined alone.

— Maureen Dowd, on the dynamics of Bill and Hillary Clinton's appearance with Al and Tipper Gore at a Gore campaign rally, *New York Times*, 16 Aug 2000

see John F Kennedy on Thomas Jefferson

On the way home from the bookstore tonight, my husband was trying to explain some concepts of oneness he had been studying. That everything was really all the same, because when you look at an apple, you see the apple, but if you could look at the molecule itself, it's mostly air, and the apple is part of the air, and we are all molecularly part of the air. So everything is one. Then he branched off into something about when you realize this, you can look at things without anger, or sadness.

Finally, I said that all this reading he is doing is very nice, but it's usually written by men who are not married, don't have families, and can go in a nice quiet room whenever they want, to meditate and therefore, do NOT have to deal with teenagers. When some philosopher writes a book on while dealing with their teenagers, I will pay attention. Until then, I want chocolate.

— Robbi Joy Eklow, quiltart mailing list, 19 Aug 2000

... pithier version

[Philosophy is] usually written by men who are not married, don't have families, and can go in a nice quiet room whenever they want, to meditate and therefore, do NOT have to deal with teenagers. When some philosopher writes a book on while dealing with their teenagers, I will pay attention. Until then, I want chocolate.

— Robbi Joy Eklow, quiltart mailing list, 19 Aug 2000

I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge, that has ever been gathered together at the White House, with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone.

— John F Kennedy, remarks at dinner honoring Nobel Prize winners of the Western Hemisphere, the White House, April 29, 1962

During my service in the United States Congress, I took the initiative in creating the Internet.

— Al Gore's actual statement about his involvement with the Internet

Once doubts have been planted in the minds of people, neither legal, political or PR defense, regardless of how well presented, can fully wipe out all doubts.

— Psychiatrist Arnold Hutschnecker in 3 July 1973 a letter to his patient, Richard Nixon, which was found in Nixon's desk at the White House after he resigned

which (we note) is exactly the strategy adopted by the attackers of William Jefferson Clinton: raise doubts, and lots of them

SFFA217c

While I was changing ... a lightbulb, the ladder I was standing on collapsed. Following my usual policy of craven submission to the law of gravity, I fell, breaking a bone in my left shoulder.

— Arthur D Hlavaty, Derogatory Reference 95, spring 2000

Bernadette and Kevin have been magnificently helpful throughout the crisis... Once again, I find that three is an excellent number of people to have in a couple, especially if these are the other two.

— Arthur D Hlavaty, Derogatory Reference 95, spring 2000

Show me a man who has enjoyed his school days and I'll show you a bully and a bore.

— Robert Morley

SFFA217b

Children are to be won to follow liberal studies by exhortations and rational motives, and on no account to be forced thereto by whipping.

— Plutarch

Public schools are the nurseries of all vice and immorality.

— Henry Fielding

The school has always been the most important means of transferring the wealth of tradition from one generation to the next. This applies today in an even higher degree... for... the family as bearer of tradition and education has become weakened.

— Albert Einstein

The Reasonable man adapts to nature. The unreasonable man seeks to adapt nature to himself. Therefore it is only through the actions of unreasonable men that civilization advances.

— George Bernard Shaw

Programmers, teachers, and the Lego company all love to believe that any problem can be solved by breaking it down into small parts that can be assembled to create the whole. Every programmer wants to turn the design of an operating system into thousands of little problems that can be solved individually. This dream usually lasts until someone begins to assemble the parts and discovers that they don't work together as perfectly as they should.

— Peter Wayner, *Free for All*

p 58

To understand God's thoughts we must study statistics, for these are the measure of his purpose.

— Florence Nightingale

SFFA217i

Statistics are no substitute for judgement.

— Henry Clay

SFFA217i

There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics.

— Benjamin Disraeli

If your experiment needs statistics, you ought to have done a better experiment.

— Ernest Rutherford

SFFA217i

I could prove God statistically.

— George Gallup

Politicians use statistics in the same way that a drunken man uses lamp-posts — for support rather than illumination.

— Andrew Lang

SFFA223i

Statistics will prove anything, even the truth.

— Noël Moynihan

Statistics: the mathematical theory of ignorance.

— Morris Kline

There are two kinds of statistics, the kind you look up and the kind you make up.

— Rex Stout

SFFA223i

I have no faith in anything short of actual measurement and the Rule of Three.

— Charles Darwin

COLUMN10/00

The last time I saw anything like that was in films from postwar Germany when the Nazis were invading people's homes without cause.

— Ron Guralnick, attorney for Elian Gonzalez's Miami relatives, commenting on a lawsuit against Attorney General Janet Reno that alleges that armed raid that took the Cuban boy was illegal.

compare and contrast with following...

Unfortunately, the Gonzalez family's refusal to comply with a lawful federal order and their statements that they would never give up the child except by force compelled us to take enforcement actions. We still believe our actions were appropriate and lawful.

— Justice Department spokeswoman Carole Florman

compare and contrast with the preceding...

To laugh often and love much; to win the respect of intelligent persons and the affection of children; to earn the approbation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to give of one's self; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exaltation; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived — this is to have succeeded.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

There is only one success — to be able to spend your life in your own way.

— Christopher Marley

Success is that old ABC — ability, breaks and courage.

— Charles Luckman

If a man has a talent and cannot use it, he has failed. If he has a talent and uses only half of it, he has partly failed. If he has a talent and learns somehow to use the whole of it, he has gloriously succeeded...

— Thomas Wolfe

He was after something that all the reports and articles failed to give. What did it *feel* like, he wanted to know, to wake up in the morning and see that great, golden globe with its scudding cloud belts dominating the sky? And the rings themselves—what did they do to your mind when they were so close that they filled the heavens from end to end?

You want a poet, I said—not an engineer. But I'll tell you this: however long you look at Saturn, and fly in and out among its moons, you can never quite believe it. Every so often you find yourself thinking: "It's all a dream—a thing like that *can't* be real." And you go to the nearest view-port—and there it is, taking your breath away.

— Arthur C Clarke, "Saturn Rising," 1961

[[reprinted in *Tales of Ten Worlds*]]

life imitates art — contrast with Gene Cernan quote from *A Man on the Moon*, noting that this is ten years older

O mighty Caesar! dost thou lie so low? / Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils, / Shrank to this little measure?

— William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, III, i, 148

This is the third time; I hope good luck lies in odd numbers. . . There is divinity in odd numbers, either in nativity, chance, or death

— William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, V, i, 2

In small proportions we just beauties see, / And in short measures life may perfect be.

— Ben Jonson, “To the Immortal Memory of Sir Lucius Cary and Sir Henry Morison”

COLUMN3/01

Measure your mind’s height by the shade it casts!

— Robert Browning, *Paracelsus*

A single death is a tragedy, a million deaths is a statistic.

— Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili, occasionally referred to as Joseph Stalin

SFFA217i

Print is the sharpest and the strongest weapon of our party.

— Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili, occasionally referred to as Joseph Stalin, speech, 19 April 1923

unless statistics lie he was / more brave than me:more blond than you.

— e e cummings, *i sing of Olaf glad and big*, 1931

SFFA217i

Statistical figures referring to economic events are historical data. They tell us what happened in a nonrepeatable historical case.

— Ludwig Edler von Mises, *Human Action*, 1949

SFFA223i

A few honest men are better than numbers.

— Oliver Cromwell, letter to Sir W. Spring, September 1643

SFFA217i

As yet a child, not yet a fool to fame, / I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.

— Alexander Pope, *Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot*, 1734

SFFA223i

Nature has... some sort of arithmetical-geometrical coordinate system, because nature has all kinds of models. What we experience in nature is in models, and all of nature's models are so beautiful. It struck me that nature's system must be a real beauty, because in chemistry we find that the associations are always in beautiful whole numbers — there are no fractions.

— R Buckminster Fuller, quoted in “In the Outlaw Area”, by Calvin Tomkins in *The New Yorker*, 8 January 1966

SFFA223i COLUMN2/01

When you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind: it may be the beginning of knowledge, but you have scarcely, in your thoughts, advanced to the stage of *science*.

— William Thomson, Lord Kelvin, *Popular Lectures and Addresses*

SFFA217i

Music has charms to soothe the savage breast, By magic numbers and persuasive sound.

— William Congreve, *The Mourning Bride*, I, i

SFFA223i

Why is it that we entertain the belief that for every purpose odd numbers are the most effectual?

— Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*

SFFA217i COLUMN2/01

Life without the reproductive urge probably popped up here and there thousands of times and then just sat there, twiddling its pseudopodia, wondering what it was all about, until it died. Then Nature struck it lucky and invented randiness. Nice one Nature.

— Craig Charles

I think it just happened. It wasn't deliberate. I didn't say, “Inventors are nice and I want to be one.” I just think if you work on interesting projects, invention is kind of a natural consequence.

— Jack Kilby, inventor of the integrated circuit

Rumination cf the Day

I had a big project at work, and my boss told me to give it the old college try. So I did: I drank until I passed out and woke up next to a confused sheep.

— James Konow, at www.topfive.com

From a professional standpoint, all satirists hope the voters will favour us with Bush.

When you look at the flaws of the two candidates, one suffers from proclivities that are arguably correctable; the other from a condition he can do nothing about. Gore's a moving target, Bush is a stable, hard target, like Quayle.

In my lifetime, we've never had a major presidential candidate who's outsourced virtually all his thinking. Bush's life story gives fresh meaning to the phrase "assisted living." [The] Brits are steeped in centuries of entitlement, but for most Americans, a restoration is a novel experience. The country may be in for a bit of a shock.

— Gary Trudeau, on George W Bush and Al Gore, interview with BBC News Online, 27 Oct 2000

SFFA222

the pithy part:

In my lifetime, we've never had a major presidential candidate who's outsourced virtually all his thinking. Bush's life story gives fresh meaning to the phrase "assisted living."

— Gary Trudeau on George W Bush in an interview with BBC News Online, 27 Oct 2000

My suspicion is that the Bushes' seeming antipathy for me stems from a certain traitor-to-his-class incomprehension. Because, on paper, I'm one of them. Anyway, it's true, the election result is good for me. Bush is this stable hard target. It's as if Quayle had won. Plus you have the wonderful narrative of how he got where he now is. It took his brother, his father, his father's friends, the Florida secretary of state, and the Supreme Court to pull it off. His entire life gives fresh meaning to the phrase "assisted living."

— Gary Trudeau on George W Bush, "Talk of the Town", *The New Yorker*, January 8, 2001

(George W Bush)

Some days I think it's wonderful; some days I'm not so sure — which means I probably feel the same way about Mr Trudeau that he feels about me.

— William Jefferson Clinton on Gary Trudeau

... Jerry Lee [Lewis] looked like a used Bible salesman with a leer that would have made Jack the Ripper smile. Jerry Lee gave us unashamed angst and unparalleled passion: It was the church of the Holy Roller brought straight to the Altar of Sex. I don't know about you, but I still use Jerry Lee Lewis's name to invoke the three-headed demon of Sex, Drugs, and Rock'n'Roll.

— Record producer Don Dixon, reviewing "Great Balls of Fire" on the forty-third anniversary of its release, 3 Nov 2000.

NPR's Morning Edition

Sorry, we didn't mean to break the election. We were playing with it and it broke by accident.

— Janice Gelb quoting phone message from Florida resident Eve Ackerman, 9 November 2000

The American people have spoken, but it's going to take a little while to determine what they said.

— William Jefferson Clinton, 8 November 2000

If ever there was a doubt about the importance of exercising democracy's most fundamental right — the right to vote — yesterday put it to rest. No American will ever be able to seriously say again, "My vote doesn't count."

— William Jefferson Clinton, 8 November 2000

We need to demystify the job. It is a *job*. . . There's a lot to be said for showing up every day and trying to push the rock up the hill. . . If you're willing to win in inches as well as feet, a phenomenal amount of positive things can happen. . . If you love your country and have something you want to do and you put together a good team, and you're willing to be relentless and exhaust yourself in the effort, the results will come.

— William Jefferson Clinton, interview with Joe Klein, *The New Yorker*, Oct 16-23, 2000

The Church says the Earth is flat. But I know it is round, for I have seen the shadow on the Moon. And I have more Faith in a shadow than in the Church.

— Ferdinand Magellan

Care should be taken in all this process. An efficient and a successful administration manifests itself in small as in great matters.

— Winston Churchill, memorandum of Aug 8, 1943 on operational codenames

Bravery, I sometimes think, consists largely of faking bravery when necessary. "Well, shit," I said, willing my voice not to quaver. "I thought I had a problem. This is merely a catastrophe."

— Spider Robinson, *Callahan's Key*

I could not believe they proposed to hurl that enormous massive object into the air, so high that it wouldn't come down until it was damn good and ready. I felt an enormous thrill of pride to belong to a species that could even conceive of a thing so splendidly arrogant — let alone pull it off.

— Jake Stonebender describing a Space Shuttle launch in *Callahan's Key* by Spider Robinson

SFFA219 SFFA223

If you entrust me with the presidency, I know I won't always be the most exciting politician. But I pledge to you tonight: I will work for you every day, and I will never let you down.

If we allow ourselves to believe, without reservation, that we can do what's right and be the better for it, then the best America will be our America. In this City of Angels, we can summon the better angels of our nature. Do not rest where we are, or retreat. Do all we can to make America all it can become.

— Peroration of Al Gore's acceptance speech, Los Angeles, 17 Aug 2000

Rumination cf the Day

I had my girlfriend convinced I was over that shameful "Roadrunner Phase," as we called it — until she found the magazines. And the anvil. And the bird seed. And the jet-powered skates.

— Erik Hallberg, at www.topfive.com

7 December 2000

Improved Optical Technology ... Now 33% Faster

— sticker on box containing Microsoft Intellimouse Optical

does this mean they've increased the speed of light to 380,741 mps?

My choice early in life was either to be a piano-player in a whorehouse or a politician. And to tell the truth, there's hardly any difference.

— Harry S Truman

I might join the Chief Justice were it my commission to interpret Florida law. But disagreement with the Florida court's interpretation of its own State's laws does not warrant the conclusion that the justices of that court have legislated.

— Ruth Bader Ginsburg in her dissent of *Bush v. Gore*, December 12, 2000

What must underlie petitioners' entire federal assault on the Florida election procedures is an unstated lack of confidence in the impartiality and capacity of state judges who would make the critical decisions if the vote count were to proceed. Otherwise, their position is wholly without merit. The endorsement of that position by the majority of this Court can only lend credence to the most cynical appraisal of the work of judges throughout the land. It is confidence in the men and women who administer the judicial system that is the true backbone of the rule of law. Time will one day heal the wound to that confidence that will be inflicted by today's decision. One thing, however, is certain. Although we may never know with complete certainty the identity of the winner of this year's Presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the Nation's confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law.

— John Paul Stevens, in his dissent in *Bush v. Gore*, December 12, 2000

[P]ublishers, like parents and any other entity dealing with groups of obstreperous and opinionated people, ought to pick their battles.

— Pamela Dean Dyer-Bennet, in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 4 Jan 2001

Message-ID: <pddb.978630677@gw.dd-b.net>

<pddb@gw.dd-b.net>

SFFA219

We suffer as a society and a culture when we don't pay the true value of goods and services delivered. We create a lack of production. Less good music is recorded if we remove the incentive to create it.

— Courtney Love

SFFA220

Man is rarely logical. But I have great confidence in Man, based on his past record. He is mean, ornery, cantankerous, illogical, emotional — and amazingly hard to kill. Religious leaders have faith in the spiritual redemotion of Man; humanist leaders subscribe to a belief in the perfectibility of Man through his own efforts; but I am not discussing either of these two viewpoints. My confidence in our species lies in its past history and is founded quite as much on Man's so-called vices as on his so-called virtues. When the chips are down, quarrelsomeness and selfishness can be as useful to the survival of the human race as is altruism, and pig-headedness can be a trait superior to sweet reasonableness. If this were not true, these "vices" would have died out through the early deaths of their hosts, at least a half million years back.

I have a deep impact and abiding confidence in Man as he is, imperfect and often unlovable — plus still greater confidence in his potential. No matter how tough things are, Man copes. He comes up with adequate answers from illogical reasons. But the answers work.

— Robert A Heinlein, "Where To?," reprinted in *Expanded Universe*

Most of you who read this will live to see constant-boost ships of $\frac{1}{10}$ gee or better — and will soon be able to afford vacations in space — soon, soon! I probably won't live to see it, but *you* will. (No complaints, Sergeant — I was born in the horse & buggy age; I have lived to see men walk on the Moon and to see live pictures from the soil of Mars. I've had my share!)

— Robert A Heinlein, footnote to "Where To?," reprinted in *Expanded Universe*

Not only is the universe stranger than you imagine, it's stranger than you can imagine.

— Arthur C Clarke

see Haldane quote about "queerer than you can suppose"

“She’ll make a fine Cabinet secretary,” he told reporters as he watched movers pack his belongings in the Texas governor’s mansion in Austin, Texas. “From what I’ve read in the press accounts, she’s perfectly qualified to be the labor secretary,” Bush added.

— George W Bush on *his* choice for Labor Secretary, Linda Chavez, as reported by CNN on the morning she was forced to withdraw her name for employing an illegal alien

History doesn’t always repeat itself – sometimes it just screams “Why don’t you listen when I’m talking to you?” and lets fly with a club.

— John W Campbell, Jr (story blurb in *Astounding Science Fiction*)

Every useful [software] application outlives the platform on which it was originally developed and deployed.

— Walli’s first law

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.

— William Jefferson Clinton, farewell address, 18 January 2001

Good wine is never expensive, Aristide. Only bad wine is expensive.

— *M Pamplémousse Investigates*, Michael Bond

NASA has two remarkable records: first, a space program far more successful than anyone had dared hope; and, second, the most incredibly bumbling, stupid, inept public relations of any government agency.

— Robert A Heinlein, in *Expanded Universe*, 1979

SFFA219

Because it is there.

— George Leigh Mallory [1886–1924], explanation of why he wanted to climb Mount Everest

SFFA219

We go into space because whatever mankind must undertake, free men must fully share... I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth.

— John F Kennedy, Special Message to the Congress on Urgent National Needs, 25 May 1961

SFFA219

We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people. For space science, like nuclear science and technology, has no conscience of its own. Whether it will become a force for good or ill depends on man, and only if the United States occupies a position of preeminence can we help decide whether this new ocean will be a sea of peace or a new terrifying theater of war.

— John F Kennedy, dedication of the Manned Spacecraft Center,
Houston, 12 September 1962

This nation has tossed its cap over the wall of space, and we have no choice but to follow it.

— John F Kennedy, San Antonio, Texas, 21 November 1963

If... history... teaches us anything, it is that man, in his quest for knowledge and progress, is determined and cannot be deterred.

— John F Kennedy, dedication of the Manned Spacecraft Center,
Houston, 12 September 1962

SFFA219

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.

— John F Kennedy, undelivered speech, 22 November 1963

SFFA219

But please remember: this is only a work of fiction.

The truth, as always, will be much stranger.

— Arthur C Clarke, *2001: A Space Odyssey*

SFFA219

In fact, I can just hear it now: “What good does it do to get people dreaming about that Buck Rogers stuff? Why waste money on interstellar research when there’s need for the money right here in the Trojan Points?”

— Jerry Pournelle, “That Buck Rogers Stuff”

December 1976, *Galaxy* magazine

SFFA219

Like it or not, we’ve got most of the technology—and we don’t have enough to develop the Earth to a point of satiation. If all the world gets rich through the same wasteful processes we employed, we’re probably in big trouble. Worse, what of our grandchildren? The Earth’s resources will not last forever; and what then?

I’ve argued here before that this generation is crucial: we have the resources to get mankind off this planet. If we don’t do it, we may soon be facing a world with 15 billion people and more, a world in which it’s all we can do to stay alive; a world without the investment resources to go into space and get rich.

— Jerry Pournelle, “That Buck Rogers Stuff”

December 1976, *Galaxy* magazine

(partial)SFFA219

Moonbases. Lunar cities. Mining communities in the asteroid belt. Domed colonies on Mars, with prospects for terraforming the planet and turning it into a paradise. An advanced engineering project headquartered on Enceladus. Pollution controlled on Earth, because most polluting activities would go on in space. Near-Earth space factories. Several to hundreds of city-states at the Trojan points of the Earth-Moon system. A space population of millions, with manned and unmanned ships stitching all the space habitats together. This is not a dream world; this is a world we could make in a hundred years!

— Jerry Pournelle, “That Buck Rogers Stuff”

December 1976, *Galaxy* magazine
SFFA219

Given the basic space civilization I’ve described, we’ll have accomplished one goal: no single accident, no war, no one insane action will finish us off. We won’t *have* to have outgrown our damn foolishness to insure survival of the race.

— Jerry Pournelle, “That Buck Rogers Stuff”

December 1976, *Galaxy* magazine

It was in my prison camp that for the first time I understood reality. It was here that I realized that the line between good and evil passes not between countries, not between political parties, not between classes, but down, straight down each separate individual human heart.

— Alexander Solzhenitsyn

I, Galileo, son of the late Vincenzo Galilei, Florentine, aged seventy years, abjure, curse, and detest the aforesaid errors and heresies, and I swear that I will never again say or assert that the Sun is the center of the universe and immovable and that the Earth is not the center and moves.

— Confession forced from Galileo Galilei by the Holy Office, 1633

Eppur si muove. [Still it moves.]

— What Galileo Galilei muttered as he was lead away after signing the confession.

Henrik Hertzberg quotes the previous two in his review of Al Gore’s concession speech after the stolen 2000 election.

People who analyze algorithms have double happiness. First of all they experience the sheer beauty of elegant mathematical patterns that surround elegant computational procedures. Then they receive a practical payoff when their theories make it possible to get other jobs done more quickly and more economically.

— Donald E Knuth, in the foreword to Robert Sedgewick and Philippe Flajolet’s *An Introduction to the Analysis of Algorithms*

(Addison-Wesley, 1996)

It is said, Do not meddle in the affairs of wizards, for they are subtle and quick to anger.

— J R R Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings*

And it is also said, Go not to the Elves for counsel, for they will say both no and yes.
— J R R Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings*

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do.
— Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Self-Reliance”

Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself, I am large, I contain multitudes.
— Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself”

This year’s [inauguration] ceremony was bound to be a trifle awkward where both victory and democracy were concerned, given that the one has come at the expense of the other. Bush has no mandate; but that does not mean that he cannot, in time, earn one. After all, as a *Wall Street Journal* editorial proclaimed not long ago, “Mr Bush won with more popular votes than Bill Clinton ever did. That’s a pretty good position from which to lead.” (Indeed, Bush received more popular votes than anyone in American history except Ronald Reagan in 1984 and Al Gore in 2000.)
— Henrik Hertzberg, “Talk of the Town”, *The New Yorker*, Jan 29, 2001

There is no reason to assume that the universe has the slightest interest in intelligence—or even in life. Both may be random accidental by-products of its operations like the beautiful patterns on a butterfly’s wings. The insect would fly just as well without them.
— Arthur C Clarke, *The Lost Worlds of 2001*

The world has arrived at an age of cheap complex devices of great reliability; and something is bound to come of it.
— Vannevar Bush

SFFA220

Knowledge... resembles a statue of marble which stands in a desert and is continuously threatened with burial by shifting sands. The hands of science must ever be at work in order that the marble column continue everlastingly to shine in the sun.
— Albert Einstein

No tool is more beneficial than intelligence. No enemy is more harmful than ignorance.
— Abu Abdullah Muhammad al-Harithi al-Baghdadi al-Mufid, 10th century Iraqi scholar and jurist.

It is a mark of wisdom not to kick away the very step from which we have risen higher. The removal of one step from a staircase brings down the whole of it.
— Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi

Virtue is the habit of acting according to wisdom. It is necessary that practice accompany knowledge.

— Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz

COLUMN5/01

Logical consequences are the scarecrows of fools and the beacons of wise men.

— T H Huxley, “On the Hypothesis that Animals are Automata”

Many have been the wise speeches of fools, though not so many as the foolish speeches of wise men.

— Thomas Fuller

Ah, it’s a lovely thing, to know a thing or two.

— Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin)

COLUMN5/01

Consider the little mouse, how sagacious Animal it is which never entrusts its life to one hole only.

— Plautus (254?-184 BC), Roman comic playwright, *Truculentus*

It is a point of wisdom to be silent when occasion requires, and better than to speak, though never so well.

— Plutarch

It is never wise to try to appear to be more clever than you are. It is sometimes wise to appear slightly less so.

— William Whitelaw

The older I grow, the more I distrust the familiar doctrine that age brings wisdom.

— H L Mencken

The young man who has not wept is a savage, and the old man who will not laugh is a fool.

— George Santayana

We are wiser than we know.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Teach us to number our days, that we may attain a wise heart.

— *Psalms* 90:12

COLUMN1/00

Indeed, I believe that virtually *every* important aspect of programming arises somewhere in the context of sorting or searching!

— Donald E Knuth, *The Art of Computer Programming*, volume 3

COLUMN5/00

Don't sweat it — it's not real life. It's only ones and zeroes.

— Gene Spafford

COLUMN12/00

Whenever a person is called upon to make a speech, the first question that enters his mind is “What shall I talk about?”

— Gerald R Ford

COLUMN1/01

We will encourage you to develop the three great virtues of a programmer: laziness, impatience, and hubris.

— Larry Wall

COLUMN2/98

Work is the curse of the drinking classes.

— Oscar Wilde

COLUMN2/98

Sir, I have found you an argument; but I am not obliged to find you an understanding.

— Samuel Johnson

COLUMN6/98

All sorts of interesting things happened when programmers tried to [manually] copy subroutines. ... it therefore seemed sensible to have the computer copy the subroutines.

— Grace Murray Hopper on why she built the first compiler

COLUMN4/99

I beheld the wretch — the miserable monster whom I created.

— Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *Frankenstein*

COLUMN5/99

Once more unto the breach, dear friends.

— William Shakespeare, *Henry V*

act III, scene 1
COLUMN7/99

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

— George Santayana

COLUMN8/99

Those who do not understand Unix are condemned to reinvent it, poorly.

— Henry Spencer

A picture is worth a thousand words.

— Fred R Barnard, *Printer's Ink*, March 10, 1927

COLUMN11/99COLUMN12/99

If a picture were really worth a thousand words, people would draw that saying instead.

— Alan Haemer

COLUMN11/99

Talks, speeches, articles and resolutions should all be concise and to the point. Meetings also should not go on too long.

— Mao Tse-Tung

COLUMN12/99

Our nomination for most cliches per column inch in a sports column:

Earnhardt part of NASCAR's killing fields

Dan LeBatard, *Miami Herald*, Feb 19, 2001

He died living.

His love is what killed him.

This is what happens sometimes when you mix this much testosterone with this much horsepower.

Dale Earnhardt dies.

And his sport dies a little bit with him.

Racing is about as safe as anything insane can be, so Earnhardt makes the tragic trade of a very fast black car for a very slow one, and a grieving racing community will feel the impact of this crash in its chest for quite a while, lives turned to debris about as quickly as Earnhardt's car was.

Earnhardt traveled faster than man was ever meant to, and it made him very famous. But fate, tired of being tempted, hit the brakes violently Sunday afternoon . . . and made the Daytona 500's last lap Earnhardt's final lap in more ways than one.

As part of his dark image, Earnhardt liked to dress in black. As part of their dark mood, his mourners will bury him dressed that way.

This isn't the way Earnhardt would have wanted to go out, but only because he wasn't leading. Racing's rush is unlike anything in sports, the adrenaline such that those crews might as well be pumping the fuel right into the drivers during those pit stops, and Earnhardt lived for that high.

He wasn't known as "The Intimidator" because it was cute or catchy. He was known as "The Intimidator" because he was appallingly aggressive even in a world populated by aggression.

He was the most famous NASCAR driver in the world, his mustachioed, weathered sneer representing the face of fast, and his fatality was every bit the racing equivalent of Michael Jordan dropping dead right on the court. His death punctuates an awful stretch of loss in sports during which heroes named Payne Stewart, Wilt Chamberlain, Walter Payton and Joe DiMaggio have been taken away.

You just wish that the people who run Earnhardt's lunatic sport poured a fraction of the money into safety that they do into winning. You just wish that wailing engines so often didn't have to be drowned out by wailing widows. You just wish that the very flame these men spend their lives chasing didn't extinguish them with it. You just wish . . .

Earnhardt lived in the fastest lane in sports, and that's where he died, too. The coffins ought to be wrapped in racing's familiar sponsorship stickers, death hangs so clearly like a guillotine over these roaring proceedings.

Three men died last season, including Adam Petty, a fourth-generation driver who was the 19-year-old grandson of Richard Petty. It makes you feel like tears and mourning and fear are as much a part of this sport as the caution flags.

These men know what they are getting into when they climb into those cars, though, and they approach it with a machismo that is either brave or stupid, depending on your perspective. Richard Petty once warned his family, "If I get killed, and you ever sue anybody over it, I will haunt you."

This should haunt you, too: It looked like such an innocent crash Sunday. Earnhardt has suffered dozens that looked more gruesome than the one that ended his life.

It's a reminder of just how dangerous this sport is, and just how thin the margin is between life and death on that track, that a man as accomplished as anybody who has ever driven fast could be killed by a bump from behind that was so imperceptible that racing experts couldn't tell for sure on replays whether he had been bumped at all.

Ironically, Earnhardt died unselfishly, blocking the field for his son and friend. Earnhardt was known as a selfish driver who didn't much care that his peers disliked him, but on this day, he looked like he was providing a 185-mph screen for Dale Jr., who was in second place, and Michael Waltrip, the little-brother-like teammate who was in first.

He had the kind of car that could have made one last aggressive move. The way Earnhardt went out, protecting them, made them a family until the end.

Winners? They could be considered that, too, but only if your vision is as small and circular as that track and doesn't extend one inch beyond it.

"The man can damn near see behind him, being aware of things he can't see," Dale Jr. marveled of his father before this race.

Alas, his old man couldn't see the one unseen that had trailed him all along . . . and finally caught him Sunday.

Well, let me put it this way. We should call this Day One of Year One.

— Robert A Heinlein to Walter Cronkite, 20 July 1969, 20:17UT

Substitute "damn" every time you're inclined to write "very"; your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be.

— Mark Twain

There are two major products that come out of Berkeley: LSD and UNIX. We don't believe this to be a coincidence.

— Jeremy S Anderson

There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home.

— Ken Olsen, founder Digital Equipment Corp, 1977

What all these functions have in common is the manipulation of digital information to create a reality that seemed more a function of the natural world than of the alien computer realm. Macintosh's first step was to create the subtle virtual reality of its interface. Step two pulled the trappings of the outside reality into this virtual world.

— Steven Levy, *Insanely Great, the Life and Times of Macintosh, the Computer That Changed Everything*

Viking, 1994, pg 252

There was a time, I know, when I conducted much of the same sorts of business that I currently engage in, without requiring a machine that makes more calculations in a morning's work than all the combined arithmetical operations of humanity performed by hand, over the span of recorded history. But I can't remember what that time was like, or how I coped. It is only through the densest fog that I can even remember what it was like using my previous, pre-Macintosh, command-line-interface computer.

— Steven Levy, *Insanely Great, the Life and Times of Macintosh, the Computer That Changed Everything*

Viking, 1994, pg 273

This gap between accepted reality (computers make us more productive) and the quantifiable result (they don't), has come to be known as the Productivity Paradox.

Still, I think the paradox is a useful tool to assess the hours we spend focusing on our tools instead of using them — as in the better part of two days I spent trying to locate the source of my Macintosh troubles. This was a process in which I had never engaged back in the bad old days when I toiled on a typewriter. In a certain sense, those days were not bad at all. I never spent a whole morning installing a new ribbon. Nor did I subscribe to *Remington World* or *IBM Selectric User*. I did not attend the Smith-Corona Expo twice a year. I did not scan the stores for the proper cables to affix to my typewriter, or purchase books that instructed me how to get more use from my Liquid Paper.

— Steven Levy, *Insanely Great, the Life and Times of Macintosh, the Computer That Changed Everything*

Viking, 1994, pg 275

Rumination of the Day

I finally stopped asking “What Would Jesus Do?” when I realized the answers were coming in first-century Aramaic. Fat lot of good *that* did me!

— Mark Spence, at www.topfive.com

21 March 2001

The best way to get a good idea is to get a *lot* of ideas.

— Linus Pauling

The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into the impossible.

— Arthur C Clarke, *The Lost Worlds of 2001*

Xander Harris: So, how did that work out for you? Make you feel better?

Buffy Summers: What are you doing here?

X: I thought you might need to talk, then I saw this skirmish happen. I was going to lend a hand, but noticed you grew a few extra ones.

B: Go home, Xander.

X: Buffy!

B: I'm serious.

X: So am I. Something's up. You're acting like a crazy person. (Buffy walks away and bangs some stuff around in the warehouse.)

X: Take this for instance: You don't want to deal, so you hide. Not very Slayer-like.

B: Just leave me alone, Xander, you have no idea what's going on.

X: No? Good. So you and Reilly aren't imploding? It doesn't take a genius. What I can't figure out is how you never saw it coming.

B: What? Who told you?

X: Nobody told me anything, Buffy. It was right in front of my Xander face. The guy would do anything for you.

B: The guy got himself bit by a vampire. He lied to me. He ran around behind my back, and almost got himself killed. And now he tells me that he's leaving with some covert military operation at midnight unless I convince him not to. Now tell me that you understand, because I sure as hell don't.

X: You gonna let him go?

B: It's not my decision to make.

X: Of course it is.

B: Why?! It's not fair!

X: Who cares if it's fair. In about twenty minutes Reilly's gonna disappear, maybe forever, unless you do something to stop him.

B: What am I supposed to do? Beg him to stay?

X: Why wouldn't you? To keep Reilly here—

B: I don't even know who he is anymore. I mean I thought he was dependable—

X: Dependable? What is he? State Farm?

B: You know what I mean.

X: Yeah. I think you mean convenient. I think you took it for granted that he was going to show up when you wanted him to and take off when you didn't.

B: Look who's talking! Look who has Anya following him around like a lovesick puppy.

X: Oh, boy, is this not about me.

B: Is she more than a convenience? 'Cause that would sort of be a surprise.

X: If you don't want to hear what I have to say, then I'll shut up, right now.

B: Good. 'Cause I don't.

X: I lied. See what I think [is that] you got burned with Angel, and then Reilly shows up.

B: I know this story Xander.

X: But you missed the point. You shut down, Buffy, and you've been treating Reilly like the rebound guy, when he's the one that comes along once in a lifetime. He's never held back with you. He's risked everything. And you're about to let him fly because you don't like ultimatums? If he's not the guy, if what he needs from you just isn't there, let him go. Break his heart, and make it a clean break. But if you really think you can love this guy, I'm talkin'

scary, messy, no emotions barred need, if you're ready for that, think about what you're about to lose.

B: (quietly) Xander...

X: Run.

(Buffy runs to helicopter.)

Xander: (later, to Anya) I've gotta say something, because I don't think I've made it clear: I'm in love with you. Powerfully, painfully, in love. The things you do, the way you think, the way you move, I get excited every time I'm about to see you. You make me feel like I've never felt before in my life: like a man. I just thought you might wanna know.

— *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode "Into the Woods" written and directed by Marti Noxon

It may be the warriors who get the glory, but it's the engineers who build societies.

— B'Elanna Torres, *Star Trek: Voyager* episode "Flesh and Blood"

SFFA221

Being a fine book is a very dignified thing for a tree: we shouldn't mourn all the trees.

— Victor Nell

talk at Microsoft on 4/20/01, "Lost in a Book: The Psychological Aspects of Pleasure Reading and Work Reading"

SFFA221

Everyday narratives — the stories we tell ourselves, our daydreams, and in particular, our pleasure reading — domesticates life as hope. Hope illumines our lives. If people are going to quote something out of [Samuel] Beckett — who wrote *Waiting for Godot*, and as you know the wait is interminable and death intervenes — if we're going to put a quote up on our wall from [Samuel] Beckett, it's going to say "Try. Fail. Try again. And you'll get it right." Because that is the message of hope that we are compelled to extract from our daily experience. If *Time* magazine writes about the Columbine High massacre, it writes about the heroes, the life-saving activities of the good kids, and it dismisses the murderers as the monsters next door. If they're monsters, they're dehumanized. If they're not human we don't have to worry about them because they're not part of the human race. So a popular magazine would adopt the same kind of mythic framework of reaffirming hope at every turn. We do live in the best of all possible worlds, or we're going to make it so.

— Victor Nell

talk at Microsoft on 4/20/01, "Lost in a Book: The Psychological Aspects of Pleasure Reading and Work Reading"

“I’ve been wondering how long it would take you to get your eyes opened. What is your case? It’s nothing new; it happened in the Old South, it happened again in California, in Mexico, in Australia, in South Africa. Why? Because in any expanding free enterprise economy which does not have a money system designed to fit its requirements, the use of mother-country capital to develop the colony inevitably results in subsistence-level wages at home and slave labor in the colonies. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer, and all the good will in the world on the part of the so-called ruling class won’t change it, because the problem is one requiring scientific analysis and a mathematical mind. Do you think you can explain those issues to the general public?”

— Robert A Heinlein, “Logic of Empire”

See, according to Cocteau’s plan, I’m the enemy. Because I like to think, I like to read, I’m into freedom of speech, and freedom of choice. I’m the kinda guy who likes to sit in a greasy spoon and wonder “gee, should I have the T-bone steak, or the jumbo rack of barbecue ribs with a side order of gravy fries?” I want high cholesterol! I wanna eat bacon, and butter, and buckets of cheese, okay? I wanna smoke a Cuban cigar the size of Cincinnati in a non-smoking section. I wanna run through the streets naked with green jello all over my body, reading *Playboy* magazine! Why? Because I suddenly might feel the need to! Okay, pal?

— Edgar Friendly (Denis Leary) in *Demolition Man*

SFFA221

’Tis the gift to be simple, ’tis the gift to be free; / ’Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be; / And when we find ourselves in the place just right, / ’Twill be in the valley of love and delight. / When true simplicity is gain’d. / To bow and to bend we shan’t be ashamed / To turn, turn will be our delight, / ’Til by turning, turning, we come round right.

— “Simple Gifts”, traditional Shaker hymn, written by Elder Joseph Brackett

COLUMN7/01

My favourite thing about deadlines is the lovely whooshing noise they make as they go by.

— Douglas Adams, 1952-2001

I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by.

— Douglas Adams, quoted by Richard Dawkins in “Lament for Douglas Adams,” *The Guardian*, 14 May 2001

SFFA221

Some of the excuses [for missing deadlines] are better than the novels. I would never sit down and write for pleasure because it’s too much like hard work. Ninety per cent of the work gets done in the last 10 per cent of the time.

— Douglas Adams, quoted in his obituary in *The (London) Times*, 14 May 2001

An adventure, wrongly considered, is an inconvenience. An inconvenience, rightly considered, is an adventure.

— G K Chesterton

(to which Arthur Hlavaty replies:)

Oh shit, not *another* adventure.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

Luck is the residue of design.

— Branch Rickey

Rickey was a front-office manager for the St Louis Cardinals and Brooklyn Dodgers — he invented the farm system and signed Jackie Robinson; Spenser (that is Robert B Parker) quotes this in *Potshot*

If our President won't sign up for the Kyoto agreement to protect the atmosphere, we can still sign up for the Brooks agreement, which is sure to protect our inner environment. The pact goes like this: We are polluted by grief and greed; let's acknowledge it, defy it, meet the inevitable vulgar annihilation with careless vulgar rapture, and, with the last measure of our energy and imagination, refuse darkness its dominion. That is the comic's bargain with the public. Laughter makes you light-headed, but it also brings light. It's intoxicating. It works. I've signed on; and I can say without fear of contradiction that there are millions of other heart-broken souls in line right behind me.

— John Lahr in "Gold Rush," his review of Mel Brooks' Broadway production of *The Producers* (*The New Yorker*, May 7, 2001)

...many a programmer derives a major part of his professional excitement from not quite understanding what he is doing, from the daring risks he takes and from the struggle to find the bugs he should not have introduced in the first place.

— Edsger W Dijkstra, 1989

Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. Moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.

— Barry Goldwater, accepting the Presidential nomination, 1964

Rumination cf the Day

If I ever buy land on Lake Titicaca, I'm going to make sure it's not on the -caca end.

— Clynch Varnadore at www.topfive.com

Rumination cf the Day

Just in case you're having trouble, "Neighbors will call the cops if you spend an afternoon in the front yard trying to cram a shrubbery into it" is one good way to tell your ass from a hole in the ground.

— Rolf Lundgren, at www.topfive.com

31 May 2001

The Content of the Propositions

#1: That this is a rich planet. Therefore poverty and hunger are unworthy of it, and since we can abolish them, we must.

#2: That we are a civilized species. Therefore none shall henceforth gain illicit advantage by reason of the fact that we together know more than one of us can know.

— John Brunner, *The Shockwave Rider*

I'm really against nudity in movies. When you act with your clothes on, it's a performance. When you act with your clothes off, it's a documentary. I don't do documentaries.

— Julia Roberts

Kasserian Ingera.

— Traditional greeting of the Masai warrior: "How are the children?"

Think about that for a moment... Fierce Masai. Worrying first about the children.

I wanted to be a writer-performer like the Pythons. In fact I wanted to be John Cleese and it took me some time to realise that the job was, in fact, taken.

— Douglas Adams

OK Danny. If you want to be between us, come to Michele's house on Friday night and we'll be waiting.

— Mira Sorvino as Romy White in *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion*

But you know what? We don't care if you like us, 'cause we don't like you. You're a bad person with an ugly heart, and we don't give a flying fuck what you think.

— Mira Sorvino as Romy White in *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion*

I'm a little *tired*, I'm a little *wired*, and I just want a little appreciation.

— Nicholas Cage as Randal "Memphis" Raines in *Gone in Sixty Seconds*

SFFA00221

If his unpleasant wounding has in some way enlightened the rest of you as to the grim finish beneath the glossy veneer of criminal life, then his injuries carry with it an inherent nobility, and a supreme glory. We should all be so fortunate. You say poor Toby? I say poor us.

— Vinnie Jones as The Sphinx in *Gone in Sixty Seconds*

They threw us out of England, they threw us out of France, so here we are. Flourishing, really, except for the minor inconvenience of despising everything about your country.

— Christopher Eccleston as Raymond Calitri in *Gone in Sixty Seconds*

I've got two jobs. I've discovered that you have to work twice as hard when it's honest.

— Angelina Jolie as Sarah “Sway” Wayland in *Gone in Sixty Seconds*

I am tempted to give one more instance showing how plants and animals, remote in the scale of nature, are bound together by a web of complex relations. I shall hereafter have occasion to show that the exotic *Lobelia fulgens* is never visited in my garden by insects, and consequently, from its peculiar structure, never sets a seed. Nearly all our orchidaceous plants absolutely require the visits of insects to remove their pollen-masses and thus to fertilise them. I find from experiments that humble-bees are almost indispensable to the fertilisation of the heartsease (*Viola tricolor*), for other bees do not visit this flower. I have also found that the visits of bees are necessary for the fertilisation of some kinds of clover; for instance twenty heads of Dutch clover (*Trifolium repens*) yielded 2,290 seeds, but twenty other heads, protected from bees, produced not one. Again, 100 heads of red clover (*T. pratense*) produced 2,700 seeds, but the same number of protected heads produced not a single seed. Humble bees alone visit red clover, as other bees cannot reach the nectar. It has been suggested that moths may fertilise the clovers; but I doubt whether they could do so in the case of the red clover, from their weight not being sufficient to depress the wing petals. Hence we may infer as highly probable that, if the whole genus of humble-bees became extinct or very rare in England, the heartsease and red clover would become very rare, or wholly disappear. The number of humble-bees in any district depends in a great measure upon the number of field-mice, which destroy their combs and nests; and Colonel Newman, who has long attended to the habits of humble-bees, believes that “more than two-thirds of them are thus destroyed all over England.” Now the number of mice is largely dependent, as every one knows, on the number of cats; and Colonel Newman says, “Near villages and small towns I have found the nests of humble-bees more numerous than elsewhere, which I attribute to the number of cats that destroy the mice.” Hence it is quite credible that the presence of a feline animal in large numbers in a district might determine, through the intervention first of mice and then of bees, the frequency of certain flowers in that district!

— Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*

As soon as we started programming, we found out to our surprise that it wasn't as easy to get programs right as we had thought. Debugging had to be discovered. I can remember the exact instant when I realized that a large part of my life from then on was going to be spent in finding mistakes in my own programs.

— Maurice Wilkes

pointed out by John McMullen

There are three principal ways to lose money: wine, women, and engineers. While the first two are more pleasant, the third is by far the more certain.

— Baron Phillippe Rothschild

pointed out by John McMullen

SFFA227

I have often thought that if there had been a good rap group in those days, I might have chosen a career in music instead of politics.

— Richard Nixon

pointed out by John McMullen; contrast with Prince Charles on singing, and Howard Waldrop's 1983 short story "Ike at the Mike"

When I face an issue of great import that cleaves both constituents and colleagues, I always take the same approach. I engage in deep deliberation and quiet contemplation. I wait to the last available minute and then I always vote with the losers. Because, my friend, the winners never remember and the losers never forget.

— Sen. Everett Dirksen

pointed out by John McMullen

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Science is my territory, but science fiction is the landscape of my dreams.

— Freeman Dyson, *Imagined Worlds*, 1997

I have often wondered how many supernovae are industrial accidents.

— Arthur C Clarke, "Review: *Imagined Worlds* by Freeman Dyson"

originally published as "Mind Stretch" in *Times Higher Education Supplement*, March 14, 1997; reprinted in *Greetings, Carbon-based Bipeds!*

The greatest tragedy in mankind's entire history may be the hijacking of morality by religion. However valuable—even necessary—that may have been in enforcing good behavior on primitive peoples, their association is now counterproductive. Yet at the very moment when they should be decoupled, sanctimonious nitwits are calling for a return to morals based on superstition.

— Arthur C Clarke, "Credo"

from *Living Philosophies*, edited by Clifton Fadiman, 1991, reprinted in *Greetings, Carbon-based Bipeds! Collected Essays, 1934–1998*

Unfortunately, most people do not understand even the basic elements of statistics and probability, which is why astrologers and advertising agencies flourish. If you want to start an interesting fight, say in a loud voice at your next cocktail party, "Fifty percent of Americans (or whatever) are mentally subnormal." Then watch all those annoyed by this mathematical tautology instantly pigeonhole themselves.

— Arthur C Clarke, "Credo"

The extraordinary success of Dr. Hawking's book [*A Short History of Time*] is one of the best pieces of news from the popular science—indeed, educational—front for many years. I have been appalled by the way in which the United States (and much of the world, East and West) appears to be sinking into cultural barbarism, harangued by the fundamentalist ayatollahs of the airwaves, its bookstores and newsstands poisoned with mind-rotting rubbish about astrology, UFOs, reincarnation, ESP, spoon-bending, and especially “creationism.” This last—which implies that the marvelous and inspiring story of evolution, so clearly recorded in the geological strata, is all a cosmic practical joke—helps me to understand the revulsion that a devout Muslim must feel toward *The Satanic Verses*. If there is indeed such a thing as blasphemy, it is here. . .

The Pontifical Academy of Science—which I have been honored to address—has now firmly stated: “Masses of evidence render the application of the concept of evolution to man and the other primates beyond serious dispute.”

— Arthur C Clarke, “Credo”

So let us recognize that there is much concerning which we must reserve judgment, and refuse to take seriously all dogmas and revelations whose acceptance demands faith. They have been proved wrong countless times in the past; they will be proved wrong again in the ages to come.

And worse than wrong. Who can forget Jacob Bronowski, in his superb television series, *The Ascent of Man*, standing among the ashes of his relatives at the Auschwitz crematorium and reminding us: “This is how men behave when they believe they have absolute knowledge.” This is how they are still behaving—in Ireland, in Lebanon, in Iran—and at this very moment, alas, in my own Sri Lanka.

— Arthur C Clarke, “Credo”

There are two futures, the future of desire and the future of fate, and man's reason has never learned to separate them.

— J D Bernal, *The World, the Flesh and the Devil*, 1929

Life is a partial, continuous, progressive, multiform and conditionally interactive self-realization of the potentialities of atomic electron states.

— J D Bernal, *The Origin of Life*

The last thing IBM needs right now is a vision.

— Lou Gerstner, IBM CEO

uttered shortly after he took the job, quoted in a 6/21/99 *Fortune* magazine article on “Why CEOs Fail”; *Fortune's* answer appears to be emphasizing goal-setting over execution; pointed out by John McMullen(John comments, “Now, there's a line for those of us who are tired of vision statements.”)

For every fatal shooting, there were roughly three non-fatal shootings. And, folks, this is unacceptable in America. It's just unacceptable. And we're going to do something about it.

— George W Bush, Philadelphia, May 14, 2001

... explaining the logic behind the rationale ...

— George W Bush, in Brussels, explaining what he was going to explain to NATO allies, 12 June 2001

It did bring home to one how terrible this thing was that treated humans as matter.

— Isadore Rabi after the Almagordo test

The last Michael Bay film, *Armageddon*, was a handy guide to what you should do when an asteroid bumps into your planet. At the time, most critics scorned the picture as deafening and dumb; in retrospect, it feels like a mature, even witty, exercise in self-reference, considering that the effect of watching a Michael Bay film is indistinguishable from having a large, pointy lump of rock drop on your head. His new picture *Pearl Harbor*, maintains the mood, pulsing with fervor as it tells a tale familiar to every child in America: how a great nation was attacked and humbled by the imperious pride of Ben Affleck.

— Anthony Lane, in “The Current Cinema: Bombs Away”, *The New Yorker*, June 4, 2001

[Christopher Columbus’] business model did not pan out: no Western route to Asia, hardly any gold, abandonment by his investors, not much of an enduring first-mover advantage for Spain. . . *but he fucking discovered America.*

— “The Revolution is Glorious, and the Sky is Falling — Get Used to It”, in *Inside.com* by co-founder Kurt Anderson, Dec 2000

“Where’s Papa going with that ax?” said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast.

— *Charlotte’s Web*, E B White

Wilbur never forgot Charlotte. Although he loved her children and grandchildren dearly, none of the new spiders ever quite took her place in his heart. She was in a class by herself. It is not often that someone comes along who is a true friend and a good writer. Charlotte was both.

— *Charlotte’s Web*, E B White

Georgia wondered if her definition of heroism had been too simplistic. Maybe heroism wasn’t a bright torchlight in the heat of battle. Maybe it was just a steady, smoldering ember of conscience that refused to surrender. Heroes were men and women who had suffered every bit as much despair, failure, and doubt as the rest of the world. They just toughed it out one minute longer.

— Suzanne Chazin, *The Fourth Angel*

in the last chapter. G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 2001, ISBN 0-399-14705-5

I can write better than anybody who can write faster, and I can write faster than anybody who can write better.

— A J Liebling, 1904–1963

pointed out by John McMullen

People everywhere confuse what they read in newspapers with news.

— A J Liebling, 1904–1963

Did you ever stop and think to yourself “This will be the last time?”

Well, today will be the last time I’ll kiss my little girl. Tomorrow she steps into womanhood, confident, confused, comely, coltish, curious, charming, garrulous, fierce, and fearing.

Who will take care of her? Who will she love? What will she remember? What will she forget? What star will guide her? Will she forgive herself when she can’t always live up to her own expectations? Will she choose the right way when the easy path beckons? Will she discover the difference between pride and vanity? Between courage and posing? Between distance and privacy? Will she experience the joy of the Golden Rule, the heartbreak of losing, the satisfaction of an anonymous kindness, and the love of a child?

Will the boulders in her life make her strong or break her spirit? How will she handle random acts of pain, accidents, and blessings? Will she need to assign blame? Will she make messes or clean them up? Will she find passion in her life of the mind and the heart, a burning, a yearning, a calling, a cause, a reason to get up every day? Will she know peace of mind, contentment, solace in her own company? Will life be good to her?

And will she always know that no matter what happens I will always love her? That she will carry the burden of my love even when we are separated by miles and years and harsh words and a vacuum of minutiae, even beyond life itself?

So many questions. So today I stand here, quietly thinking all these thoughts as I watch her whirl about in preoccupied flurry, knowing this will be the last time. She will be a woman in a blink of an eye. And as I kiss her cheek, I can only ask “Where did she go? This little girl of mine?”

— Baxter Black’s commentary on the occasion of his daughter Jennifer’s college graduation, NPR’s *Morning Edition*, 25 May 2001

If one listens to academics, one might make the mistake of thinking they would like their complaints to be remedied; but in fact the complaints of academics are their treasures, and were you to remove them, you would find either that they had been instantly replenished or that you were now their object. The reason that academics want and need their complaints is that it is important to them to feel oppressed, for in the psychic economy of the academy, oppression is the sign of virtue . . . The essence of it all is contained in the first aphorism I ever formulated, in 1964 as I watched my colleagues at Berkeley turn from abasing themselves before deans and boards of trustees to abasing themselves before students — *Academics like to eat shit, and in a pinch, they don’t care whose shit they eat.*

— Stanley Fish, english lit *enfant terrible*

Software engineering is a lot like fad dieting. No matter how many diets you have tried which failed, along comes the mustard and watermelon diet and you say, “Oh, the reason that all my previous diets have failed is not that dieting is bad. I just haven’t tried the right one yet!”

Software engineering is a difficult thing to do, just like losing weight (for some of us anyway). People have a natural tendency to want to believe that there must be a simple solution to difficult problems. This is used extensively to market the next software engineering fad and miracle cure.

— Dave Taenzer

Filmmakers should ask themselves: “Is my film more interesting than a documentary of the same actors having lunch together?”

— Gene Siskel

pointed out by Janice Gelb

My mother taught me that sex is clean and money is dirty. The first part worked out better than the second.

— Arthur D Hlavaty

Heaven knows we need never be ashamed of our tears, for they are rain upon the blinding dust of Earth, overlaying our hard hearts.

— Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*

Women want mediocre men, and men are working hard to be as mediocre as possible.

— Margaret Mead

If you meet the Buddha on the information superhighway, corrupt his files.

— Zen wisdom for the information age, pointed out by Janice Gelb

The Right Honourable Gentleman is indebted to his memory for his jests and to his imagination for his facts.

— Richard Brinsley Sheridan on the Earl of Dundas

If a traveler were informed that such a man was the Leader of the House of Commons, he might begin to comprehend how the Egyptians worshiped an insect.

— Benjamin Disraeli, on Lord John Russell

If Gladstone fell into the Thames, that would be a misfortune, and if anybody pulled him out that, I suppose, would be a calamity.

— Benjamin Disraeli, when asked to distinguish between a misfortune and a calamity.

He is a self-made man, and worships his creator.

— Benjamin Disraeli, on John Bright

For socialists, going to bed with the Liberals is like having oral sex with a shark.

— Larry Zolf, Canadian socialist, 1975

The left in Canada is more *gauche* than *sinister*.

— John Hamey, 1970

The Honourable Member disagrees. I can hear him shaking his head.

— Pierre Elliott Trudeau

Heckler: I'm a Democrat!

Theodore Roosevelt: May I ask the gentleman why he is a Democrat?

Heckler: My grandfather was a Democrat; my father was a Democrat; and I am a Democrat.

Roosevelt: My friend, suppose your grandfather had been a jackass and your father was a jackass, what would you be?

Heckler: (instantly) A Republican!

We are but the stuff of stars.

— Carl Sagan

It's clearly the budget, it's got lots of numbers.

— George W Bush

They've misunderestimated me.

— George W Bush

It's not important how many people I've killed. What's important is how I get along with the people who are still alive.

— Jimmy "The Tulip" Tudeski, in *The Whole Nine Yards*

Gettin' away from you people is the best thing that ever happened to me. I mean how much sex, fun, and friendship can one man take?

— Harold Cooper (Kevin Kline) in *The Big Chill*

pithy bit:

How much sex, fun, and friendship can one man take?

— Kevin Kline as Harold Cooper in *The Big Chill*

SFFA00223

"I knew he wasn't happy. That doesn't tell you much. I had no idea how bad it was. I think he purposely wanted to cut off from all of us because he was so unhappy with where he was at."

"Is that true Chloe? Did you feel that?"

"I don't know. We had some good times. I haven't met that many happy people in my life. How do they act?"

— Sarah Cooper (Glenn Close), Karen Bowens (JoBeth Williams), and Chloe (Meg Tilly) in *The Big Chill*

... pithy bit

I haven't met that many happy people in my life. How do they act?

— Chloe (Meg Tilly) in *The Big Chill*

“Nick, we go back a long way, and I'm not gonna piss that away because you're higher than a kite.”

“Wrong! A long time ago, we knew each other for a short period. You don't know anything about me. It was easy back then. No one ever had a cushier birth than we did. It's not surprising our friendship could survive that. It's only out here in the world that it gets tough.”

— Sam Weber (Tom Berenger) and Nick (William Hurt) in *The Big Chill*

We took a secret vote. We're not leaving. We're never leaving.

— Michael (Jeff Goldblum) in *The Big Chill*

A pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.

— Winston Churchill

contrast with Chesterton on adventure

I am the leaden army that conquers the world ... I am type.

— Fred Goudy

My heart was in my throat when he was growing up: How on Earth was he going to meet any nice girls that way?

— Anna Torvalds, about her son Linus

quoted in *Just for Fun: The Story of an Accidental Revolutionary*, by Linus Torvalds and David Diamond

I could never even figure out what they were referring to by “heavy petting.” I had spent time taking care of a neighbor's fifteen-pound cat and couldn't figure out what the big deal was.

— Linus Torvalds, *Just for Fun*

In order to hold a very strong opinion, you have to exclude all the other opinions. And that means you have to become unreasonable. This is one of the problems I have with American politics vis-à-vis European politics. In the American version of the game, you draw the enemy lines and the skill rests on one side's ability to be divisive. European politicians tend to win by demonstrating they can foster cooperation.

— Linus Torvalds, *Just for Fun*

On consideration, I think this is one of those discussions where the rhetorical space has gotten so thoroughly trashed it's very hard to have any sort of useful communication, unfortunately.

— David Dyer-Bennet, in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 24 Aug 2001

in a thread entitled “Pharmaceutical Industry vs. Mental Health”

Not forgiving is like drinking rat poison and then waiting for the rat to die.

— Anne Lamott

pointed out by Patrick Nielsen Hayden in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, 11 Sep 2001

[She] is one of the secret masters of the world: a librarian. They control information. Don't ever piss one off.

— Spider Robinson, *Callahan's Touch*

The events of the past two days are shocking and emotional for all of us. I want to encourage everyone to pay special attention to the needs of your colleagues and your broader teams during such a difficult time. It's also important not to jump to any conclusions about these tragic events, and to remember that the individuals who committed these horrific crimes do not represent or speak for any broader ethnic or religious group. In the days ahead, it's more important than ever that we draw on the tolerance and diversity that has made America strong.

— Microsoft President Rick Belluzzo in an all-hands e-mail, 12 Sept 2001

They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.

— Benjamin Franklin

The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate. So it goes. Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.

— Martin Luther King, Jr

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten we belong to each other.

— Mother Teresa

born (Gonxhe Agnes Bojaxhiu)

What Teresa has been saying for years, not just this week, is: "It's my flag too."
And it is.

I'm a patriot. I love my decadent, cosmopolitan, self-indulgent, racially-mixed, godless, intellectually dilettante, drug-abusing, promiscuous, queer-loving country. And its flag is the Stars and Stripes.

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

article <slrn9q6h00.a58.pnh@panix3.panix.com>

Et factus est tonitrus terram perfrangens. (And then there was an earth-shattering kaboom.)

— Dorothy J Heydt explains what Marvin the Martian says in Latin,
rec.arts.sf.fandom, Sat 15 Sep 2001

We shall fight the war as if there were no White Paper, and the White Paper as if there were no war.

— David Ben Gurion

SFFA223

Weapons are the tools of violence; / all decent men detest them.

Weapons are the tools of fear; / a decent man will avoid them / except in the direst necessity / and, if compelled, will use them / only with the utmost restraint.

Peace is his highest value. / If the peace has been shattered, / how can he be content?

His enemies are not demons, / but human beings like himself. / He doesn't wish them personal harm.

Nor does he rejoice in victory. / How could he rejoice in victory / and delight in the slaughter of men?

He enters a battle gravely, / with sorrow and with great compassion, / as if he were attending a funeral.

— Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*

(Translated by Charles Muller)

We succeeded in taking that picture [from deep space], and, if you look at it, you see a dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever lived, lived out their lives. The aggregate of all our joys and sufferings, thousands of confident religions, ideologies and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilizations, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every hopeful child, every mother and father, every inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every superstar, every supreme leader, every saint and sinner in the history of our species, lived there on a mote of dust, suspended in a sunbeam.

The earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and in triumph they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of the dot on scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner of the dot. How frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds. Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light.

Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity – in all this vastness – there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves. It is up to us. It's been said that astronomy is a humbling, and I might add, a character-building experience. To my mind, there is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly and compassionately with one another and to preserve and cherish that pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known.

— Carl Sagan, contemplating a picture of earth taken from *Voyager*

“Look, I know you find me attractive. I’ve seen you looking at my breasts.”

“Nothing personal, but when a guy does that, it just means his eyes are open.”

— Anya Emerson and Xander Harris, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

“The world is what it is—we fight, we die. Wishing doesn’t change that.”

“I have to believe in a better world.”

“Go ahead. I have to live in this one.”

— Buffy Summers and Rupert Giles in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

My country right or wrong. My country if right, to be kept right; and if wrong, to be set right.

— Carl Schurz in the U.S. Senate, 29 February 1872

This attack wasn't on the America of Jerry Falwell. These people that Ken MacLeod so accurately and precisely describes as "barbarians" don't have it in for the America of stifling conformity and fundie authoritarianism. Quite the contrary, what bin Ladin and people like him hate and revile is the America of Robert Mapplethorpe. Of Usenet. Of rap music, slash fiction, the ACLU. Of middle-class peaceniks and Harley-Davidson fanciers. Of BDSM practitioners who rent time at pistol ranges. Of Courtney Love, and Ralph Stanley, and magazines in Spanglish. Of Burning Man, and the World Science Fiction Convention. My America – and yours.

— Patrick Nielsen Hayden, in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, Sat 15 Sep 2001, in a thread entitled "No Comment", on Jerry Falwell blaming the 11 Sep attacks on the ACLU

in article <`slrn9q6hnu.a58.pnh@panix3.panix.com`>

Anyway, the America that's worth fighting for is one in which we can call our President a royalist scum-sucking halfwit who stole the election, and do so while holding our flag high. That's America and I'm for it.

— Patrick Nielsen Hayden, in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, Sat 15 Sep 2001, in a discussion on the Sierra Club backing off from criticizing George W Bush in the aftermath of the 11 Sep attacks

in article <`slrn9q6hnu.a58.pnh@panix3.panix.com`>

Defenceless under the night
our world in stupor lies;
yet dotted everywhere,
ironic points of light
flash out wherever the Just
exchange their messages.
May I, composed like them
of Eros and of dust,
beleaguered by the same
negation and despair,
show an affirming flame.

— W H Auden, closing of "September 1, 1939"

pointed out by Jo Walton (`jo@bluejo.demon.co.uk`), in `rec.art.sf.fandom`, 16 Sep 2001, in article <`1000754748snz@bluejo.demon.co.uk`>,

I sit in one of the dives
On Fifty-second Street
Uncertain and afraid
As the clever hopes expire
Of a low dishonest decade

— W H Auden, opening of "September 1, 1939"

For the national press, scandals have become the main obstacle to keeping news in perspective. Real and alleged scandals, involving figures from Bill Clinton to Michael Jackson, have come to serve as a distraction machine, systematically diverting attention to a spectacle whenever the political system threatens to deal with an important but dull-seeming question affecting the way people actually live.

— James Fallows, *Breaking the News*

Pantheon, 1996, ISBN 0-679-44209-X, p131
SFFA223

Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.

— George W Bush, address to a joint session of Congress, 20 Sep 2001

SFFA223

These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists or they will share in their fate.

— George W Bush, address to a joint session of Congress, 20 Sep 2001

I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful. And those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying in effect to hijack Islam itself.

— George W Bush, address to a joint session of Congress, 20 Sep 2001

compare this next with previous Patrick Nielsen Hayden:

Americans are asking, "Why do they hate us?"

They hate what they see right here in this chamber, a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms, our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other. They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa.

— George W Bush, address to a joint session of Congress, 20 Sep 2001

These terrorists kill not merely to end lives but to disrupt and end a way of life. With every atrocity they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and forsaking our friends. They stand against us because we stand in their way. We're not deceived by their pretenses to piety. We have seen their kind before. They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions, by abandoning every value except the will to power, they follow in the path of fascism, Nazism and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way to where it ends: in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies.

— George W Bush, address to a joint session of Congress, 20 Sep 2001

pithy bit of the last:

They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions, by abandoning every value except the will to power, they follow in the path of fascism, Nazism and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way to where it ends: in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies.

— George W Bush, address to a joint session of Congress, 20 Sep 2001

Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.

From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

— George W Bush, address to a joint session of Congress, 20 Sep 2001

second paragraph of this next is a confluence of JFK and Churchill:

Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger, we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom, the great achievement of our time and the great hope of every time, now depends on us.

Our nation, this generation, will lift the dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter and we will not fail.

— George W Bush, address to a joint session of Congress, 20 Sep 2001

“You know this isn't your world, right? I mean, you know you don't belong here.”

“No. This is a dumb world. On my world, there are people in chains, and we can ride them like ponies.”

— Anya and an evil Willow from an alternate universe, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

“You trusting fool. How do you know the other world is any better than this?”
“Because it has to be.”

— Anya Emerson and Rupert Giles, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

I wanna torture you. I used to love it, and it’s been such a long time. I mean, the last time I tortured someone, they didn’t even *have* chainsaws.

— Angelus, Angel’s evil twin, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Do—do you think I chose to be like this? Do you have any idea how lonely it is, how dangerous? I would *love* to be upstairs watching TV or gossiping about boys or... God, even studying! But I have to save the world. Again.

— Buffy Summers, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

You can attack me, you can send assassins after me, that’s fine. But nobody messes with my boyfriend!

— Buffy Summers, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

“Vampires are creeps.”

“Yes. That’s why one slays them.”

— Buffy Summers and Rupert Giles, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

I gotta stop him before he unleashes unholy havoc and it’s just another Tuesday night in Sunnydale.

— Buffy Summers, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

“Mom, the only way you get a new slayer is if the old slayer dies.”

“Then that means you... When did you die? You never told me you died.”

“It was just for a few minutes.”

— Buffy Summers and her mother Joyce Summers, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Life is risky. You can decide to live your life afraid of that happening, or you can decide to live your life the way Americans live their lives, which is unafraid. There’s no reason to have this increased fear.

— New York Mayor Rudolph Guiliani

Unable to actually imprison us, these terrorists want us to imprison ourselves. Sorry, but no way. It breaks my heart to think about the people who lost loved ones on September 11, but I will not let it break my spirit.

I went to the ballgame Friday night, took in Dvorak's "New World" Symphony at the Kennedy Center Saturday, took my girls out to breakfast in Washington Sunday morning, and then flew to the University of Michigan. Heck, I even went out yesterday and bought some stock. What a great country.

I wonder what Osama bin Laden did in his cave in Afghanistan yesterday?

— Thomas L Friedman, *New York Times*, 25 Sept 2001

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This is precisely the time we should be providing a comforting experience. People who haven't had the heart yet to go back to work have been coming here for a sense of serenity and the intercession of other people, rubbing shoulders in a kind of womb of culture. Hospitals are open. They're around to fix the body. We're here to fix the soul.

— Philippe de Montebello, director of the Metropolitan Museum, quoted by Michael Kimmel, *The New York Times*, 17 Sept 2001

Rumination of the Day

How many angels can dance on the head of a pin? Well, if you take "angels" as a metaphor for "PEZ candy," and if you take "head of a pin" as a metaphor for "my tongue," the answer is something around 17.

— David Hyatt at www.topfive.com

28 Sept 2001

Last December, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* dug up a story of a 1964 GOP voter-intimidation program in Arizona that bullied minority voters in South Phoenix.

The paper interviewed Lito Pena, who had gotten into a shoving match back then with a brainy and particularly obnoxious GOP agent who positioned himself at a table in a minority precinct and "quizzed voters ad nauseam about where they were from, how long they'd lived there—every question in the book. A passage in the Constitution was read and people who spoke broken English were ordered to interpret it to prove they had the language skills to vote."

Pena, a Democrat who went on to serve 30 years in the Arizona legislature, isn't the only one who remembers this attorney prowling South Phoenix. The *Post-Gazette* also talked to Charlie Stevens, a Republican who was recruited by this same agent in '64 to help out. But Stevens refused, because his own parents were immigrants and didn't speak English well: "I didn't think it was proper to challenge my dad or my mother to interpret the Constitution. . . . Lawyers have trouble interpreting it."

Both Pena and Stevens identified the South Phoenix bully as none other than William H. Rehnquist, now Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. . .

— *Hightower Lowdown*, Aug 2001

Well, before my sword can pass all the way through your neck, it has to pass *half way* through your neck. But before it can do *that*, it has to first pass *one-fourth* of the way through your neck. And before it can do *that*...

— Ray Radlein, in `rec.arts.sf.fandom`, quoting Zeno, Warrior Princess

You're not friends. You'll never be friends. You'll be in love 'til it kills you both. You'll fight, and you'll shag, and you'll hate each other 'til it makes you quiver, but you'll never be friends. Real love isn't brains, children. It's blood. It's blood screaming inside you to work its will. I may be love's bitch, but at least I'm man enough to admit it.

— Spike to Buffy Summers and Angel, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Well, 'cause you never know if a girl's gonna say yes or if she's gonna laugh in your face and pull out your still-beating heart and crush it into the ground with her heel.

— Xander Harris, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

"Does it ever get easy?"

"You mean life?"

"Yeah, does it ever get easy?"

"What do you want me to say?"

"Lie to me."

"Yes. It's terribly simple. The good guys are always stalwart and true. The bad guys are easily distinguished by their pointy horns or black hats, and we always defeat them and save the day. No one ever dies...and everyone lives happily ever after."

"Liar."

— Buffy Summers and Rupert Giles, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

"Come on. You don't think he ever got restless as a kid?"

"Are you kidding? His diapers were tweed."

— Buffy Summers and Xander Harris about Rupert Giles, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

"[Nailing crosses around her doors] I'm going to have a hard time explaining this to my dad."

"You really think this'll bother him?"

"Ira Rosenberg's only daughter nailing crucifixes to her bedroom wall? I have to go to Xander's house just to watch *A Charlie Brown Christmas* every year."

"I see your point."

"Although it is worthwhile just to see Xander do the Snoopy dance."

— Willow Rosenberg and Buffy Summers, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

“Crap. Look at this. . . Now I’m burdened with a husband and several tiny pink children and more cash than I can reasonably manage.”

“That means you’re winning.”

“Really?”

“Yes. Cash equals good.”

“Ooooh! I’m so pleased! Can I trade in the children for more cash?”

— Anya Emerson and Xander Harris playing a board game, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Hey, I’m well aware of how lucky I am. Like, lottery lucky. Buffy’s like nobody else in the world. When I’m with her, it’s like I’m split in two – half of me is just on fire, going crazy if I’m not touching her. Other half is so still and peaceful, just perfectly content. Just knows: this is the one. . . . But she doesn’t love me.

— Riley Finn to Xander Harris about Buffy Summers, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

compare with the following

Sometimes I envy you so much it chokes me. And sometimes I think I got the better deal. To be that close to her and not have her, to be all alone even when you’re holding her. Feeling her, feeling her beneath you. Surrounding you. . . the scent. No, you got the better deal.

— Spike to Riley Finn, about Buffy Summers, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

“I still don’t know why we had to come here to look up information on a killer snot monster.”

“Because it’s a killer snot monster from outer space. . . I did not say that.”

— Xander Harris and Rupert Giles, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

When I’m around you, Buffy, I find myself needing to know the plural of apocalypse.

— Riley Finn, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Simpler is Better.

— Dick Dunn

COLUMN6/01COLUMN7/01

By God, he was an atheist.

— Gardner Dozois on Isaac Asimov’s lack of a deathbed conversion

There’s something you don’t see every day. . . unless you’re us.

— Xander Harris, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

9/11/01

Every morning for over twelve years I woke up before dawn, grabbed my timer-brewed coffee and sat down to draw a Dilbert comic. I did it seven days a week. I did it on Thanksgiving. I did it on Christmas. I did it when I was sick. That was my rule, unless I was traveling. No exceptions. Never.

People always asked me, “Do you ever have writer’s block?” Nope. Not once.

On 9/11/01, that changed. Somehow I managed to turn off the television for a few minutes. I stared at a blank piece of paper. It stayed blank.

The bastards took my sense of humor.

Shock. Disbelief. Grief. Anger. Repeat.

The counting began. The husband of a friend, gone. The husband of a business associate, gone. A regular customer of my restaurant, gone. The innocence of a generation of children, gone. Trust, gone. Investments, squashed.

We lost so much. But it put life in perspective, and that might be the one good thing to come from this. Friends and family are more precious. I am grateful for every bite of food and every drink of water. My cats purr better. The first normal radio commercial in several days was deeply satisfying. I had taken so much for granted.

The politicians and the soldiers have their jobs to do. We all know our roles too – somehow automatically – a reassuring sign of our indestructible connectedness.

Now I’m going to do my job. I’m taking back my sense of humor. I hope you’ll join me when you can. If you’re not ready, read no further. We’ll catch up later, my friend.

— Scott Adams, Dilbert Newsletter #37, 3 Oct 2001

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If you’re in a fair fight, you didn’t plan it properly.

— Nick Lappos, Chief R&D Pilot, Sikorsky Aircraft

If my son wants to be a pimp when he grows up, that’s fine with me. I hope he’s a good one and enjoys it and doesn’t get caught. I’ll support him in this. But if he wants to be a network administrator, he’s out of the house and not part of my family.

— Steve Wozniak, www.woz.org

...Do you realize what a very important person a Major is? Ninety-nine people out of a hundred in this great Army have to touch their hats to me. With this inspiring reflection, let me sign myself,

Your loving and devoted husband,
Winston

Kiss Randolph, Diana, and that golden Sarah for me.

— Winston Churchill, letter to his wife Clementine, 23 Nov 1915,
from the trenches in France

My own darling,

I long so to be able to comfort you. Later on when you are in danger in the trenches, you will be equable and contented, while I, who am now comparatively at ease, will be in mortal anxiety. Try not to brood too much: I'd be so unhappy if your naturally open and unsuspecting nature became embittered. Patience is the only grace you need. If you are not killed, as sure as day follows night, you will come into your own again. I know *you* don't fear death — it is I who dread *that*. But I am almost glad to be suffering because I'm sure no single soul will be allowed to live through this time without sorrow, so perhaps what we are enduring now will be counted and we shall be spared the greatest pain of all.

When it's all over we'll be proud you were a soldier and not a politician for the greater part of the war. Soldiers and soldiers' wives seem to me now the only real people.

I'm glad you tell me all you feel, Darling. I want to know it all. I, too, show a detached and smiling face to the world.

I wish I had some interesting news for you. Goodbye, my darling. I send you my kisses.

Your darling Clemmie

Do you want any more cigars?

— Letter to Winston Churchill in France, from his wife Clementine,
12 Jan 1916

Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.

— Blaise Pascal

We have received a wake up call from hell. Now the question is simple: Do we rally to defeat this evil, while there is still time, or do we press a collective snooze button and go back to business as usual? The time for action is now.

Today the terrorists have the will to destroy us, but they do not have the power. There is no doubt that we have the power to crush them. Now we must also show that we have the will to do just that. Once any part of the terror network acquires nuclear weapons, this equation will fundamentally change, and with it the course of human affairs. This is the historical imperative that now confronts all of us.

— Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the United States House of Representatives Government Reform Committee, September 20, 2001.

It has been over three weeks since the clean up of this terrible disaster began. During that time, both the mood of the site as well as the momentum of the work has vacillated.

...

We have suffered a tremendous blow, huge and terrible losses. In no way, however have we suffered any defeat, not that can be seen while standing in the streets of lower Manhattan.

— Charlie Cappello, Bechtel Corporation, in one of his periodic dispatches from the site of the World Trade Center cleanup, 7 Oct 2001

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