

JUNE 1998

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ALTERNATELY, WE COULD
JUST TRANSPLANT YOUR
HEAD ON A NEW BODY.

HEART, LUNGS
KIDNEYS,
LIVER AND
SEX CHANGE
IN ONE
FELL
SWOOP!



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As Editor, I do not usually publish all of a letter. Especially long ones

Freedom of the press:

Whoever owns the press owns the freedom.

---Arthur Lane Terego

Freedom of speech:

Everyone can speak; only the wealthy can make themselves heard.

---Arthur Lane Terego



Personal

The Eyes Don't Have It

Admittedly, in a burst of enthusiasm, I did say in print that I'd use my eyes reading sf, fantasy & horror until I went blind.

But now that blur has come to print, I must recant. And that in turn requires some readjustments in and to The Geis Letter.

To put an out of focus point to it, what happens is that after reading text for a few minutes my eyes tire and the print gets fuzzy...and fuzzier...

So I must stop and rest my eyes.

New glasses is not the answer.

I must avoid focusing for more than a minute on a page. Glancing aside every few seconds to look around the room or out the window helps some, but makes for an endless series of brief reading periods in order to read a complete novel. Like, weeks!

It's infuriating, humiliating, depressing, frightening.

This seems only to be a problem for up-close work while using magnifying, correcting glasses. [Gee, there goes my hobby of brain surgery.]

Watching TV is no problem for some reason. I most often do not need to use glasses, and I naturally shift focus to other objects in the room very often without realizing it---clock, cat, Paulette, TV Host, glass/bottle, food, window...

And even focusing on this computer monitor (with up-close glasses) is relatively free of strain since viewing is relieved by glances at papers, keyboard, and especially out the window (which requires taking off my glasses) at the gardens, shrubs, trees, fences, at the squirrels, at the cats who use our back yard as a highway...

And I write using 18-point type which I subsequently step down to 12-point for TGL and letters.

Sometimes I use 24-point on

'weak eyes' days.

So that's the way it is, and now to discuss the consequences.

I'm now asking editors and publishers to stop sending me books and other stuff to read or review. It kills me to write this, but STOP SENDING BOOKS and zines. [I know lots of you'll feel guilty getting TGL and not giving anything back, but an occasional letter of comment will be fine.]

What pisses me most is missing all the good reading, important new novels, all the interesting and important background and inside info about world affairs...

Like, just today I received from Tor the novels *Darwinia* by Robert Charles Wilson and *Factoring Humanity* by Robert J. Sawyer. They both look very good.

And on my desk also is *Earth Made of Glass* by John Barnes with its mindblowing opening:

It was hard to believe that Refeu had been killed nine years ago. As he sat with us over a glass of wine, he barely looked six years old today. "It's honestly getting better," he said. "In this last year I've finally gotten some fine motor control, and as the corpus callosum grows in, I've begun to think more coherently. Still, puberty's a long way away."

The joyous obscenity of his grin made me glad we'd taken the trouble to visit.

Incredible hook! Marvelous skill: he creates a wild reality, a new future... in one paragraph!

And I'm very unlikely to ever be able to finish reading the book.

Yeah, I've tried all the herbal things: Eyebright, Bilberry, a Chinese formula for the eyes... I already take vitamins and minerals up the yin yang.

I've just got to accept that I'm almost 71 and this body is gradually deteriorating. It's the end game of life.

You accept it, make what adjustments you can, and go on. Like, what's the alternative?

So, here's my plan...

I'm interested in publishing reviews by other fans and/or writers who have read a new novel or non-fiction book they consider exceptional (good or bad) and wish to alert us to. As for instance the review by Vince Nowell of *The Day After Roswell* in TGL 47.

And I'll continue (resume, actually) to write caustic Politically unCorrect comments on the passing human parade. And perhaps resume reviewing TV and films now and again. I'll fill these pages, never fear.

That's about it. Oh, if possible send me your letters and reviews via

e-mail:

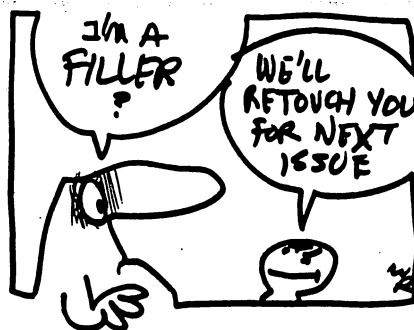
INTERNET:100313.3440@compuserve.com

That way it's easy for me to download them and convert them to big print for easier reading and editing.

The limitations of this machine are such that it cannot accept binary e-mail files. ASCII files only. I don't pretend to know the technical difference; I only report what happens—binary files do not appear, though the binary gap is reported on my screen.

Finally, this situation is a bitch, and I feel foolish after having made the big fuss about 'returning to sf' in issue 47. I thought I could get away with more reading than possible, or that new glasses would solve the problem. This is not the future I want.

Well, thank you all. Onward!



Letter

Vince Nowell

INTERNET:VNowell@aol.com

5-18-98 'Interesting issue, Richard, especially the new information about TWA 800. However, it never ceases to irritate me when someone carelessly (or purposefully) turns a verb into a noun, or vice versa. Goddard's misuse of the word "disappeared" jumped off the page.

'As to your comment, "Of course all of Moses' plagues can be rationalized, but if they were so common, what is the threat? Not much of an Almighty God if that's all He can do!" Common they may have been, singularly, but as a predicted (via Moses' threats) series of rapidly successive disasters...well, that's a bit of show, isn't it?

I take an alternate viewpoint from yours. Given a Higher Power (pardon the caps, but believers don't take chances), I think it is the institutions of mankind that have put divinity in such a bad light. Or, one could say, it's a chicken and egg conundrum, with

human institutions being the bad eggs.

In that regard, then, one could (and I do) say that Wicca is successful for its never having evolved into an actual humanized organization with heirarchy, latent dogma, theological lawyers, and a power-mad, politically motivated clergy.

The review of Col. Corso's *The Day After Roswell* in the *Skeptical Inquirer* must have been written by someone who read a different edition than I did. The "errors" the review is said to have exposed are not things I recall reading in the first place.

Finally, if the conspiracies surrounding TWA 800, and now the 1968 Aer Lingus event, fantastic as they appear, are acceptable to any kind of a large audience, then belief in UFOs can hardly be scoff-fodder, can it? Of course that kind of syllogistic reasoning really carries no weight.'

REG: But 'human institutions' are a direct aspect of mankind who was--- according to most religionists---created by God. So why blame us for being and doing what God must have intended, since He is perfect and must have created man with perfect intent and planning, and must have foreseen man's development of science and all that flowed from that. What we are today is exactly what God intended...or He is a flawed fraud.

Wicca hasn't developed all the trappings of a major religion because it's a very minor belief system shared by three hundred and ten delusional women scattered around the world. Believe me, if there was any real money to be made from it, it would develop all the masked power-money struggles as other religions.

My view of the UFO belief phenomena is that it is an aspect of our religious impulse (which in turn might simply be the result of mortal fear of death and a primal need to avoid or escape death by believing in god/gods and an afterlife).

And keep in mind the distinction made by Charles Platt in TGL 47: conspiracies as opposed to cover-ups; the Aer Lingus and TWA Flight 800 disasters seem both to be accidents and cover-ups.

Letter

DARRELL SCHWEITZER

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18-May-98 'Re: Vince Nowell

and the Bible as fantasy, no it is not fantasy in the modern sense. There exists no acknowledgement on the part of the writers that this is made up, for the purposes of the tale. Such sophistication comes a bit later in cultural development. It appears in the ancient world in the works of Lucian of Samosata and of Apuleius.

'Recall that passage de Camp quotes at the beginning of *The Incomplete Enchanter*, all about "I have not seen these things nor do I expect anyone to believe them." Knowing fantasy can only arise out of a culture of (at least partial) skepticism, something which did not exist when the Bible was written, or during most of the centuries afterwards.

The Bible has more in common with the works of Homer and the Epic of Gilgamesh. Parts of it, which have specific, named authors (rather than just the tradition that Moses wrote the first five books, including the description of his own death), are comparable to Hesiod or the early books of Livy. The work begins in mythology and slides almost imperceptibly into history, even as Livy does (though Livy's is a single-author work, not an anthology, and so he was able to acknowledge that nobody really knew the earliest history of Rome).

'But the people of the time would not have made such a distinction. I don't think they would have recognized "myth" as we know it, any more than a primitive today makes a distinction between waking/real experience and dream/unreal. To him, both are things which happened. To an ancient Hebrew, the Creation, the Exodus, and the civil war between Solomon and his son Absalom were just things that happened, before the lifetime of the reader. WE would say that the first is myth, the second legend, and the third history.

'Certainly from *Kings* onward, the Bible is about as reliable as any other ancient history. The only book which might even be called fiction in the modern sense is *Job*, which is a fable showing how one is supposed to confront the seeming cruelty of God.

'Speaking of which, where does Nowell get the idea that ancient Judaism was based on "peace and hope"? It is true that the Jews made the radical contribution of a linear rather than cyclical view of history (i.e. the future is going to be different), but, as Mark Twain put it, the God of the Old Testament is an abusive parent at the very least.

'Yahweh is actually no more than a tribal sky-god, the Hebrew Jupiter, who frequently ordered his people to commit acts of genocide, as at Jericho.

'(The economic reason behind that, I suspect, was that the Hebrew economy was too primitive to support slaves. Also, there was fear of cultural contamination if the conquered were to outnumber the conquerors, so the Jews took no prisoners.)

'There are actually indications in the Old Testament that the Jews acknowledged the existence of gods other than Yahweh, but merely regarded it as wicked to worship them. Yahweh was a jealous god, and there had to be something for him to be jealous of. 'The concept "your god doesn't exist; he is a delusion" probably would have seemed gibberish in the 2nd millennium BC. The import of the Old Testament is that Yahweh is more powerful, and he will look out for the Jews if they worship him and no other.

'Nowhere does the Old Testament suggest the Philistines or Egyptians should give up their gods and worship the Jewish one. That is a Christian/New Testament concept. In the Old Testament, it's more a matter that Yahweh can beat up Moloch in a fight.

'By the way, one intriguing Exodus theory I've encountered is that the plagues of Egypt (and especially the drowning of the Egyptian army) were caused by the explosion of Thera. Look at a map of the eastern Mediterranean. Consider that the tidal waves from the blast would have radiated out in all directions from Thera, striking the shores of Crete, Asia Minor, and various islands. But the way to Egypt is clear. There is an unobstructed path for the wave to have travelled between Thera and what is now Suez. So if the Hebrews got across to higher ground hours before the wave arrived and the Egyptians arrived too late, it fits, and the rest was just improved in the telling.

'This certainly makes more sense than Velikovsky, whom, I suspect, Nowell is in danger of taking seriously. (Nowell clearly hasn't a clue as to what skepticism is about.) That Velikovsky's theories are untrue is evident from the basic physical workings of the universe. That Velikovsky didn't believe them either, and was a fraud, is also pretty clear, but another matter entirely.'

REG: But according to my Columbia

Encyclopedia, Thera erupted in 1500 BC, and Moses lived in the 1300rds BC, about 200 years later.

Wot, you're intent on destroying my tentative belief in Velikovsky, too? You are cruel beyond measure, Darrell.

Letter

Bill Bowers

INTERNET: xenolith@juno.com

5-18-98 'It is good to be back in touch with you after all these years ... and to see that you are still as feisty as always!

'I, with several others, welcome your (apparently) increased emphasis on sf & fantasy.

'As appears to be the case with at least a few others, over the past half decade my "entertainment" reading has been diverted from sf to (mainly) mysteries. I've gone back and read, for the first time, many of the classics from the '30s and '40s. That was an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Also, over the same span, a large percentage of my film "viewing" as been of '30s & '40s "noir".

'Graduating to more recent examples, I've just finished reading all thirteen of Lawrence Sanders' "Matthew Scudder" novels, in sequence. It is a strange, and heady experience, to read in the span of the of a couple of weeks something that took the author over twenty years to create--- but in this case it was particularly rewarding, since Sanders achieved the best sustained example of solid, logical, character development I've encountered in any genre.

'Anent Buzz Dixon's letter in #48: I've only read one "collection" of James Ellroy, but I have virtually all of his books on the shelf, and look forward to diving into them in the near future. I finally, this past week, went to see the film version of *L.A. Confidential*, loved it, and look forward to reading the novel on which it was based.

'Though that is a risky assumption. All too often, when I've read a novel first, and then seen the film version, I've been terribly disappointed. I know that they are two separate and distinct mediums, but still....

[In fact, the only film adaption of a mystery novel that I feel came close to capturing the "feel" of the original was that, several years ago, made from Charles Willeford's *Miami Blues*.]

"If you want "gritty" fiction, try Willeford. Or James Crumley. ...And if you really want to be blown away, try the work of Andrew Vachss. He'll tear you up, spit you out, and make you enjoy the process."

"The stars descended upon me like an elevator in a shaft."

---Ross Macdonald,
Trouble Follows Me, 1946

REG: One thing I've learned: the Conspiracy-Cover-up community is very insular and hates to write letters of comment. I'm far more at home and happier in sf fandom. Though I will still Update & Review some government outrages.

You've given me even more authors to hope to read. Hope springs eternal, even if my eyes don't. I'll have to think about audiobooks. But---as I review my typical day --- when would I listen to the tapes? I frankly would rather **write** fiction than listen to it from tapes.

Letter

Frank Denton

14654 - 8th Av SW
Seattle, WA 98166

5-17-98 'George Laskowski's letter [in TGL 48] is rather indicative of what happens to many older sf and fantasy fans. Eventually tiring of reading the same story over and over, we seek something different in some of the classic novels from the mainstream and from earlier times. Or we settle on a few very good writers whom we can continue to enjoy. Robert Silverberg is such a one for me, plus a couple of fine Canadian writers, Guy Gavriel Kay and Charles de Lint. I would suggest to George that *The Crying of Lot 49* is probably a lot more accessible than is Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*.'

REG: As luck (and someone in the offices of Tor) would have it, I have a copy of Charles de Lint's new novel *Someplace To Be Flying*, and have been promising myself for several months I'll read it. But that seems more and more unlikely, now. Would you care to send a review of it?

I doubt, too, I'll make a special effort to get into Pynchon.

Letter

Joseph T. Major

1409 Christy Avenue
Louisville, KY 40204-2040

5-19-98 'SFWA Online Update in TGL #48: The interesting thing is that not one of the Nebula winning items was even nominated for the Hugo.'

REG: !!! Now there is a massive divergence between the professional writers and the fans/readers. Any authors, editors and readers out there care to explain this!?

'LoC from Roy Tackett in TGL #48: He is right about Roswell. I was reading really far-out flying saucer books back in the sixties --- look, there was not so much SF available then --- and never a mention of Roswell then, nary a peep. And I was looking up things like *They Knew Too Much About Flying Saucers*, the *original* Men In Black book!

'Review of *The Predators* in TGL #48: I think I read a [Harold] Robbins novel, but since I cannot even remember the title, cannot be sure. If it was that unremarkable, that would seem to confirm your comment about "short, simple sentences". Robbins was one of those vicarious-pleasure novelists - the reader was supposed to immerse himself in the sex and wealth and sex and consumption and sex and wild living and sex and, oh yes, sex. Readers would have most of the fun of being there and they could feel better about themselves since they were not as immoral as those rich people.'



Letter

L. A. Rollins

1930 Lawrence St. #21
Port Townsend WA 98368

5-18-98 'Regarding your review of Mark Ludwig's *The Millenium* (sic) *Bug: Gateway To the Cashless Society*?: I have not read the book. Nevertheless, in my state of blissful ignorance, I do not find the thesis of the book "convincing."

'While I agree that some folks might want to create a "cashless

society" of "Almost total electronic 'money'", I don't see how they can use the Y2K problem to do this, if Y2K problem is a real and serious problem.

'Since the Y2K problem is a computer problem, and since electronic money systems depend upon computers, I don't see how the Y2K problem can be used to create a "cashless society," if the Y2K problem is for real. Unless there is some fine point here I'm missing, then to the extent that the Y2K problem is a real problem, to that extent a system of electronic money would be unworkable.'

REG: Firstly, Ludwig titled his book using 'Millenium' or his publisher-editor at American Eagle Publications did it. I simply used his spelling of the word and trusted somebody would become sic about it.

Secondly, the Y2K problem is an internal dating problem in old but still in use computers, old embedded chips and old data bases. That will cause a lot of problems. But newer computers (and all Macs) are '2K compliant'.

To make a hypothetical case for Ludwig's prediction-fears:

More and more use of e-money (restricted to the new and newer, powerful computers using tamper-proof, encrypted software) will be sold to the public as safe and reliable and necessary to get vital government welfare and bank credit during the crushing recession-depression which will be manifest in 1999 and onward. And to foil suddenly-highlighted counterfeiters (home grown and overseas) of paper money and to foil the drug dealers and the smugglers and the low-life denizens of the tax-evading underground economy who, it will be shown by the govt. and the mass media, are virtually the only ones who really need to use paper money!

It will be unpatriotic and subversive and reactionary to use and possess that old unsanitary paper money! [The media will show pictures of diseased antisocials spitting on paper money... smearing it with feces...] Large retail chains will change over to a no cash payment policy. You will be looked at and treated with suspicion if you use paper cash. "Only criminals and enemies of the USA use cash!" "Patriots use their cards!" "Ret(ina)Scans protect you and your credits!"

That's my estimate of how it might be done. And it would be a campaign scheduled to take a generation or more to complete. But 95-99% complete in

say five years. Our current base metal "coins" (tokens) could be retained for vending machine and public phone use until the old machines are phased out. Yikes! I've scared myself!

Review

China Bride

By Henry Luk

Forge Books, 1998, \$22.95, 302 p., Hardcover, ISBN: 0-312-86521-X

Highly readable, often exciting, instructive in Chinese culture and traditions (including its crime culture), this first novel has all the makings for a 'major Hollywood film'.

Beth Connor, former Olympic athlete, has agreed to marry a young Chinese man, heir to a huge Hong Kong family fortune.

They are brutally kidnapped on their way from the Hong Kong airport.

Beth manages to escape, and bullheadedly, love-driven, despite overwhelming cultural opposition and plotting from some in the family and a Taiwanese criminal Triad (Mafia-like tribe), charms, and wills herself into positions of power and influence to create allies and friends and to cause the rescue of her fiancé and acceptance of her by his traditional Chinese family.

It both helps and harms her to be a tall, big-breasted beautiful blonde American.

Along the way there is much danger, many sex and nude scenes, some flogging, murders, tortures... Good stuff!

Since Henry Luk is the son of a filmmaker and has been a successful Wall Street analyst and bond and future trader (before his move home to Hong Kong), the high-level business deals and connivings are convincing. He writes in scenes and often in script-paced dialog. Successfully. Though as a result there is a degree of shallowness to the novel.

I think some end-game plot twists and out-of-character moves by the prime bad person are plot-driven rather than character driven, but in a movie hardly anyone would notice or care.

The prime question is: who in Hollywood could best play the role of Beth Connor?



Letter

KENN THOMAS

INTERNET:skthoma@umslvma.umsl.edu

5-23-98 'I noticed the look at Aer Lingus in *Geis Letter* 48 and thought you might be interested in the following. Odd how *Irish Times* fails to make a connection to Flight 800. Clearly the similarities are what's keeping the files locked up past the 30 year rule.'

'"Air mystery cover-up fear" by Andrew Bushe, *Irish Post*, 3/28/98

'Grieving families of the 61 passengers who died in an Aer Lingus plane crash 30 years ago this week have been stunned by news that secret state papers on the tragedy will stay locked up.

'Relatives gathering for anniversary Masses had expected the Irish National Archive to release documents under normal 30 year rules but they have been angered to learn that disclosure could be years away.

'And now there are fears of a cover-up to hide the truth of what really happened to the flight.

'I would be very surprised if the file is available," national Archive director Dr. David Craig told the *Irish Post* this week. He believes that a filing backlog could mean the crash papers not being released until 2001 at the earliest.

'The St. Phelim took off from London on Sunday, March 24, 1968, but crashed into the Irish Sea at Tuskar Rock off Wexford and many believe that a stray test missile fired from Wales was to blame.

'British Ministry of Defence files on the case are also due for release under 30 year rules but if theories about a rogue missile are correct, those files will almost certainly be reclassified as too sensitive for public consumption.

'Mourners will travel from Britain and the US for commemorations being held this weekend for the families of the 61 dead passengers and those ceremonies have prompted calls for a fresh probe of the baffling tragedy.

'Hugh Byrne, the Republic's Minister of State for the Marine, believes the plane was mistakenly hit by a British heat-seeking missile and he is appealing to military servicemen to recognise their "moral duty" to "tell the truth".

'People reported seeing an aircraft with red markings on it in the air over Wexford on the day of the crash and there has been speculation that this was a missile target drone. One theory is that a missile may have been fired at that drone but was diverted off course by the heat of the Viscount plane's engines.

REG: Thanks, Kenn, for this update on the Aer Lingus crash remembrance. Again we see how well a government can keep its secrets if necessary. And I note that the American mass media hasn't noted the odd similarities with TWA Flight 800. They search the records for similar central fuel tank explosions (in service to the government position), but look for similar

"friendly-fire" shootdowns of airliners (in service to the critics)? No way!

Update

The following are quotes from Admiral Thomas H. Moorer:

Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, USN, Ret.

July 17, 1998, will mark the second anniversary of the mysterious crash of TWA Flight 800 off the coast of Long Island, killing 230 men, women and children. ...

The FBI and National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) ... theory is that the crash was initiated by an explosion of fuel in the plane's center tank, but the evidence they cite to support this is so weak that many people have been unwilling to accept it.

As a former Navy aviator and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I am puzzled and disturbed by the inconclusive results of this investigation.

Blaming the crash on an explosion in the fuel tank does not ring true for several reasons. First of all, modern aviation fuel is designed for safety. It does not readily burn, much less explode. There is no precedent for a mid-air fuel tank explosion in a modern jet airliner using Jet A-1 fuel without the involvement of a high explosive device.

The NTSB searched long and hard for evidence that something in the center wing tank of TWA Flight 800 had created a spark that set off a powerful explosion in the nearly empty tank. They could find nothing that would have generated such a spark.

And unless the fuel was heated to at least 127 degrees Fahrenheit at sea level, you couldn't burn it with a match. That is why these modern jets using modern fuel have flown billions of miles with never an accident of this type unless a high explosive was involved.

There is no doubt that there was an explosion in the center wing fuel tank of TWA Flight 800, but the evidence indicates that it was the result of the explosion of a powerful missile outside the tank.

There is a great deal of important evidence bearing on the crash that apparently has not been given the

attention that it deserves by either the official investigators or the news media. The most obvious and inexplicable example is the evidence provided by 183 eyewitnesses interviewed by the FBI who saw a streak of light heading toward the plane immediately before the explosion. According to an FBI report, 96 of these eyewitnesses said they saw the streak of light rising from the surface.

The disregard of the evidence provided by all these eyewitnesses raises a number of questions.

- Why did the FBI insist that the NTSB not allow any eyewitnesses to testify at its public hearing on the causes of the crash?

- Why did the Justice Department, through an assistant U.S. attorney in New York City, order the investigative team assembled by the NTSB not to undertake any eye witness interviews, but to leave that to the FBI?

- Why did the FBI refuse to let the NTSB investigators participate in its interviews of eyewitnesses?

- Why has the FBI refused to release its eyewitness interview reports to the press and public?

- Why has the government tried to discredit eyewitness testimony with the claim that all those people who said they saw a rocket-like object rising from the surface and exploding 14,000 feet up had really seen burning fuel spilling from the fuel tanks in the plane's wings.

The intelligent, sober people who saw a streak of light ascending shake their heads in disbelief when told that the government is saying that they really saw burning fuel falling.

There are many more questions I would like to see answered.

The investigators conducted tests to determine what impact a missile would have on the plane, what kind of "fingerprints" it would leave on the wreckage. But their testing raises these questions:

- Why did they limit their testing of the impact of a missile to small shoulder-fired missiles such as the Stinger?

- Don't they know that these small missiles would not have been effective against a 747 flying at nearly 14,000 feet?

- Why didn't they look for the clues that would be left by the explosion of a large sophisticated missile detonating in close proximity to the target?

- Why did they ignore the compelling evidence that indicates that this is just what happened?

The public is entitled to an answer to those questions, but the mainstream media are not asking the questions. They have been content to accept the official explanation of the crash, disregarding all the evidence that casts doubt upon it.

End of Quotes from Admiral Thomas Moorer

Full text:

<http://members.aol.com/RobertD202/-Donaldson.html>

VISIT IAN WILLIAMS GODDARD ----

----> <http://ian.Goddard.net>

TWA-800 CASE CORE -->

<http://www.erols.com/igoddard/twa-core.htm>

REG: You have to ask, why would Admiral Moorer (and the other **retired NAVY OFFICERS** who joined him in questioning the Official Truth of the TWA Flight 800 disaster) risk media and government smears and derision and lies in order to come forward as they have?

I think they are courageous, outraged true patriots. And my immediate thinking is that they know things from friends still serving in the Navy which they cannot surface because of confidentiality. This stuff will hit the fan; it's just a matter of time and circumstance.

Letter

Anonymous

5-31-98 'I was reading in the paper recently that one of the local columnists, in a story on the issue of deregulation of electric service, had been criticized for "revealing the secret" that the actual amount of electricity used by customers is typically less than half of the total energy "consumed" in the process, including heat loss in power plants, transmission loss over power lines, and etc.

'And even what gets to the customers is largely "wasted," considering that everything the customer uses will have high percentages of loss. More or less so, depending how you look at it.

'For example, a regular light bulb might consume 100 watts of electricity in order to generate 40 watts of actual light, and 60 watts of heat.

'This isn't so bad in winter times when you wanted heat too, but in summer times the situation is even worse since the heat must then be removed by A/C systems that have their own loss factors.

'So you may end up using 200 watts of electricity to generate 40 watts of light AND to remove the excess heat generated by the bulb. And that's AFTER the 50% or greater loss in the generation/transmission process, before that 200 watts of electricity even gets to you!'

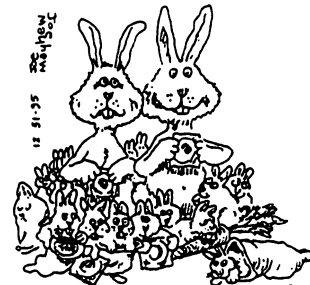
REG: Which suggests that ways to avoid waste in heat and 'bleeding' in transmission and use would more than pay for themselves...and it suggests that the socialists have a point in saying that public ownership of utilities (and the avoidance of having to raise a high profit for the private owners) would save even more millions...even allowing for bureaucratic waste and policy screw-ups.

In fact, it might even be possible to provide free electricity and pay for its generation and transmission by taxes or public services...if only an efficient way could be found to arrange all that coordination and 'pay'. I can see the incredible allure of socialism and the theoretical savings and avoidance of the 'profit class' which lives off the capitalist system.

But currently capitalism is in control and will not easily give up its power and profit.

As I've noted recently in re Christianity: it will take a cataclysmic collapse of capitalism (which is allied to Christianity) for socialism (and alternate religions) to make a comeback and rule the world...for a thousand years or so.

It's worth noting that economics analysts are now whispering in newspapers about an oncoming 'possible' world depression. If that happens, billions of people, manipulated out of savings, jobs and houses as a result of believing in the capitalist 'consumer' system, will be ripe for a radical change.



The bunnies expressed their gratitude for all the lovely condoms.

Books Received

Some reviewed, others listed and described.

THE SHAPES OF THEIR HEARTS

By **Melissa Scott**

TOR Books, \$22.95, 1998, 304 p., Hardcover Novel, ISBN: 0-312-85877-9.

A computer tape of a fanatic religious prophet's brain has been uploaded and allowed to merge with an artificial intelligence to create a Christian icon worshipped by the faithful on the planet Idun. But this god-like being called the Memoriant is also a formidable religious terrorist that threatens civilization.

It would be interesting to read this to see if or how Scott's lesbianism is present, and if the novel is anti-Christian or anti-religion.

Review

PAPERBACK PARADE #50 May 1998

Gryphon Publications, PO Box 280-209, Brooklyn, NY 11228-0209, \$7.00, 104 p. plus color covers.

'The Magazine for Paperback Readers and Collectors', and there are more and more of them out there. This issue features an article on little-known but very hardboiled writer Charles Willeford, an interview with Algis Budrys, articles by Richard Lupoff, Barry Malzberg, editor-publisher Gary Lovisi, and an interview with Bill Pronzini, along with the expected lists of works and their covers, and much more. A very good issue.

Review

PORTABLE WEALTH

By **Adam Starchild**

'The Complete Guide to Precious Metals Investment.'

Paladin Press, PO Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306, 1998, \$12.00, 71 p., Trade Paperback, ISBN: 0-87364-959-1.

Starchild examines gold, silver, and platinum in their various investment forms, surveys the current macro-economic situation and advises a just-in-case minimum accumulation of precious metals. IF the current boom bubble bursts big-time, he foresees a surge of ruinous inflation (that is, a devaluation of fiat money to worthlessness), and a discrediting of government e-money and paper money as society reverts to barter and use of whatever silver and gold coins come out of hiding.

This has been the mantra of the gold bugs for as long as I remember.

But there are too many billions of people now for true coin money to be a medium of exchange.

Review

THE ART & SCIENCE OF MONEY LAUNDERING - Inside the Commerce of the International Narcotics Traffickers

By **Brett F. Woods**

Paladin Press, PO Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306, 1998, \$18.00, Trade Paperback, ISBN: 0-87364-969-6.

I'm told that Brett F. Woods is the author's real name and that he is an Inspector General for the state of New Mexico. He knows what he's talking about.

He explains the multi-leveled ways and means of laundering money in the United States, and in every other country in the world, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, and describes the agencies and methods used to combat this successful international money traffic. Permissive banks and permissive governments are key.

Only a small percentage of the drug profits is 'lost' due to highly publicized (self-congratulatory) government anti-drug stings and Operations and 'Wars'. Mostly because only a few governments and agencies are really interested in doing their job in this area.

For a writer of novels dealing with drug money this book is absolutely necessary! It generates plot ideas as you read it.

Review

SOUTHERN BLOOD - Vampire Stories From the American South

Edited by **Lawrence Schimel and Martin H. Greenberg**

Cumberland House, 431 Harding Industrial Park Dr., Nashville, TN 37211-3160, 1997, \$12.95, 240 p., Trade Paperback, ISBN: 1-888952-49-0.

Twelve stories which show vampires from various angles and viewpoints and hungers, set in the South. Most good, a few boring.

I liked "Carion Comfort" by Dan Simmons best once it got into the killing and using of bodies by rival sister vampires, and disliked "Claim-Jumpin' Woman, You Got a Stake in My Heart" by Esther Freisner because of its Bertie Wooster meets Dracula style.

This publisher and these editors also have published *Blood Lines - Vampire Stories From New England* in this American Vampire series [\$12.95, 1997, trade paperback, 225 p., ISBN: 1-888952-50-1]. Both volumes have the same attractive red-black cover format.

DREAMCHILD

By **Hillary Hemingway & Jeffry P. Lindsay**

Forge Books, 1998, \$22.95, 288 p., Hardcover novel, ISBN: 0-312-85953-8.

Max is a five-year-old boy, the product of an alien-human mother union, who is a focus, a battleground for warring alien powers. And then the United States government becomes aware of him...

FACTORING HUMANITY

By **Robert J. Sawyer**

Tor Books, 1998, \$23.95, 350 p., Hardcover, Novel, ISBN: 0-312-86458-2.

An alien message is finally deciphered and in combination with a new level of quantum super computers opens a new horizon for human development and exploration---or final doom.

DARWINIA

By **Robert Charles Wilson**

Tor Books, 1998, \$22.95, 320 p., Hardcover, Novel, ISBN: 0-312-86038-2.

An alternate world history novel wherein in 1912 the entire European continent is suddenly and miraculously replaced with a primitive, nightmarish jungle, alien plants and savage life. It is called Darwinia.

In 1920 an expedition explores this new terra incognita and discovers a shattering truth about mankind's destiny.

[The fate of mankind seems always on the line.]

ONE BLOODY ALABASTER EYE

By **Clayton R. Douglas**

Winsor Media, Inc. \$12.95, 1998, 175 p., trade paperback, novel, ISBN: 0-9654712-0-9.

A Trevor McGee novel. Intended to be action-suspense, but while Douglas writes well enough, I didn't think it moved fast enough or was ruthless enough. But then, I remember and admire A.E. van Vogt's 700-word scenes.

Douglas tends to over-explain and his character thinks too much.

FORREST J ACKERMAN'S WORLD OF SCIENCE FICTION

By **Forrest J. Ackerman**

Preface By **A.E. Van Vogt**

Foreword By **John Landis**

General Publishing Group, 2701 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90405, 1997, \$30.00, 240 p, 8 1/2 x 11 hardcover, ISBN: 1-57544-069-5.

The hundreds of lovely and superb b/w and full color photos of early and current sf magazines, books, films and TV, and the people involved are the heart of this extravagant, first class volume, and Forry's text is the soul. His 'take' on sf, from its beginnings to now is both encyclopedic and individual,

since he has lived through it all, and his word is law as far as I'm concerned.

This is probably the ultimate science fiction coffee table book. It will absorb you and your family and friends each for hours!

Letter

TERRY JEEVES

56 RED SCAR DR
SCARBOROUGH N. YORKS YO12 5RQ
UNITED KINGDOM

5-30-98 'Book reviews are rather over my head as I no longer buy SF, it has got too bland and PC-slanted. Heroes or heroines must be culled from ethnic minorities, sexual ambivalents, under-achievers and drug takers. Nowadays you would get the PC police on you if you wrote about Seaton, Crane, Kimball Kinnison or other suchlike characters.'

REG: Diversity is the watchword, now. Very little Anglo Saxon superiority and arrogance allowed.

'I have just had a cut off from tape recordings to follow the one when I found cine film no longer available, so I can make no more animated epics. "Progress." Already, my 8mm filming equipment is unusable. Likewise repair of my reel-to-reel tape recorder was turned down by nine dealers AND its maker before I tracked down exorbitantly priced spares and did it myself. So when my projector and recorder finally go bottoms up, all my cherished films and tapes will be unavailable. That's "Progress"? Just imagine all those 78s, eps and lps, cine films and so on stashed away lovingly in time capsules during the thirties. Once disinterred there will be no equipment on which future generations will be able to play 'em.'

REG: Yes. Remember, "Sic Transit Gloria Mundi", which is Suspect Latin for "On Monday the transit workers go on strike." Unfortunately, in this 24th year of our Munificent Master Trud-zolm's reign [12,945 New Eons], we no longer know the meaning of 'transit'...or 'Gloria', for that matter. And, alas, the ancient planet museum fell down last Trudsdays and destroyed the last relic "Computer". Whatever that thing did. Lack of slave power... Well, you know that old story. Do you have a spare turkey nib I could borrow?

'A bit of sad news is that Vince Clarke is in hospital for an 'indefinite period' because of muscular weakness. Apparently it can't be cured, but they hope to prevent it getting worse. Gradually the old fen are dropping off the tree.'

REG: But are we rotten fruit dropping off the tree, or dying old monkeys? (I have a special basket in preparation which will keep me lashed to the branch!)

Letter

HARRY WARNER

423 Summit Av.
Hagerstown, MD 21740

5-19-98 'Many thanks for the May *Geis Letter*. It brought me pleasant news with the information that Poul Anderson has been chosen as a Grand Master by the SFWA. Unlike some of the previously named Grand Masters, he has been a good person in addition to his good qualities as a writer of fiction. Maybe one of the small specialty publishers will be inspired by this honor to think about trying to get a several-volume collection of Poul's best fiction back into print.

[In re: the Aer Lingus crash in 1968 in which it is claimed the British military accidentally shot down an airliner] 'When someone reveals something he'd previously been silent about, thirty years after the fact, I feel very skeptical. Many of the people who would know about the event in question will be dead or senile after the passing of three decades. Quite possibly some of the documentary evidence relating to things that happened around 1968 will be inaccessible because it's difficult or impossible to get the computer files from that era to work on modern computers.

'Besides, I had enough trouble when the new edition of *A Wealth of Fable* was in preparation to distrust any memories beyond the immediate past. One fan after another offered corrections and additional "facts" about the fandom of the 1950s. Those that I could check for accuracy turned out to be utterly wrong, for the most part. (There were strange elements to these emendations, too. One female fan denied vigorously that she had ever been pretty, a status I had afforded her

in the first edition. The co-editors of one famous fanzine both wrote asking for corrections to be made about the roles I'd given them in the first edition: each claimed that the other had done the bulk of the work.) Fortunately the new edition does include one important new passage because I received documentary evidence from a British fan who seems to have been the one who invented "the usual" as a way of getting fanzines. In the first edition I'd admitted inability to track down the onlie begetter of this fannish traditon.'

REG: Who published the new edition of *A Wealth of Fable*? How much is it? And am I mentioned in it? My ego needs to know!

Letter

LLOYD DENNEY

1706-24 Eva Rd.
Etobicoke, ON, CANADA M9C 2B2

5-31-98 'I'm happy that Sir ACC [Arthur C. Clarke] has been cleared of any paedophilic activities, but I do wonder how all of this started, and who was behind it. He seems to have some desperate enemies. Also, did anyone notice an Ann Landers column a short time ago? It was printed in the *Toronto Star* (and many other papers) on May 26. Ann printed a letter from someone identifying himself as "an officer in a large professional writers' association", warning budding writers against the frauds and scams associated with many publishers who charge you to get your novel published, and signing the letter with the initials ACC.'

REG: I'm not aware of any final word from the Sri Lankan police that their investigation is complete and that Arthur C. Clarke has been cleared.

I wonder that the "writers association" officer couldn't give his name and that of the association. A good alert, of course, as to vanity publishing companies.

LAST WORD: 6-8-98

Letters from Buzz Dixon and John Berry will be shuttled into TGL #50.

Need a few reviews of sf, fantasy, horror. ■