

Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette #69

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A woman being lusted after by a plant
I hear the story isn't as ridiculous as it looks.

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ERRATA

I notice my Table of Contents was off for at least the past two Twygs. I'm going to have to do more than examine the finished file. I am going to have to examine the publication when it comes out of the printer.

MY SUPERDUPER COMPUTER

This time around, I have more bad news to report than chickens have eggs. Not bad bad news. I have my job. I am, for now, healthy. I am doing OK financially. But irritating bad news.

For instance, I made a mistake in buying a computer. I bought one with a Gigahertz of speed, a 30 Gigabyte memory, 128 Megabytes of RAM. More computer than I'll ever need? That's the rub. Maybe not never. Maybe in ten years it will be in lockstep with the computers then.

However, as of now, it is unstable as all get out. When I boot up or reboot, it is possible that I will get back to my desktop in a second or two. But it is even more possible that I will end up with a blank screen with lines at the top. Which means the computer is hanging. Or the computer can even decide to reboot itself. And then the Scandisk comes on telling me to shut down the computer correctly. Then its scan adds several minutes to the reboot. At least it seem to take forever.

Also, when I finally get to my desktop and programs, the computer screen has been known to freeze at bad times. This happens more on the web than in other software. Of course, it requires that I reboot with all the ensuing problems.

I called up the computer place and the tech said to download Nvidia's new driver

TNT-3 to replace TNT-2. Which I did.

Then, the computer was worse than ever. I called Nvidia and the resident nerd told me to download the Via driver. Which only meant that the screen hung less and the computer rebooted itself more. I was trying to get through to the resident nerd again, but he seems to have become a very busy man.

I can't be too frustrated by all this. All the computers I have ever bought had bugs that had to be ironed out ~~because I bought them cheaply~~. Also, I have several tricks up my sleeve. So my computer may yet be stable.

BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER KWAI

Another bit of bad news is my new bridge. I finally got a bridge put in. I told you how the old bridge broke. And my dentist Gary was going to put in a new bridge. The remnants of my teeth were pulled, there were impressions and temporaries. Temporaries that fell out every couple of days and gave me the country bumpkin look.

Finally, I got my new bridge. At six units, it was really expensive. Not enough to buy a new car, but enough to buy three computers like my new one.

Then I got angry over some trivial nonsense one day. And started gnawing at my teeth. And the porcelain front started coming out. I

didn't know how fragile it was.

It wasn't glued in fragilely, though. After some attempts to get the bridge out as a whole, Gary found he had to take it out in little pieces. I could have eaten corn on the cob with a glue like that. Hell, I could have eaten iron with it. Of course, the teeth holding up the bridge would have been uprooted long before that.

This time around I only had to pay the price of the materials. Enough. And the price of a new toothguard. One I am going to have to wear for the foreseeable future. It hasn't come back yet. But I am wearing my old, moth eaten but serviceable, toothguard when I am not eating or involved in public speaking.

MY CELL PHONE

Another bit of bad news was my cell phone, my first one. It was a mistake along with my new computer. I got 500 minutes of free time anywhere in the country from Sprint. I wasn't doing my calculating. Given that it is \$30 more a month, that's 60¢ a minute. Someone at work, whose opinion I respect had it and swore by it. Having it, I'm not certain I'm getting my money's worth.

Still, the cellphone has come in handy. I can use some of that prepaid time if I need tech support. Since I have only one phone line at home, it is the only way I can call California and be on the internet there. Downloading what the tech person is instructing me to.

Also, I can call my parents when they believe they will hear my call. They can't when they are watching TV. The sound of the shows and their deafness drown out the phone. Or, at least, that is their rationale. Of course, when they aren't watching is when I am not at home. The cell phone is the best way.

On the other hand, I am not certain I have better luck reaching them then than during

TV time.

Next time, I am going to get the 180 minutes and just use it for emergencies. And tech support.

SOME IRRELEVANT ARGUMENTS ABOUT RICHGATE

Now instead of moaning about my problems, I am going to make a political rant. A pro-Clinton political rant. Thereby I will add to the unpleasantness of SFPA.

In politics, the temptation is to give arguments the other side regards as irrelevant. It is irrelevant to the Clinton haters that there was no quid pro quo proven against Clinton. No proof he came out and told Denise Rich, or Marc himself, how much it would cost to pardon Marc. Which the law requires to prove bribery. None.

Also, I have to emphasize there isn't going to be any proof. I know that Conservatives have been hoping and praying for the smoking gun. But, after nine years of Clinton watching, I have to conclude Bill Clinton is a man who does not break the law. Just bends it.

Even though it is irrelevant, Conservatives are going to have to play along with me. They will say who cares whether he said it. If campaign contributions, contributions to his library, etc. caused Bill to give favors, then it is bribery pure and simple. One column in the *Washington Post* claimed that all Denise Rich did was pay for access. And the reply in a letter was: like you

pay a prostitute for access.

In turn, I can't let this irrelevancy go unanswered. Money for favors may be *de facto* bribery, but it is also the basis of the system. Every lobbyist, every big contributor expects favors for money. And the voters expect favors for votes. Maybe *de facto* bribery is the basis of our system. Which is why *de jure* puts you in coventry.

Let's face it, the real argument of the Clinton haters is that the pardon brouahah allows us to get Bill Clinton. They believe he is a notorious criminal: perjurer, murderer, thief, liar, adulterer, tyrant, traitor. Of course, their rap sheet of Clinton's misdeeds is longer than this. And they believe with all their heart he should get his comeuppance.

I think that this argument by the Conservative Clinton haters is even more irrelevant than mine. At least I'm not acting in a counterproductive fashion. They could GET Bill Clinton. They could impeach and convict him as an ex-President. They could even send him to the electric chair. But Clintonism would be more alive than ever. And Clintonism is what they really hate.

The idea behind Clintonism is that Bill isn't honest and he is flawed otherwise. But he means well. It's worse than this. Bill's defenders are only using euphemisms. That he is unprincipled, in this case, is his virtue. The two ideologies have convinced the public they represent principle. Yet people are chaffing at the ideological bit. And Bill is their avatar.

In SFPA, many have asked why there can't be a party of civil liberty and *laissez-faire*. Others, not in this APA but very much on the scene, think there should be a Family party that believes the State should intervene for the working man.

Well, Bill Clinton was daring enough to break out of the ideological straightjacket from

the Left. Clinton haters would love to paint Bill as a radical liberal. And they love to emphasize his liberalism. But, at the same time, they complain Bill stole their issues.

The idea behind the current investigations of Bill's pardons is to destroy his credibility. That will not put a dent in the luster of Clintonism. It can only be destroyed when ideology is no longer principle.

Because to actually grapple with Clintonism is a nonstarter, all the attempts to destroy Bill so far have backfired. As someone in the White House said, wrestling with Bill Clinton is like wrestling with the tar baby.

I have a very recent example of Conservatives not understanding that the rest of the country doesn't hate the Clintons as much as they do. Hillary's election to the Senate.

There was no reason why Lazio should have lost. Focus groups of women, who would have been natural Hillary's constituency, disliked her. They thought she was cold, cruel and someone who knifed people in the back. If the Republicans had run someone whose sensitivity was above a prune's, they would have had it made it in the shade.

And the Clinton haters chose a good man for the job, Lazio. He was known for being affable and moderate among his constituents; sensitivity approaching feeling-your-pain. He just had to develop that reputation in the rest of New York State.

But I'm willing to bet his

bankrollers told him that he was through if he gave Hillary any quarter. When Tim Russert attacked Hillary and claimed she had misled the public about her husband's infidelity, Lazio had to attack and attack hard. He had to say there was no difference between her and her husband even though she looked shaken.

And, in so doing, he gave the impression he was even worse than Hillary, and his loss was sealed.

The great fear of Conservatives is that Bill Clinton will outshine Ronald Reagan. If it happens, it will be because some strategy to finally destroy Clinton and his reputation has backfired really bad.

SFPA MAILING #219

JEFF COPELAND

the southerner 12/2000-1/2001

☺▲☺ My mailing took twelve days from Washington State. Being a postage meter customer may make the mailing arrive faster but it is under the onus of book rate.

Of course, even book rate should not take that long. Maybe it was a fluke.

GARY BROWN

first zine in the oeship

☺▲☺ I don't know whether Poe's work would not be considered sentimental by our standards. Certainly there was sentiment aplenty in his writing. Albeit more than counterbalanced by his angst.

On the other hand, I don't know whether that unencrypted second passage would be considered sentimental today. It just describes two lovers waking up. And discussing what to do with the window curtains. Today it might just be considered overwritten.

Come to think of it, if those lovers had had a night of passion, that would have been considered shocking in 1841.

NED BROOKS

the new port news 195 no-longer from new port

☺▲☺ Actually, I have to confess that that **parody virus** hoax "Free Money," that I sent you through email, did not originate with me. I got it off the email list Tourbus. And I don't know where the Tourbus guy got it.

☺▲☺ If I'm thinking of the right Leland, **Charles G. Leland** must have been very versatile. I knew him for crank stuff: books promoting a proto-Wicca and that a Chinese monk discovered America. Also, a book on Folklore. And now we find he was an artist.

☺▲☺ ct. Me. The **rusty razor** in the hospital didn't give me any cuts, thank God. Just an unpleasant shave.

☺▲☺ If Joe is only **semi-literate** for not writing, aren't all teenybops semi-literate then? And therefore barbarians. Except maybe for me. I did write. But very very short things. A page or two of Big Chief, lined paper and I had had it. Maybe if I was ambitious I might write five. I certainly couldn't have written this zine.

☺▲☺ No, you can't disprove that Britain wasn't saved by frozen Wiccans. But it is not for me to

disprove; it is for them to **prove**. Of course, I don't believe people have to prove such things scientifically anymore. Necessarily.

☹▲☹ If I am not mistaken, the term **Bodkins**, or Bodikins, for God's Body is quite a bit later than Bodkin meaning a knife. 18th Century as opposed to 16th Century. Or 15th Century.

☹▲☹ You're right. The fragments the **Scandisk** in my computer comes up with are never useful. At least not to me. Often fragments of stuff that I have in full. Or gibberish. Lots of gibberish.

☹▲☹ Now I remember. **Dot-Matrix** did do graphics, at the lowest resolution imaginable. Often just letters creating a pyramid or the outlines of a human.

☹▲☹ Come to think of it, you're right about that **shepherd** on the cover of *Twyg* #67. I didn't notice. I just thought it was a bad illo by someone who knew no shepherds. But the illo must have been done by someone who hated shepherds.

I don't know about the propriety of him walking on the shovel, but the shepherd's dogs shouldn't be on short leash while a wolf is eating his sheep. Also, Bagpipes, which he is playing, were only liked by the Scots.

Of course, it could be referring to something inside the *Shepherd's Kalender* (1506). I don't know what that would be. It was translation of a Belgian astrological almanac, and that doesn't raise any strong associations.

Or the incompetent shepherd could be a whimsy.

☹▲☹ ct. Guy. Speaking of bad film, like *Werewolf vs. Vampire Women*, there is a whole website of bad films, <http://www.Atomfilms.com>. At least they are meant to be funny and they are very very short.

Like *The Night of the Living Bread*. In fact, shorter than that. Some are only five minutes.

They are free too. Of course, they are in the awful format of web cinema. To get a decent version, you have to pay. I forget how much, but not much.

☹▲☹ You're right. The election of **Shrub or Stick** (?) wouldn't make a great difference. But they would make a difference. And changes are cumulative. We didn't use to have executions. Now we have them aplenty. I guess we could go back. It looks like the nation is collectively taking one step back right now. Unfortunately, having taken a hundred forward.

Also, civil liberties could become more important over time.

It is probably just as well changes are slow rather than fast. So we can see how they fit in. And fewer catastrophes happen. Lots of catastrophes happen during revolutions.

☹▲☹ ct. Randy. I was wondering if the **Invisible man** could see in other wavelengths. And get around that way. Forget about the light being converted back to normal light.

In an associated thought, I once wrote a story about a world which was in eternal night and people had to wear infrared glasses.

☹▲☹ ct. Jeff. Forget about the '50s. I remember **Harry Andruschak** was using Ditto in the '80s. I seem to remember the '90s. He called himself

the Writer of the Purple Page.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Brown. I suspected that was the idea behind punch card **ballots**, to throw out votes by the riff raff. A legal version of the literacy test.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Toni. Hank's solution to the **Palestinian/Israeli** conflict? I didn't read it. But I bet it wasn't the Arabs and Jews should get together and settle it in a nice Christian manner. That someone said that is the subject of a lot of urban legends. In one, it was supposedly said by diplomat called Austin. Who went into 'voluntary' retirement after that.

RICH LYNCH

variations on a theme #4

🍷▲🍷 Getting invited to an **embassy party** for me was a real treat for me. The Japanese embassy a number of years back sponsored a party for librarians. All-you-could-eat-sushi.

And I didn't have your problem. Librarians will talk to one another.

I heard the idea of diplomatic parties is not to speak to anyone lower than you. And people you don't know, you assume are lower than you. Not many people talk at those parties. I hear State Department interns chow down there and don't have to buy food. Because no one will talk to them, it's as if they're invisible.

However, I'm surprised that nobody at the Rumanian Embassy party didn't try to buttonhole you. You're somebody who can help Rumania.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. *How far would* [playing an audio of] *all of Jules Verne's works take you* [in a car]? was not a trick question, I didn't know the answer. 80 Days is good enough. In fact, it's GREAT!

🍷▲🍷 I wasn't able to find a piece by

Saint-Saëns entitled "Out of Africa."

On Google, what comes up for "Out of Africa" is a sort of Rock tune, and/or the incidental music for the movie *Out of Africa*.

I was able to come up with a piece called *Africa* (1891?). I wonder if that is the piece of I was thinking of? If I am not mistaken, he had a theme similar to the one I am thinking of in *Samson and Delilah*. Which was much earlier.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Ned Brooks. I wish my car hadn't broken down on the way to New Port. It sounds like that **Dittocon** was a neat affair. With people you could talk to, no less.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Guy Lillian. Creators are always robbed. The **Copyright laws** are made almost totally for the big corporations. Who are both owners and robber barons. Which is why they are so stringent yet have mile high loopholes.

🍷▲🍷 ct. David Schlosser. I haven't seen movies in a while. From what you say about *Galaxy Quest*, it sounds like it portrayed fans the way many fans see themselves. As misfits. When they're just dissatisfied. Being articulate and nonmundane alone is going to give you a problem fitting in. In fact, they may do so by definition.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Even Ackerman.

There are some advantages to writing with a **pseudonym**. It might be Eve doesn't want to get stuck in the Pirate Romance genre. Which, I imagine, is a small world. Maybe her next novel might be a Regency. Chalance

Chavance. Or maybe SF. Rocket J. Squirrel.
Who knows?

☺▲☺ ct. Toni Weisskopf. To you, that
Republican senator would be out in right field.
Or even the ballpark. You would find more
believable the same pronouncements be made
by Olympia Snowe or Fred Thompson.

To Toni, that senator might be the fount
of truth. And Snowe and Thompson fink outs.

☺▲☺ **Perpetual motion** is indeed
possible. Look at Washington, DC. On the other
hand, Washington is not reactionless as the
Dean Drive is supposed to have been.

GUY H. LILLIAN III
rear-ender '00

☺▲☺ I went through a lot of changes
myself in the **year 2000**. Overall maybe not as
good as yours. But we're running neck and neck
for impact.

My wife was recuperating from cancer
surgery and I had to fend for myself. I had to
pay mucho money for a 6-unit bridge for my
teeth. Something like you would for the Bridge
over the River Kwai. And my bite broke the
porcelain so I had to pay more. This time to get
a new bridge and a bite guard to protect it. Also,
I found out I had multiple sclerosis. Which, I
hope, is benign.

Finally, I bought a cell phone and got
into the cellular age. Next year, I plan to retreat
from it a little. And I bought a new jazzy
computer. Maybe too jazzy a computer.

☺▲☺ I know **money's** important. But a
good job is important too. That's what makes
the money worth it. ...Look who's talking.
Somebody who's his own boss. Somebody who
only takes his own guff. I wonder what the
others not so blessed think.

☺▲☺ Guy. From what you've told me

about life with **Rose-Marie**. Even if
you divorced this second, your
marriage would have been worth it.

ARTHUR D. HLAVATY
confessions of a consistent liar 72

☺▲☺ ct. Me. I am crossing my
fingers that the **MS** continues to be
me it was, but further reading
convinced it is something not in the
bag. Maybe she wanted to make me
feel better. Also, I am not certain
there is anything more effective
against it than those shots. Maybe I
can get some good Hoodoo magic
from Cat Yronwode. What do you
think? She sells it now.

☺▲☺ From what I've read,
Norm and you are violating some
corollary of Murphy's Law:
attributing to conspiracy what you
should attribute to incompetence.
Namely presuming **H.L. Gold** knew
good science fiction from bad science
fiction. From the anthology I read, I
just thought Gold had bad taste.

☺▲☺ ct. Janice Gelb. If fans
acted as if they wanted **new fans**,
would we still be fans? Would
especially the kind who are obsessed
with fan history still be fans?

☺▲☺ ct. Randy. Why do
Heinlein's superwomen go down
with his males? Because they're
adolescent fantasies?

☺▲☺ ct. Jeff Copeland.
Dumbth is supposed to be one of
Prometheus' better selling books. I
guess there are a lot of people out
there concerned about the servant



A contemporary picture of Cyrano.
As you can see, he had a large but not a monstrous nose.

problem.

ct. Gary Brown. I believe 'adult sitcom' is not an oxymoron. Rare but not an oxymoron. In fact, I don't believe this is an oxymoron either. There is no logical reason why it couldn't happen. A 'situation tragedy.' The show keeps the same villain and a new hero dies each week. You'll never see it on TV but it is not logically impossible.

TOM FELLER

frequent flyer. Jan. 19, 2001

My legs hurt too in the night like

Anita's. And, yes, it's due to cold weather. And arthritis. They hurt less, however, than they did at years ago. Maybe all that power walking is doing them so good. Why, I don't know.

I am afraid I ignored my aunts, uncles and grandparents until recent years. I was fortunate enough, in a way, to speak to my Aunt Dora a month before she died. And my Uncle Lou, who didn't die too much after her. I was on a project trying to track down something to do with genealogy for my mother. Talking with them, I found now that I am fifty, I have a lot in common with them. benign. I know my neurologist told

There was another reason why I felt I had to go to my Aunt Dora's funeral. I had spoken to her so near her death. That made me too close to her not to go. My parents convinced me not to go to my Uncle Lou's. It was at the very end of Cape Cod and a fairly long drive. Of course, nothing to some of you guys.

So the Chalet Landhaus Inn looks like a Holiday Inn. In Alexandria, VA, we have a fast food place called the Dutch Touch. It's run by Koreans. Then there is the Thai Room. Oh the food is Thai and the waiters are too. But the decor is Italian. And the waiters are dressed like Italian waiters. ... You figure.

Charles Grant is right. Villains are more interesting than heroes. Villains can have flaws but heroes can't. Our idea of heroes is they must be plaster saints. It's OK

for Indiana Jones to be afraid of snakes. But a bigger flaw is unheard of.

It makes things even worse in our real lives. Celebrities are always being taken to task because they have one flaw or another flaw. George Washington had false teeth. Ghandi was mean to his son. Sister Teresa was a Catholic.

In short, there can be no heroes and heroines in real life unless you kill all biographers.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. I don't know if I can say the same about my one bout with *Lois and Clark*. That it is a show I will always like. It was OK. And probably better than the original. ...Or, on the other hand, is that blasphemy?

🍷▲🍷 I don't know what happened to me. I had an incredible appetite for **sweets** before I was diagnosed with diabetes. And I ate mostly carbohydrates. Giant servings of macaroni and cheese, giant croissants, bagels. Very few veggies. Maybe a small salad.

But once I moderated my intake I haven't had an incredible desire for them. I don't why. In fact, I had to increase my carbohydrate intake not so much because I craved it; but because my intake was too low and that was causing some problems. My diet was getting to look too much like the Atkins diet.

🍷▲🍷 I don't think the show with the **Apache hero** with the long hair was *Daniel Boone*. No, I remember it was in the West. I originally thought it *Stage Coach West*. But it couldn't have been that.

🍷▲🍷 AOL is always suing porno spammers and others. It was a small step up to sue the domain many were spamming from.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Janice Gelb. Bill Nichols is right that Clinton will never shake **Monicagate**. But that's because Monicagate is his briar patch. He

lives there. It has been part of his ineffable charm that he has affairs and lies about them. Even in court. He is the artful dodger people forgive.

And that is what the Conservative contingent doesn't see. While this may not reflect the highest morality, it had had to be reckoned with.

STEVE HUGHES

technical toys #1

🍷▲🍷 Learning is the most important thing when it comes to **taking pictures**. Mine without any knowledge or experience at all turn out dreadful. Do you want to see a great shot of my uncle's feet? So you're doing the right thing taking photos every which way but loose.

🍷▲🍷 Your **Wrist Cam** photos don't look so bad. Actually, they seem to have a halfway decent resolution. Just that they're postage stamp size. But that's great for putting them in zines.

DAVID SCHLOSSER

peter, pan & merry #35

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. It is not as clear to me that the **MS** is benign, as it was in the hospital. The neurologist said that I had completely recuperated from my previous bout showed that. Further reading has revealed that that happens to plenty of non-benign people with MS. But the situation is fuzzier than that. One source said the attacks had to be a month apart for it to be MS.

However, she is definitely

right that the drug of choice is Interferon Beta 1-a. So I will keep on with it.

☛▲☛ By '**regular SFPAn**' I meant how well I feel I am accepted here. In good part but not 100%. Being a 'regular SFPAn' certainly does not mean sane; sane SFPAns are few and far between.

☛▲☛ That tale of English Wiccans saving Britain sounds like just another variant of **Gardner's** tale. In the early days, the '50s, Gardner was the only game in town. At least the only game willing to publicize itself.

☛▲☛ But has travel or Scottish dancing taken over **Harry Andruschak's** life? Not that he didn't do either as a fan. I hear, of course, they haven't. He's still around fandom. And may comment on my next *JOMP, JR.*

☛▲☛ I should give awards to answers to my question How long would it take you to hear all of **Jules Verne's** works while driving? Richard Lynch says it's 80 days and you say it's from the Earth to the Moon. How about a Brass Fig-a-magee with Bronze Oak Leaf Palm?

☛▲☛ I doubt the **Lemba** have remained Jews. They may still practice some Jewish rituals; but the core of the Jewish religion, they have long since been forgotten.

☛▲☛ 150 years for oral traditions to get mangled into legends is a rule of the thumb. Based on what, I don't know. I admit, maybe nothing. Lord Raglan claims it in his book *The Hero* (1936). But even Lord Raglan admitted some oral traditions are passed down in tact twice as long. And others become legend almost immediately.

☛▲☛ I was asserting that the fat, thin and the strong will split into different races at some time in the future. And, who knows, maybe

different species ultimately.

One of your arguments against is **weight** does not have a large genetic component. I'm not certain that it doesn't. I know the received dogma is that weight is purely an example of free will and there is nothing that will influence us to gain or lose weight but our own 'goddam' fault.

This is the whole wrong idea behind free will. It is not that nothing influences our actions. It is we choose between competing influences. In this case, the desire for Sara Lee cheesecake vs. the desire for a figure like Cindy Crawford. Or lower odds for heart attacks.

In short, free will presupposes cause. As do the ideas of temptation and will power.

☛▲☛ Actually, the fact that people can **choose evil** does not imply the converse, that they would otherwise choose good. It is possible – and very very likely – some choose only between the greater of two evils. I'm sure someone out there is choosing between crack and smack. Or robbery and murder.

On the other hand, that people can choose good also does not mean imply the converse either, that they would otherwise choose evil. A virtuous person might choose between the more virtuous of two goods. Or eight goods. Or a hundred goods. I'm sure someone out there is trying to choose between helping their father and helping their mother. Or giving to the March of Dimes or the Lighthouse for the Blind.

ct. Rich Lynch. I don't know whether the Japanese high school girl was buying scotch for her dad, but **orientals** seem to have a high regard for Scotch. One time, I had a Korean neighbor, a physics student. He knocked on the door one night and, in a display of honesty that flabbergasted me, told me he had put a dent in my car. And that he was willing to pay for it.

I went down to look at the dent. It was indistinguishable from all the other dents. In its fifteen or so years, it had accumulated quite a number.

So I went back up to my apartment and told him to forget it. That his dent made all the rest symmetrical. He laughed and left.

The next day he gave me a bottle of Scotch because I had decided not to sue for big bucks. Or any bucks. It was expensive Scotch too. Not being much of a drinker, it was my alcohol ration for a couple of weeks.

I believe **Eliau** belonged with his father in Cuba. But I can't believe that Fidel didn't want to make a cause celebre out of him. I saw too much evidence that he did. With all the rallies. My guess is Eliau was Fidelito, a son of his he kidnaped. I believe, from Mexico.

If I was temple president, I would be careful before I chose the most convenient Rabbi. And having **Renewal Rabbis** all over the place. We may not feel that strongly about the lacunae of religion, but plenty of people do. I take it plenty of people in you temple do.

ct. Jeff Copeland. You're right. All of us only support **diversity** that doesn't nauseate us too much. KKK, neo-Nazis and the like are beyond the pale. Maybe we should tolerate them legally. But we don't have to like them. In fact, we may love to hate them.

That your **Chanukah** party was

poorly attended may have added to the enjoyment of the participants. That's been my experience with Toastmasters' meetings. The best ones are five people. Over ten, some people don't get to participate much.

A time share in the **Nola's French Quarter**. Does it pay for itself? They sounded like a scam when I first heard about them. Of course, I bet a lot of people want to visit the French Quarter.

I sort of half agree with Random. While the beignets at **Café du Monde** sat OK with me, I never cared for them that much. They weren't sweet enough or something. The powdered sugar didn't stick right.

I know I'm in the minority on this. Everybody else raves about them.

I was going to say: cold in **New Orleans**? But I remember having to wear a coat in February. A coat I felt like a fool for bringing. That year was strange. For a short stretch of time, it was the same temperature in New Orleans as it was in DC. And, I think, in Boston.

I had wished I had gone on the **Plantation cruise** when I was in New Orleans. But the way you explain it, I should be glad I didn't. It doesn't sound like much.

The **Port of Call**, a restaurant that was mostly a bar with good food. When I was in Kent, Ohio, there was a place called Johnny's Stag Bar, or something like that. It had more than a few tables for food,

though. And the food was good, down home type Italian food. And plenty of it.

The people I was staying with were teetotalers and demanded all their lodgers be teetotalers. So I was wary that they should know I frequented a place with that name. However, I found out later that they liked its food and went there quite often.

GUY H. LILLIAN III spiritus mundi 181

🍷🍷🍷 As you can see, Guy, I have a picture of what the **real Cyrano** is likely to have looked like on page 9. And his real family's Coat of Arms on p18.

🍷🍷🍷 Love your cover with the **Elvis** with the giant wingtips.

🍷🍷🍷 My God, Guy. You've married a very **talented woman** there. She can fix your computer. She can cook. She's getting her Ph.D. Maybe she can find a way to get you out of your financial hole

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Me. I recovered fast enough from my recent bout with **MS**. Actually, it was much worse three years ago. My strength was back within the month. As was my coordination. What remains are minor problems, which may or may not have anything to do with Multiple Sclerosis.

Also, the spinal tap wasn't that big a deal. And no one zonked my ass. The fluid was taken higher up. The MRI was much worse. The damn thing is like a tomb. A tomb people are operating machinery over. You don't even get death's one advantage, peace.

🍷🍷🍷 I was thinking more of something about **Cyrano de Bergerac** for *Challenger* than the origins of science fiction. How he was a real person. How his name was not really Bergerac. How he didn't have a large nose. How he wrote

science ficiton.

🍷🍷🍷 It's difficult to see the relationship between **James Joyce's Ulysses** and the *Odyssey*. Explicate.

Petronius Arbiter's *Satyricon*, written in ancient times, is thought to be about a sexual Ulysses. He interfered with the rites of Priapus and so cannot reach orgasm, no matter who he has sex with. In the large chunk of the novel I read, that is not what happens. There is a lot about Gay love, but nothing about impotence.

🍷🍷🍷 Those who took away **Clayton Moore's** mask and made him wear dark glasses were under the impression that the best PR is meanness. A completely cynical view I bet you can easily pick up in Hollywood. Of course, it's completely and totally stupid as well as being completely and totally mean.

It's like the DA who wants to be promoted by prosecuting Santa Claus. An idea that appeared in one comic book. And castigated by a lawyer.

🍷🍷🍷 Both the soldiers who served were blamed for the outcome of the **Vietnam war**, and us anti-War people. Part of this attitude, I bet, was the attitude of the old, that all the younger generation is going to hell in a handbasket.

🍷🍷🍷 If your car isn't a Hyundai, it's no wonder it has performed so well.

Aren't **Geos**, by the way, made by the same people who made

my car, a Toyota Corolla? I hear they are even put out by the same factory. The only difference for many years was Geo dealers didn't service their cars quite as well as Toyota dealers. I don't know whether that's changed or not.

🍷▲🍷 You mention the show *Yancy Derringer*. I happened to see **Jock Mahoney's** website. It's a big deal. One thinks Jock has been dead in the mind as well as in the body. But, no, some people are very enthusiastic about him and his Westerns. Jock did a Tarzan film too.

🍷▲🍷 With the gang who is SFPA, I can believe that someone here wrote all those **fan fiction** titles you describe. However, for some reason, I remember this first line of fan fiction. It was a take off on the first line of one of the '40s Shaver Mysteries.

"I remember Lemuria.
I wish I could forget it."

🍷▲🍷 ct. Ned. That you need something like coke or heroin doesn't mean that they don't give you **pleasure**. And, who knows, you may need it because you need that level of pleasure and reality pales beside it.

I know coke or heroin, given all the havoc they have caused, shouldn't be giving us too much pleasure. But 'should' and 'is' are two different things.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Rich L. **Defending yourself** with guile or skill not something to be proud of? You can be proud of your marksmanship or your cleverness.

I agree, however, that saving our skin isn't a moral issue. And not anything to be proud of, morally. That honor is reserved for saving others from death and dismemberment at some risk to ourselves.

~~Anyone remember a movie *Dismember* Mama?~~

🍷▲🍷 ct. Sheila. You got into the weirdness of **spellcheckers** here. I was just thinking maybe someday the computer makers will claim to make software that will insure that our writings are coherent. You run it and, voil , that which made no sense at all makes sense. ...Riiiiiggghhhht. But I don't doubt that Microsoft will claim that.

Of course, Swift proposed how that could be done in the 18th Century. In one of his mythical countries, there was a technique whereby the unlearned could write learned tomes on philosophy, science, etc.

I gather it was by quoting others.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Jeff. I gather, as of this moment, Clinton is stealing George Bush's thunder. The Republican investigation of the **Rich pardon** is driving Bush out of the headlines. That was the observation of an ex-Congressional aide who reads the papers in my library.

That's the way the top people in Washington think, front page and column space in newspapers. And Clinton's problem is driving George Bush out of both.

It's no wonder Bush told the Congressional people to cool it with the investigations and get on with his Administration. But they can't bear not to attack Clinton.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Gary R. I am glad Rosie gives you **hope** for living a happy life. But we should never lose hope under any circumstances. Hope

is the greatest miracle God has given us. We believe it despite all the evidence to the contrary.

🍌▲🍌 ct. Janice. How do you grade a course entitled "**Americanism vs. Communism.**" By the amount of bull you sling. And it gives kids a great preparation for life.

RANDY B. CLEARY
avatar press v2 #13

🍌▲🍌 **Weight loss** is a hard row to hoe. I know. I lost weight only because I found out that I was diabetic, and to eat carbos I had to store fat. I have weighed 50 lbs. less for six years by cutting down on my carbos.

Otherwise, dieting has been a vicious cycle. Dieting made me that much hungrier. And that much more irritable. For the longest period of time I said Uncle. Then I found my key, limiting carbos.

You may have better luck.

🍌▲🍌 About **exercise**, you have to ease on into it. I don't know whether I was walking that much faster than I normally walked when I started my power walking. And that was at a snail's pace. Now it's damn near four miles an hour.

I started out lifting less than ten pounds of weights. I felt like such a wimp. But I've worked the poundage up.

Still, getting into an exercise regimen hurt all the same. But I didn't break anything and the pain subsided in a matter of weeks. You, being younger, it may not hurt so much.

🍌▲🍌 Too bad that **Robinson's** Martian novels have gone down hill from *Red Mars* to *The Martians*. *Red Mars* is a classic. I gather *The Martians* are less than that. A lot of writers have gone down hill trying to exploit their popularity, and writing at a 100 miles per hour. Heinlein, the man who wrote *Hyperion*.

🍌▲🍌 ct. Derogatory Reference.

Sure, three pairs of pants can stop a **bullet**. If it's a slow bullet. A very slow bullet.

🍌▲🍌 Clever. From **Christian fish** to GAFilk turtles.

IRV KOCH
offline reader
dec 2000-jan 2001

🍌▲🍌 ct. Me. I'm not so certain now my **MS** is benign. After some reading, I'm not so certain anyone knows how benign any particular MS is. The hope is the new drug I am taking, will postpone paralysis, loss of balance and other major problems. I personally hope indefinitely.

🍌▲🍌 I have had a good enough **dentist**. A woman I knew when I came work told me about him. And he really had a good reputation as the up and coming young man. He isn't so young anymore, but he has a great reputation. It was the luck of the draw.

🍌▲🍌 The address of **Cartridges for Less?** Here is the address and phone number.

Cartridges for Less.com
1279 37th St.
Brooklyn, NY 11218
(800)276-5858
Fax (877)937-4965

🍌▲🍌 ct. Rich L. Will steak tartare cause Mad Cow disease a la Joe Mayhew? I thought only raw, infected, human brains would do that.

ct. Sheila S. If Kay is into Methodism, she would love a community nearby my parents, **Ocean Grove, New Jersey**. Which is run by the Campfire Association. People live in tents there during the Summer for the Summer revivals.

And there is no driving on Sunday at any time of year. Which was even great for me. It is neat walking along streets without any fear you will be hit by a car.

However, I do remember someone complaining that he had to lug his luggage several blocks on a Sunday because his convention ended then. The organization had not realized theirs was the rules.

ct.. Randy C. There may be a scientific basis for men living longer if they watch **big boobs**. But it reminds me too much of such urban legends as banana smoking, pyramid power and flesh eating bananas.

ct. Eva. A. There has been crossover between comics and **pirate novels**. There was a comic called Mickey and the Air Pirates. It was pornographic too. Unfortunately – or fortunately – Disney sued it for copyright infringement and won.

Of course, I am just retelling this tale from my ever porous memory, and some comic fans here, like Mike Weber, may have a more accurate version of this story.

GARY BROWN
oblio no. 132

You had **flu** when you wrote this in January. And it caused you aches and pains. My flu didn't cause aches and pains so much as fatigue. I had a whole spate of flu a couple of years ago. And I was so tired I could hardly get up. Even then I could hardly keep my eyes open and I would nod off.

Or was it flu? A gastroenterologist claimed it might be gallbladder problems. It doesn't sound like something that would originate in the gallbladder. But I haven't had that type of flu since I had my gallbladder out. So who knows?

THE LONG GOODBYE.
No, I wouldn't bug Dubya every step of the way like the Repubs bugged **Clinton**.

The temptation is to fight fire with fire. But actually I am not certain that was a good tactic. I am sure harassing Clinton satisfied the Conservative core who believe Clinton is the anti-Christ, but it had a drawback. If you cry wolf too often, people will ignore you.

After a beginning when there was a new accusation each week against Clinton: and none of them stuck: the public went ho-hum at new ones. No, I would treat Dubya cordially until I had something I could actually pin on him or his Administration.

Then it would be more believable, or at least less unbelievable.

ct. Me. Even though I seem to be following doctor's orders for the most part, I sympathize with the husband. Flesh is weak. We all have our **vices**. No, he shouldn't have started to smoke again. But we do lots of things we shouldn't.

I wonder about the attraction of cigarettes. People call them their 'friends.' I gather they have a tranquilizing effect you can't get

elsewhere. Maybe we need a new high. People seem to have gotten more dissatisfied in America since we lost our old ones, tobacco and booze.

☛▲☛ I have limited my carboos too. I have had to since I am diabetic. And I still **weigh** fifty pounds less than at my heaviest in 1995. I usually just take tastes of the cakes and candies in the office.

I have to admit that I have gained twenty pounds in the past several years. I am eating more carbohydrates, though. I had problems with cutting back too far. And that may explain it.

☛▲☛ Didn't **cowboy heroes** get more complex near the end of the fashion for cowboy shows? I remember Maverick, who was partially a rogue. Then there's Johnny Yuma, who, as you say, is looking for salvation. Would someone on a simple 'commercial' show look for salvation?

I remember Richard Boone as Paladin. Didn't he quote from the classics the first several years of the show. Then the producers figured a cultured cowboy was enough. There didn't have to be any actual culture.

☛▲☛ I agree with you. **Gore** did just fine. I have to add: especially since it was a Republican year. But people don't seem to understand that.

There has been all this bickering among Democrats about why the election was lost. Too much Clinton. Too little Clinton. Too much liberalism. Not getting back to his Democratic roots. As they say, I'm not a member of any organized party. I'm a Democrat.

☛▲☛ Are the knockoff **inkjet cartridges** inferior? The companies who make printers would want you to think their printers can't work right without the 'authentic' cartridge. Of course, more and more of any printer is in the

cartridges. A lot of the price of printing is in the cartridge. More and more the printers are mere shells awaiting a cartridge.

I haven't found that great a difference between the \$8 cartridge from the manufacturer and the \$3.50 cartridge from Cartridges for Less. The manufacturer's cartridge may print a little darker but the Cartridges for Less cartridge lasts a little longer.

☛▲☛ Certainly, it wouldn't be great to resurrect **mimeoing** if it leaves ink under your fingernails for twenty years.

Maybe we could have new hip mimeoing. I don't know what that would be, though. And it sounds like an oxymoron. But maybe not.

☛▲☛ I'll bring back **fan fiction** singlehandedly. And it will be creative. The hero won't be run over by a truck; he will be run over by a rocket ship.

☛▲☛ Fun with my **new boss**? I will never meet Ann Veneman, if it's the Secretary you mean. I think I may have met Dan Glickman fifteen minutes. And spoken to him for five seconds.

It will be several months before we have an Under Secretary. And several more months before we have a new Administrator. And even then I won't be dealing with them very much.

☛▲☛ ct. Jeff Copeland. Sounds like **computer people** only listen to management when it comes to a new system. Maybe that's who you should funnel your suggestions for



The Coat of Arms of Cyrano's real family, the 'de Cyranos.' He was only 'de Bergerac,' as far as I can see, by the acclaim of his fellow officers.

improvements through.



ct. Liz

Copeland. **Florida** usually only varies in temperature between 90s and 80s. It sounds like you're on the Gulfstream. I hear Britain doesn't vary that much. Nor Newfoundland. Nor in the far Arctic Spitzbergen. Just, of course, they're much

colder than Florida.



ct. Steve Hughes. No, I think we

can **time travel** and do more than merely observe events. Of course, we would not be able to travel to our past, but an alternate past that differs – maybe ever so slightly – from our past. And not our future but an alternate future that differs – maybe ever so slightly – from our future. Maybe not slightly.



ct. Ned Brooks. Being politically incorrect in our misspent **youth**. Your friends tried to start a team called the Afros.

An acquaintance of mine was called the Big Black Pig. Black because of his hair. It was something from his childhood. On the other hand, unlike your friends and their team, the name stuck with him way into adulthood.



ct. Guy Lillian. Maybe we could

find a less racist symbol for Southern heritage than **Stars and Bars**. How about the Moon Pie? Or maybe we could modify the Stars and Bars. Put a little African green into it. Or black and white hands shaking.

Just suggestions.



ct. Janice Gelb. Of course, **Bush** is going to depend on collective leadership to

make decisions. Like his father. That was why people voted for him. On the grounds that he would never be the one who was actually making the decisions.

That the real President would be Cheney. Or, some say, his Texas advisor Karl Rove.



I get the feeling from the **Bible** that God did not look too kindly on kings. Among the other ancients, the great holy men were god kings. But, among the Israelites, they were concerned citizens. Just think of Noah and Abraham and Elijah and John the Baptist.

So the God of Israeli would be very dubious about censuses. Which, as you say, were for purposes of taxes. And thus for filling up the coffers of kings.



ct. Don Markstein. Naw, it wouldn't be good politics to challenge the vote of **military men**, no matter how illegal. My agency has a program called the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children. As someone told me during the Reagan Administration, the only way you could give the program more clout would be to call it Women, Infants and Veterans.

T.K.F. WEISSKOPF

"**yingvi is a louse**" and other graffitos #69



KREEGAH! **Historicals** aren't on TV as far as I can see. And there are fewer of them than I remember in the movies. Yet they are very popular in paperback. I gather

the rationale is that historicals are too expensive to produce. You point out some additional reasons.

Of course, it could be the belief among the bottomfeeders in Hollywood and the networks that only people who read are interested in historicals. And no one watches their shows can read.

☹▲☹ CHARLOTTE'S WEB. It could be that if the Tea' Leoni character had been married rather than a **working woman**, and had two adorable children, she would have been happier and more together. It happens. The opposite happens too, depending upon the marriage and job.

I know a woman who was very bitter until she had her first child. And then she became rather happy-go-lucky. But it wasn't an either-or situation; she still continued to work in our agency as a Program Analyst.

☹▲☹ TERRY JEEVES. You know I've never read a **mystery** where the butler did it. Once the chauffeur did it, but never the butler. Still, that has been a mystery cliché. Even in the '20s it was. Eric Ambler has a Turkish police chief write a mystery he thinks is in the English style. And, of course, the butler did it. And seduced the wife besides.

☹▲☹ You believe all the **lies**, the distortions, the fallacies of every single Republican legal brief that comes down the pike. I would much prefer to believe all the lies, distortions, etc. of every single Democratic brief that comes down the pike.

I have already commented on the issue of the **election**. As far as I can tell, your arguments have no relationship to mine. As Jules Feiffer says, this is a nation of trade press. The Democratic and liberal press represent one trade; the Republican and conservative press represent another.

☹▲☹ HARRY WARNER, JR.

I'm sure Harry's right that Rock killed **ballroom dancing**. But ballroom dancing seems to be coming back with a vengeance. I keep seeing all sorts of ballroom dancing competitions on PBS. Plus a friend of mine was a champion of untelevised ones.

☹▲☹ ct. JoAnn. Zoe Baird is a law breaker vs. **Linda Chavez** a humanitarian, vegetarian? I think the difference is that Zoe didn't have as much chutzpah as Linda. ✓

SING THE PRAISES OF THE WOLFLORD

☹▲☹ Suzanne, it might prove useful for you and Steve to know **archery** when you're storming castles. However, I will stick to my trusty catapult.

☹▲☹ Steve, I like the SF **covers** too with the Green Monster, large breasted woman in distress and the hero with the ray gun. In short, SF good girl art.

I didn't see much of that growing up in the '50s. But I saw a lot of it when I went to college. Some college libraries had collections of such pulps for some unknown reason. Plus in the Boston area, I was a frequenter of the MIT Science Fiction Society Library, which had gathered an incredible number of pulps in one place. Plus Science Fiction porno, *Deep Thrust*.

However, I take umbrage at one thing. Toni: chain mail bikinis might look real sexy but I hear they

give you one hell of a chafing.

☺▲☺ That's right, Toni. Get that boy friend of yours to take you to a real Nola restaurant next time. How about Mom's?

EVE ACKERMAN

guilty pleasures 17

☺▲☺ The way my **Hebrew school** taught me it was for a day. We were supposed to do our Bar Mitzvah and that would be it. In my case, they may have been realistic. Given my parents didn't go, I probably wouldn't be coming back to the Synagogue very much.

☺▲☺ **PARTNERS OF NECESSITY.**

Maybe a small press put out the last **Meisha Merlin** book, but a big review has reviewed at least one of the books, in the *The Washington Post*.

☺▲☺ ct. Me. I hope the **Interferon Beta 1-a**, which, I guess, is some sort of steroid, will protect me from Multiple Sclerosis. It certainly is a nuisance to inject.

Fortunately, I don't have a limp like your oldest brother. In fact, I powerwalk, more skipping than walking, three times a week about three miles. Still, I am wondering if the continuing spasms in my feet are a remnant of the event three years ago. I had thought the periodic feeling there are bands around my stomach was caused by it, but they seem more to be caused by overdoing the stomach exercises.

☺▲☺ ct. Lynch. I was told that the Thai Room in D.C. tried to serve as real **Thai food** as possible, but the ingredients are not widely available in this country. So they made do. The person who told me was married to a Thai.

☺▲☺ ct. Koch. Of course, you're right that saying "He screamed" or "She screamed"

dialogue can get on your nerves after a while.

This one instruction book I read said you should use 'Said' usually. And 'Said with an adverb' for more emotional moments. And some more specific depiction at the height of emotion, like 'Screamed.' And nothing at all when you can get away with it. I hate to think of how old the book was. But it works, especially if you're not thinking about it.

Some things should be avoided. Remember the old Tom Swifties's. "'Jesus Christ!' said Tom crossly. And then there is the old term for surprise, "He ejaculated." It worked around 1910, but right now--

☺▲☺ During Passover, I get invited to **Seders** at my friend Larry's and his friend Phil's. I, Larry and Phil have had to battle Larry's wife and the Mexican Jewish contingent. We may not demand Kosher chardonnays and sauvignon blanc; just something that doesn't kill you, like Manishevitz concord.

NORM METCALF

tyndallite v3. #93

☺▲☺ What happened, Norm? It seemed like you had a **call** on the other end and ultimately we disconnected when I spoke to you over the phone a while back.

☺▲☺ ct. T.K.F. Weisskopf. The colophon illo on the **OE's zine** didn't look 1920s. It didn't look like it would have been in the original "The Skylark of Space." But I figured it

The scandal is in what gets accepted, not rejected.

should be n

MIKE WEBER

However, all this talk about outer planets reminds me of a novel I tried to write years ago. In it, there is an enormous planet far out from the Sun. I have it called Proserpina. It's so large that it can sport Moons large enough for life. And hot enough to heat those Moons. However, the whole area is in darkness because this planet is a black dwarf. Colonists on its Moon have to wear infrared glasses outside.

That is also why it hasn't been detected yet.

Since attempting this novel, I was told by an astronomer that the planet may as well be a brown dwarf. They give off very little light and would also be hard to detect.

Of course, a purist would say Proserpina was not a planet at all. But the Sun's double star.

STEVE HUGHES

random thoughts

🍷▲🍷 Certainly the punch card **votes** are more accurate than what was going on in your father's 'imaginary' county. And Florida ballot counting is probably no less corrupt.

So who counted the votes to begin with in your father's friend's election? Were they more honest?

🍷▲🍷 I imagine I haven't met quite as many **politicians** in my job as you met in yours as a kid compiling voter lists. I only remember two. Both of them seemed to appreciate and reward loyalty. And, in general, seemed to care about people. In my book, that put them head over heels above the norm for office 'politics.'

One was Andy Hornsby. He supposedly was a bureaucrat but it didn't seem that way. He acted like a good 'ol boy, although we knew he knew a lot more than he let on. He on occasion went back to Alabama and was their welfare commissioner.

He saved a friend of mine's ass when he was Regional Administrator in, I think, the Mid-Atlantic. The Headquarters' Administrator wanted him fired for union activity. I don't know how they could do that to a civil servant. They didn't try. Andy said he was his best employee; which, I'm sure, Jim was. And somehow smoothed things over.

I had a more limited experience with Andy. But he obviously liked the fact he could come to me and have his requests for information answered.

When he retired and returned to Alabama permanently, others were equally affectionate. Making fun of his accent, which they believed was to some extent put on; and praising him for being a great human being.

Someone who was more obviously a politician was Betty Jo Nelsen. She had been the minority leader of the Wisconsin State Assembly. President Bush asked her personally to be Administrator of our agency. She couldn't administer her way out of a paperback. I don't think that was the reason why she was appointed, though.

Our paths didn't cross until her last day. Then I met her on the shuttle to Washington. She told me she thought Washington politics were really dirty. And was giving up politics for now. What impressed me about this was she actually spoke to me. A big thing given the caste system in Washington

🍷▲🍷 **GORE. Clinton** taking credit for prosperity during his Administration? To me that's what politicians do, whether they had anything to do with it or not. Of course, for you, Clinton in particular has a lot of cheek because of all the damage he's caused.

On the other hand, would Clinton be blamed for a Gore recession? The lesson of the election was that Gore could not inherit Clinton's reputation for prosperity. Would Clinton inherit a Gore reputation for recession?

GARY ROBE

tennessee trash #39

☺▲☺ I'm going to have to get together a list of good **websites** for practical things. I have enough impractical stuff. And keep those practical things on my favorites. The Oriental Trading Company for gifts sounds like one. Liz's <http://www.mikesedore.com> for games sounds like another.

Of course, this will require that I get off my duff.

☺▲☺ I wonder if you could have gotten that **armoire** for your wife on the Thomas' Register site. They list people who will customize anything so it seems. Of course, they're expensive, so it's just as well you got those armoires at Service Merchandise and Treasure Quest.

☺▲☺ **Nostalgia** trumps comfort, luxury and our current taste. Being snowed in at a Best Western doesn't sound like my idea of fun, although you remember nostalgically. Same with those silly Dollar Store gifts.

However, it is amazing what I remember nostalgically. Guy Lombardo shouldn't have been my cup of tea. But I saw him so often New Years' Eves I missed him when he went off the air. I think by dying. For some reason, the ball dropping in Time Square never did that for me. Of course, they're still doing it, so it isn't the stuff of nostalgia yet.

☺▲☺ **Camping** out in 20° weather, hiking, leatherwork all at once. Are you sure you're kids aren't Eagle Scouts by now?

☺▲☺ I've always believed that business isn't going to preserve **endangered species** unless they can make money off them. The stingray, which is commercial exploitable, will survive for millions of years to come. Or as long as businessmen are in the game.

☺▲☺ ct. Me. I don't know. I don't believe

ignorance is bliss, necessarily. If I have **MS**, I want to know about it and have it treated instead of being plagued by an unknowable ailment. On the other hand, no possibility of my teeth's condition remaining a mystery. The corn on the cob saw to that.

☺▲☺ I notice that tendency even in Windows 98 on my computer at work. If a program locks up, it can get you out of it; so you can resume your work. Unfortunately, not on my new super duper computer at home. No matter what drivers I have downloaded up till now.

Which reminds me. With **Windows 2000**, I hear, you need all new drivers for your software. Which, I guess, is doable, but I was too lazy to. So I opted for Window 98 Second Edition. May have been a mistake. Especially with a computer of this power.

☺▲☺ I don't worry too much about the **Gray Screen** of Death. That usually means the monitor is not plugged in right. A little fiddling remedies it. It's these software quirks that I have a hard time dealing with. On both my old and new computer.

☺▲☺ When I had something wrong with my back, I was given a **relaxant** that I couldn't take as prescribed, like you couldn't take Lotronex. I was dead for the entire day. I much rather put up with the pain. I didn't mind taking it at night, though. I slept well then.

☺▲☺ **Linda Tripp** too low on



According to the website <http://www.brineyspears.acfasers.htm> she is an expert on semi-conductor physics.

the totem pole to worry about? She had a cushy job. That's a plumb every Administration would covet. Some rich contributor's preppy son or debutante would jump at the chance.

If memory serves me correctly, she had such a good enough reputation on the job that she was held over from the Bush Administration. That happens. It has happened with my Assistant Administrator in I-don't-know-how many Administrations. Of course, in retrospect, re-appointing her was a mistake on the Clinton Administration's part.

ct. Guy H. Lillian III. **Urine** is of course sterile most of the time. I was reading about an operation that took place in the 16th Century. A nobleman came to a physician with his nose detached in a sword fight. And wanted it re-attached.

The physician peed on it and sewed it back on. I told a modern day physician that and he said he could see the point.

ct. Richard Lynch. Pining to go to Thailand when you go to Mexico City and São

Paulo. My theory is that if you know something too well, it can't be exotic. Tanna Tuva. Samoa. Bali. Mata Hari and her exotic dancing. Boooooiiiiinnnnnggg!!!

LIZ COPELAND

home with the armadillo #45

☪▲☪ You wanted to give a surprise gift to Bill and Eve. I don't give any surprises to my wife Heidi. She doesn't like them. Forget about a book. Or a kit. Forget about kitchen implements, even though she loves to cook. I guess I could get her flowers for Saint Valentine's day. Or candy. Even though she's warned me off them.

But I usually ask her what she wants and get it. This year it was a toy stuffed pig. It has a bow and a curlicue tail. She saw it at Wal-Mart and she just had to have it. And now it sits on her chest of drawers.

☪▲☪ I hear originally the Trumps in the original Tarot of 15th Century Italy meant 'Triumphs.' And each card may have some moral significance.

Also, originally the Tarot was not used for divination any more than any other set of cards. It owes its reputation to 18th Century France.

All magic was discredited then; it was the age of reason. But some magic was less discredited than others. In Britain, it was the popular art, astrology. In Germany, it was the learned arts, Cabala and alchemy. And, predictably in France, it was the naughty arts. The gypsy arts. Among them, Tarot and palmistry.

All the legends of the Tarot, it's origination in Egypt, its Cabalistic connection, etc. arose then.

♠♣♠ ct. GHLIII. I don't blame only 15% of all **Blacks** for voting if the sheriff has a blockade of the voting booths. Not that that's necessarily the sole reason.

♠♣♠ ct. Brown. From our point of view, a lot of people believe bad info, the worse the better. In fact, H.L. Mencken said that, given a choice between the **truth** and lies, the public will pick lies.

From the point of view of the believer, things are different. Belief depends on what's most convenient to believe. That is their true definition of truth. And facts are often inconvenient.

♠♣♠ ct. Schlosser. I'm afraid the idea of people individually investing Social Security funds is not encouraging. Maggie Thatcher encouraged her civil servants to invest for their **retirement plan**. So a few invested in a certain fund set up especially for that purpose. And it went bankrupt. Those civil servants had to pay some substantial sum to get back in the old pension system..

♠♣♠ E.J. DIONNE, JR. While not being racist per se, let's face it: John Ashcroft believes in his Southern heritage more than he disbelieves in **slavery**. And Gale Norton believes more in States' Rights because it suits her ultra-Conservatism.

By the way, Curt Phillips had the best solution. He was forward about slavery in his article about Civil War re-enactments. It was wrong. His fellow Southerners were wrong to pursue it. But there is good in his Southern heritage. And he is intent on practicing that good.

Let me add, there is bad in all heritages.

Sometimes radical bad. But it's ours. We can't shake it. We may as well enjoy our heritage.

♠♣♠ GEORGE F. WILL I agree with George Will. We need more gentlemen's agreements. And more **common sense**.

But common sense is always in short supply. There will always be officials who want to ban key chains as weapons and aspirin as drugs. My school, when I was kid, didn't have much in the way of common sense. And that was long before p.c..

On the other hand, we have to agree to have a gentlemen's agreement. And no one is agreeing anymore.

What this country needs is a new high to mellow us. And if we don't agree more, at least we will disagree less.

JEFF COPELAND fantasy and reality

♠♣♠ JERRY POURNELLE
QUOTE. I agree with Jerry Pournelle for once. The only way to insure the **ecology** of the Earth is to go into outerspace. And do our polluting in the lifeless void. And have real wide open spaces for the Earth's increasing population.

I am dubious we are going to do it by self-restraint. That much self-restraint has proven above and beyond the human race.

♠♣♠ Katherine Harris paid a large fee to disenfranchise 15,000 Floridians. Cops blockaded the Black's way to voting booths. Steve

Hughes may be right. **Elections** are far from honest.

And really far from honest in Florida.

ct. Gary Brown. No, no, no, Dunkin' Donuts makes the best **donuts**. They seem to be better known in the Northeast. Having tasted theirs and Krispy Kreme's before being diagnosed with diabetes, I have to say that. Given my diet, I probably won't be able to do justice to Tim Horton's. So I have only to conclude that Dunkin' Donuts is best.

Anyway, Dunkin' Donuts has its own university, Dunkin' Donuts University. How could they help not being the best? ~~Don't~~ answer.

ct. Steve Hughes. The Microsoft Outlook at work certainly is vulnerable to **email viruses**. I opened one recently. It came on my librarians' list; I didn't expect a thing. I just acted like an automaton.

I was embarrassed. I could have at least opened it for the picture of Anna Kournikova that beckoned inside. But I wasn't even noticing enough to realize even that.

Suddenly, I did notice the VBS extension and realized I had to act fast as the file looked like it would about to explode. All I could think of was rebooting. Which I did. And which didn't do much good.

Immediately, I got a telephone call from the Northeast region asking whether the Anna Kournikova message was a virus. I told the caller, "You're damn straight it's a virus." All day I saw Outlooks with piles of messages beckoning skills like me to see Anna.

At least this virus only replicated other email. Also, the miscreant was soon caught. I believe a Dutchman was arrested for it within a day or two. And he somehow believed he was warning people against viruses.

ct. Toni Weisskopf. Taxing away

speculation? I read a book that claimed that the way nations normally have dealt with speculative bubbles is they have loaned money, *Manias, Panics and Crashes* by Charles P. Kindleberger (1978). And Kindleberger, an economist, thought that the terms should be onerous enough so that the speculators will think twice about speculating.

I guess the strategy will work for a time. But the idea behind speculation is that you can't lose; you can only win. That you will wind up in hock to the government is beyond your current periscope.

ct. Gary Robe. I hear that Microsoft, listening to the hue and cry against the **animated paperclip**, now includes other possible animated icons. One is Einstein. If you don't like the animated paperclip giving you advice, you can have an Einstein animation do it.

But I can't changeover on my computer and put the paperclip out of his misery. I'll have to ask help from ITD.

ct. Yourself. You have forgotten one great trashy imitation of Star Wars, ***Battleship Galactica***. Also known as *Battleship Gastritis*.

You're probably right. It was more an imitation of *Star Trek*. It may even have predated *Star Wars*. But I needed a come on to talk about it.

My sister knew someone who was a star on that show, Richard Hatch. Not the Survivor Richard Hatch; the one also on *All My Children* and *Streets of San Francisco*.

He hated *Battleship Galactica* at the time as beneath him. But since then he has decided it was one of his few claims to fame. So he also decided to publicize a comeback for it. And mortgaged his house for that purpose.

One problem was he didn't own the rights to *Battleship Galactica*. Which made him a laughingstock. He'll have to go back teaching acting based on how you were abused as a child.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Guy Lillian. John Snider should have an **award** he can shoot for with his website. Now the problem remains Should it be a statuette of a spider or of a fly?

🍷▲🍷 Goths gloomy? When I've seen archetypal Goths, they look gloomy, violent, fiendish, filled with radical evil. When I've seen real **Goths**, they look like healthy, happy enough kids who are trying to weave that aspect of themselves with other strands into something completely different.

🍷▲🍷 **Marx** and Engels are not considered Dead White Males by the p.c. crowd because they created the Westernized concept of capitalist culture exploiting the Third World. Calling people Dead White Male is very Dead White Male.

🍷▲🍷 Which reminds me of an ancient *National Lampoon* bit. A school for tact. Learn how to say things like this tactfully: "Marcel, you're a dead, Gay, Jew."

THE END