

Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette #78

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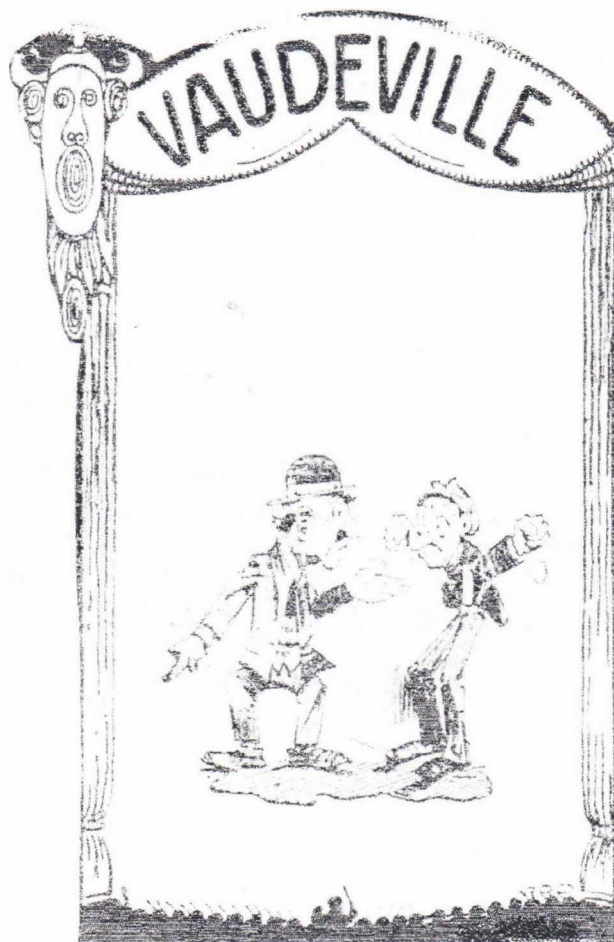


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ILLUSTRATIONS: FRONT, Vaudeville; p5, Crazy Flowers (Trinlay Khadro); p10, Rocket Flowers (Trinlay Khadro); p15, Martha Stewart Lifer; p20, Sandbox Yuppy; p25, Baby Balkis (John Held, Jr.); p29, Betty Paige Catwoman (Bunny Yeager); BACK, Greek Theater. Two more pix from Trinlay. *Martha Stewart Lifer* is what the cartoonist Lazlo speculates Martha will change her magazine Martha Stewart Living to if she has to do time. Baby Balkis comes from the hoax/parody The Queen of Sheba: Her Life in Times (1922) by Phinneas A. Crutch (?). The pic by the famed drawer of flappers. The Betty Paige photo was taken by Bunny Yeager, model turned photographer.

CORRECTION: Egg on face. It was absentmindedness when I said Guy received the Rubble this year. I knew it was his wife, our charming Rosy. And how did I forget Julie Wall won a Rebel? I shouldn't have. On the other hand, since I didn't really know Allen Steele, I can see why I forgot he won the Phoenix.

I won't apologize either about claiming Gary Robe's Pisco Sours came from Peru. I didn't realize at the time he found the ingredients here in the States.

COMMENTS ON SFPA #228

T.K.F. WEISSKOPF

'yngvi is a louse' #77

🍷▲🍷 ct. Ned Brooks. In Federal spending, one man's meat is another's poison. Ned finds defense spending poison; you find it meat and welfare poison.

As for pork, it's necessary or bills wouldn't get through. Enough Congresspersons are on the fence for any one bill. Of course, the Congressional leaders don't have to feather their constituents' nests like they do.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Jeff Copeland. Hayden Christensen, who played Anakin Skywalker, may have been a talentless urchin; but my generation had Troy Donahue. Who couldn't act his way out of a paperbag, who was famous for the cardboard school of acting. When the Lord gave out brains, he opted for muscle.

Also, wasn't Walter Brennan an older person when he became known for character acting? It seems like comparing Hayden to Walter Brennan is like comparing fish to bicycles.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Janice Gelb. That it is

obvious that you are not in need of penis enlargement isn't going to stop the spammer. I think I have found what does. I got a new anti-spam program, ChoiceMail. It treats spammers like Call Intercept here in Virginia treats telemarketers. Basically, if you want to get through, you can't be using a fake address. Which nearly all spammers do. I admit there are some additional complications to this, and we'll see how well it works.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Janet Larson. Janet should get an unbiased opinion on the Arab-Israeli conflict? You mean there is such an opinion?! But you're right that Israel has such a big army because the Arab states all around her have promised her annihilation.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Guy H. Lillian III. You're for taking away the rights of 'furriners' if it makes sense. But you are against government computers speaking to one another. Can that ever not make sense? Maybe we shouldn't have some databases, but if they are legit, then government computers should talk to one another.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Gary Robe. "Liver Maria." Isn't how long you live dependent on the liver?

NED BROOKS

the new port news 204

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. I realize the scanned in caption is unreadable on my cover, where a man is getting into bed with a woman. And I confess I can't even understand the, albeit legible German words on the original. However, I was told they said if you are unhappy, to get into bed with a friend.

By the way, this illo and caption weren't on German money distributed nationwide; it was local money. Minted

because the Reichsbank had closed after World War I rather than pay reparations. It was to make up for the fact no national currency was being printed.

🍷📖🍷 I got the impression that the George Putnam who published the *Queen of Sheba* was not the same as the George Putnam who published the Traprock books. But I looked at the copyright dates and you're right. The *Cruise of the Kawa* is 1921 and the *Queen of Sheba* is 1922. So it was the same Putnam. The firm apparently was into parodies at the time.

However, it was not George Palmer Putnam, who married Amelia Earhardt, as someone claimed. But George Haven Putnam who ran the firm until 1924.

🍷📖🍷 Scientists may not have been talking about human cloning until 1968, but a Brian Ford claims that A.E. Van Vogt had the concept in *World of Null-A* in 1945. I couldn't say. While I read the novel, it was too many years ago to remember.

🍷📖🍷 Abraham Ettleson's *Lewis Carroll's "Through the Looking Glass" Decoded* (1966) annotated to show the book alludes to Jewish wisdom. It sounds like Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*. There, a mad king-in-exile turned academic steals a poet's manuscript, and thus makes himself its annotator. Of course, he fathers on the poem a detailed account of events in his homeland.

🍷📖🍷 It's true that you can learn to read by phonics and not understand what you are reading. But the same is true of the competing school of reading, by sight. There is no substitute for common sense. No matter how hard people try in order to find one.

🍷📖🍷 ct. Metcalf. An asbestos bound book. Wouldn't that be considered poison these days? Much less a book written on asbestos.

🍷📖🍷 ct. Guy. I heard in the '60s most lynchings were for reasons of scandal rather than race. Usually, some wife was cheating on one of the town's husbands. So they used mob action to teach her a thing or two. Supposedly, that was mostly how even the Klu Klux Klan was most used, even though it's basis was racial and anti-foreign feelings.

Of course, those killed by lynching were overwhelmingly Black.

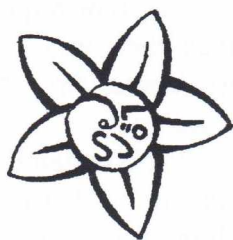
🍷📖🍷 There were earlier sightings of not only witches on broomsticks but witches riding goats. And sometimes horses. The sightings were much more varied than the stereotype.

Just as flying saucers have not always been saucer shaped. Sometimes they are cigar shaped and sometimes points of light. In the 1890s, they were airships. And had earthly inventors more often than extraterrestrial pilots.

🍷📖🍷 No, the idea behind the insanity defense has nothing to do with science. It is not a matter of science or scientific evidence that we should avoid putting someone behind bars who doesn't know they are committing a crime. Or doing anything wrong. It is more moral revulsion.

On the other hand, the idea behind Free Will is that we should incarcerate people who know right from wrong, yet claim they couldn't control their actions. According to Free Will, everyone has the will power to control their actions. It just takes enough oomph.

This also has nothing to do with



science, and everything to do with moral revulsion.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Hughes. Well, if you're right, then Verne didn't get his science right in *Robur the Conqueror*. The plane could never have been airworthy at all. Or at least his translator didn't get the science right.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Don. Newspapers have been doing crazy things with comics recently. I guess it is to increase circulation, but it strikes me in some cases more to exert editorial whim. *Doonsbury* in the *Washington Post* is set apart in the Style Section. And *Dilbert* is in the Business Section. You figure.

Of course, *Pogo* was always in the editorial section of the *New York Post* during my childhood.

🍷🍷🍷 So, Ned, if you're not a party animal and the trip is getting to be a pain in the you-know-where, will we never get to see you at Deep South Con again?

ARTHUR D. HLAVATY
derogatory reference 99

🍷🍷🍷 Fortunately, for Dubya, he has a cheering section. And no one is after his butt. If Bill Clinton had done the things Dubya has done, he would have been impeached and convicted. Just think, he allowed 9-1-1 to happen. No one would

claim he could not have known beforehand; like an army has Bush.

Also, he let bin Laden get away. Then there is the matter of insider trading. (Of course, I don't believe Dubya does his own trading, like he doesn't run his own White House.)

🍷🍷🍷 When my sister was making the rounds of the Comedy Clubs, she had a bit in which various women sing "I am Woman" in their own inimitable style. Dinah Shore sang how they talked about atomic energy, and shared recipes. Barbara Streissand sang about her nails.

🍷🍷🍷 I never read the *American Psycho* novel, but I saw parts of the movie. It was funny idea. No matter how obvious, nobody notices this handsome, stylish, 'in' person is a serial killer.

🍷🍷🍷 Does it matter whether James Tiptree, Jr. was a male or female? Ideally no. Ideally, males chauvinism could be determined by the meaning of her words alone. But you bet your booties, during the '70s, her sex mattered.

It's like Does it matter that a work of art was not painted by a master but a forger: beauty is beauty? Again you bet your booties.

🍷🍷🍷 It is the myth that everything must go right if you speak in public. No, a hundred things have to go wrong. Public speaking is basically of matter of going on with the show.

The form of public speaking where that is most the case are debates. There is no time for reason or sense. In fact, that may be their virtue since people seem to get their views from debates..

🍷🍷🍷 Swarthmore prided itself only

on having a poor football team. But some colleges have acted on this feeling with style. Cal Tech broadcast far and wide it had never ever won a game. Also, its cheerleaders had the cheer "Sliderule, sliderule, rah, rah rah."


Rice University has had even more style. When they were playing a Baptist school which had fired a gay faculty member, the entire school band dressed in drag.

Also, Rice cheerleaders have had an Existential Cheer.

"I'm from Rice


"That's nice

"Do you know who you are."

 I love Effinger's Barbie Tarot: the Nine of Handbags, a Corvette as the Chariot, Vanna White on the Wheel of Fortune card. I have heard there is an Elvis Tarot. Also, in Southern California, decks are popular that are supposed to tell your fortune from the different whales on them.

RICH LYNCH

variations on a theme #14

 As I have said elsewhere the heat drove me and my wife from the Folk Life Festivals. I don't know whether I would have even turned out for the Silk Road, even had I known how good an exhibit it was.


Some random comments. 1) The width of the silk road reminded me of a t-shirt I remember seeing in the '60s: "Moscow-Vladivostok Fun Run."


2) You know China was best known for many centuries for silk. The only thing the Greeks knew about China was it was where silk was produced.


3) Tanna Tuva has been best known for its stamps. Some collector was trying to drive up the price of Tanna Tuvan stamps in

the United States in the 1930s. He did that by claiming how mighty a nation it is. For instance, there was a train on one of the stamps. Tanna Tuva, he declared, had both a train and track.

The Russian Embassy, which handled Tanna Tuvan affairs here, didn't help him, though. The ambassador admitted that there were no trains in that part of the world. And that the stamps were printed in Moscow. By apparently unknowing apparatniks.

 ct. Me. I heard it was Pushkin who made up that Salieri had secretly caused trouble for Mozart and ultimately engineered his death. Not only is there no proof Salieri hated Mozart, but there is no proof that Salieri and Mozart were anything but friends. By the way, despite what Forman's *Amadeus* claimed, Salieri's music is still played. I hear it on WGMS. It is not as popular as Mozart's, of course.

 ct. Ned Brooks. Whoever stuffed the envelopes with anthrax discovered what a mistake he made: namely, in thinking important people answer their own letters. And the threat has receded. In a few more months, I think it will be forgotten. Your letters will no longer be discolored or brittle. And your mail will be received as close to on time as before.

 ct. Gary Brown. The White House and Capitol are our symbols. Symbols which, we presume, the no goods who committed the 9-1-1 bombings would have to be after. But I suspect our symbols are not theirs.

The hijackers might possibly have mistaken the Pentagon for the White House. Just possibly. No way were they going to mistake the World Trade Center for the

Capitol. No way. Before 9-1-1, the World Trade Center was not, to us, an especially potent symbol of America. However, it had been in bin Laden's crosshairs for quite some time.

I bet, however, the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were symbols to the hijackers: the World Trade Center of bloated capitalism, the Pentagon of American imperialism. And I have been arguing for quite some time the last plane wanted to crash into the CIA headquarters even though finding it would be a problem. It would have been the symbol of the American plot to keep the Arabs in their place.

Of course, I am talking to deaf ears. The hijackers had to be evil incarnate. They had to want to destroy all the symbols we hold dear. I bet some have theories right now the 9-1-1 hijackers weren't aiming at the World Trade Center either.

ct. Steve Hughes. I think Steve lives farther out from civilization, or at any rate population, than we do. Shooting your b-b gun out the door isn't apt to hit anyone. And is even less likely to attract the attention of the police. Particularly in rural Georgia.

ct. Toni Weisskopf. As a lawyer, Pat Gibbs might be used to arguing for absurd things, often turning the law upside down to do it. However, I think that his article on the 'sainted' Elian was made to appeal not to a court but to believers. His brief would have made poor courtroom tactics. There is not a word rebutting probable arguments of his opponent – like what the law says.

ONE-SHOT

moddling, canoodling & oogling.

ct. Ah, Emperor Randy with his paperclip crown. Is he trying to say that Deep South Con is an Imperial Clip Joint?

ct. Toni. Potentially Gary Larson's Poodle Elephant would be more offensive than Fifi, the Poodle Cow. Of course, it would have to be chartreuse and have on even worse glasses.

ct. It was hard for me to cotton up to doing a one-shot. I was tempted to think before I wrote, but finally resisted temptation. And what came out was pure paranoia.

Since I can't expect you to get my allusions, I will explain. I once read someone who named the Zelator as the head of the Illuminati. I doubt that has any historical basis, although I have forgotten what Adam Weissaupt's real hierarchy was. The Zelator was, however, the head of the famed occult lodge the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. So it was appropriate to graft on to the Illuminati.

Also, one rightwing fraud about ten years ago was going around the country claiming to have been a Master Witch in the Illuminati. While that has even less historical basis than the position of Zelator, I couldn't resist including it.

ct. Steve. *Roam the universe slaying unlikely monsters in search of a really good cheeseburger.* A great line. Of course, your Planet Space Rangers don't hold a candle to my Insurance Salesmen from Atlantis.

ct. Gary R. I'm afraid that my Pisco Sours were not as powerful as the concoction you made last year. I was out for quite some time then. However, the sours will do in a pinch, like for having a good

time at DSC.



ct. Rosy. I apologize amply for claiming it was Guy who got the Rubble in my last *Twyg*. It was you. And it is a great honor. I could never receive it. As far as people are concerned, I have not done anything for Southern Fandom. Or to it.



ct. Sheila. You were kept busy with PROGRAMMING at Deep South Con!!! Isn't that sacrilege?!!

SHEILA STRICKLAND

murphy makes a house call



It's been a while since I've heard about problems like that where you can't print out your Deep South Con report. In the old days, the computer ruined the diskette far more often. Of course, I have known all along that the quality control for diskettes has left something to be desired.



Good luck going back to school. In school, listening was a problem for me. Fortunately, I was able read and study on my own, which often made up for it.



I found *Men in Black II* basically another dull action adventure.

Don't get me wrong. There were a few bits that were really great. Two having to do with worms. When Will Smith complained about the worm tranquilizer after having ridden through the city on a giant worm. And when they introduced the worms with the New York accents and a playful, daring attitude. Another great bit had nothing to do with worms. The extraterrestrials hidden from view at the Massachusetts post office.

Don't get me wrong either about some criticisms of the movie. They don't make it. One critic said that Tommy Lee

Jones acted tired in this one. Wasn't that supposed to be idea behind his character in the first movie? In fact, isn't he supposed to be insanely worldweary.

My problem with the movie was this. Scene after scene of the *Men in Black* engaging in a parody of normal action adventure daring do. Thus making the movie stupider than most action adventure movies. Which doesn't seem possible, and you have to see it to believe it.

This might have been redeemed had they started on this shtick earlier. And wove a number of gags into it. Will Smith tells his girl friend that impossible situations are normal and he would miss them if he didn't have them. Also, he will get out of the current completely impossible situation in a few minutes. Utter frankness no 'serious' action adventure movie dare speak.

Another thing that could have redeemed the film might have been some more parodies on other films. Or extended treatment of one. The last is what the first film did to great effect to the movie *Alien*. I gather the two headed man was a parody on *Dumb and Dumber*. I hear, in playing the evil villainess, Lara Flynn Boyle was playing her usual role, seductress.

I will still see *Men in Black III*. I am too entranced by the idea of *Men in Black*. Which I heard concerning Gray Barker's '50s book rather than the Malibu comic. Even though the movie's and comic's *Men in Black* are the good guys. And Gray Barker's are the bad guys; maybe even aliens themselves.

STEVE HUGHES

adventures in graphic design



Someone has got to keep the stereopticon faith. Do the convention. Be the leader. So few people are willing to take

responsibility and do. And so much is needed to be done. In addition, it is the reason why, despite claims of being rugged individualists, we are still a nation of sheep. No one will lead or do.

🍷▲🍷 By the way, where can we get a decent stereoscope these days so we can view your card?

TOM FELLER
frequent flyer. june 16, 2002

🍷▲🍷 Did you have to lose 10 lbs.? You haven't been fat, not that I've seen. I have been; I have been over 200 lbs and am 5'7½".

As for your blood sugar, 5.9 is great on the hemaglobin test. I was 6.1 in one and my doctor told me that I didn't have diabetes anymore. Of course, only as long as I did my exercises and kept the carbohydrates down.

And, with you, only as long as you keep your carbs down. Right?

🍷▲🍷 All these accounting shortcuts to the appearance of high profits were part of the heady '90s. Actually, I gather when the heady '90s started to falter and companies could not make their accustomed profits.

The chicanery may have helped in the short run, but hurt them in the long run. In the cases of Enron and Worldcon, it did them in.

Of course, now that corporations are not going to try these tricks again for some time, we are forbidding them. The fox has visited the chicken coop and there are no chickens; so we lock the door.

🍷▲🍷 You like to fix things according to Fire Logic. And once, according to Myers-Briggs, I was an Artisan. Clumsier

fingers than mine, you have never seen.

🍷▲🍷 9-1-1 attacks plotted by oil interests? The last thing oil interests want are bad feelings between the U.S. and the Middle East.

I gather Meyssan's book is based to some extent on the idea that the planes hitting could not have caused that much destruction. But can we pinpoint what destruction any explosion will cause? Especially if some of it depends on fire during the aftermath.

🍷▲🍷 You're right that Memphis was far better organized than Charlotte for the 2004 DSC bid – which didn't seem organized at all. And Memphis rightly won it.

🍷▲🍷 The problem with the Matt Helm movies being second-rate imitations of James Bond, and not being parodies, is that the James Bond movies themselves were, to some extent, parodies.

🍷▲🍷 You're right that Tommy Dorsey died in 1956. In short, the man who was angry because he didn't see Tommy Dorsey at that concert was living in some sort of weird time warp.

🍷▲🍷 So much for the *Wall Street Journal's* theory about why Southwest Airlines was doing so well: that it had not cut back on the amenities after 9-1-1. It omitted to say that Southwest didn't have any amenities to begin with.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Dave Schlosser. You're right that the slogan "Use Oil Helps Terrorism" It is true enough: Al Qaeda is probably funded mostly with oil money. But the last thing Americans want to cut back on is oil.

On the other hand, "Using Drugs



Helps Terrorism” is a starter even though our Afghani allies are more likely to traffic in drugs. In the public’s mind, one evil has to spawn another. And so it has to be the terrorists who are trafficking drugs.

I remember a ‘50s article in the *Readers’ Digest* about how the Red Chinese were involved in drug trafficking. Later I learned it was Koumintang troops trapped in Burma who were the big traffickers.

ct. Jeffrey Copeland. Actually, it wouldn’t have been the actual killing off the Sandpeople that led Anakin down the Dark Side? The killing itself would likely have spawned remorse. It would have been the anger in him after he saw his mother dead that caused him to go down the Dark Side.

NORM METCALF
tyndallite v3 #102

ct. Me. I think you got two different stories mixed up. The one on Mars where the spaceships appear to have been horses in a prior draft was a *Spicy Adventure* from the early ‘40s. The one about a civil war over segregation was in a SF prozine from the late ‘50s.

The only value of the latter story is nostalgia from my childhood; I must have been twelve at the time. For some reason it

is one of my clear memories.

ct. Cyril Kornbluth may have been a Stalinist at one time, but he certainly could not have been one when he wrote *The Syndic*. It is no wonder that it has won so many libertarian awards. In fact, it seems to be rediscovered each year and given a libertarian award.

ct. Couldn’t Werewolfism be both a blood and a saliva disease. I think the idea behind AIDS is that it thrives in moisture and so can be transmitted both by semen and through the blood. In fact, it is typically transmitted where semen meets blood. So it could also be transmitted via saliva too. And so, in that case, could Werewolfism.

ct. CHESTER CUTHBERT.

Westerns are very open to fantasies. I know the German writer Karl May became very famous in Germany writing about Old Shatterhand and the Amerindian Winnetou. But never visited American until way afterward.

ct. I actually didn’t find reading Algernon Blackwood that much of a chore. I was given a book with a number of his stories. He had a good grasp of myth and a good grasp of character. Of course, if you are looking for action adventure, there is a dearth of that.

ct. I can’t say that I am reading A.E. Waite’s books on the history of magic and the occult for his charming prose style. It is stiffer than a cigar store Indian and more convoluted the income tax form. Enlivened maybe by his strong opinions. Of course, his work is where the facts are, whereas some more charming writers do not have the facts.

♥▲♥ I remember Max Brand's (i.e., Frederick Faust's) westerns were the biggest thing since sliced bread in the '60s. They may have been new then. While he died in 1944, a lot of his manuscripts may not have been published until the 1960s.

By the way, do I remember right that he wrote *Destry Rides Again*? Which they made a big musical of the '50s. I heard it was quite clever.

DAVID SCHLOSSER

peter, pan & merry #44

♥▲♥ ct. Me. The Supreme Court couldn't fire judges who refuse to exact the death penalty, you're right. Nor could they refuse to allow judges on the bench who disagreed with capital punishment. It could only overrule them. And I suspect that was all Scalia meant.

The Congress is another thing. I suspect they have litmus tests for judges. I suspect the House would approve of no judge that didn't say he was against abortion and for capital punishment. The Senate, of course, has other litmus tests. Its judges might have to be pro-abortion.

So somebody is going to have to compromise somewhere.

♥▲♥ My *American Collegiate* does give "cotton" as another word for increase or prosperity. However, I tend to agree with you. Cotton Mather more likely got his name from his grandfather John Cotton.

♥▲♥ Your sciatica had to be treated; you were in definite pain. So you had more of an incentive than my wife. However, since she limps, I suspect she has a strong incentive. We'll see whether she runs with it, as it were. She did go to the doctor recently to have it looked into.

♥▲♥ If a symbol is on a religious building, you suspect it is religious. And that is what I suspect about the Magen David. There may be nothing in the Bible and no centuries old tradition, but I suspect, in the two centuries it has been identified with Judaism, it has become a religious symbol.

Sometimes what is on a building, however, has nothing to do with the business it houses. There was a joke about Mohel's storefront where he put out pictures frogs. They asked him why and he said: "You would prefer I display my circumcisions?"

♥▲♥ Maybe Lancelot's lake is not the same as the the Lady of the Lake's. Maybe his French lake wasn't integrated into a Welsh lake. However, in folk tales like that, disparate elements tend to get fused. And that was my point.

♥▲♥ Actually, the Constitution does mention a supreme court. On the other hand, the Supreme Court has said that Congress can determine the jurisdiction for courts by a majority vote, and whether they have any jurisdiction at all. I guess, in their view, the supreme court mentioned doesn't have to be the Supreme Court.

♥▲♥ I don't know whether pictures like the Alamo or Ben Hur were five hours long. And I don't know whether the *Mad* parody actually said five hours. But those movies were ungodly long. Maybe they deserved to have *Mad* assassins come and get them.

♥▲♥ I can understand that Israel might wish to punish whoever was responsible for the terrorism, but Israeli policy often gets very close to punishing the Palestinian people. And inciting more

terrorism. The recent 23 hour curfew, for instance.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Norm Metcalf. For Norm, like Humpty Dumpty in *Through the Looking Glass*, words mean what he wants them to mean. Particularly the word "science fiction."

🍷▲🍷 ct. Guy Lillian. What redress can we liberals have for the wrongful election of Shrub? The belief that he was elected during an unlucky time. It is worse than not being elected at all.

🍷▲🍷 You're right according to my websearch. The 144,000 come from a *New Testament* work, Revelation 7:1-8 and 14:1-5.

By the way, they seem to be the people taken to heaven before the Millennium begins. And they are all Jewish male virgins. While Fundamentalists claim to take the Bible literally, they always interpret the word Jewish to mean Christian. I can understand. Otherwise, theirs wouldn't be the true religion.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Steve Hughes. A fund manager telling Steve his money market investments are risky. Where enough money is involved, people will say anything. There was enough money involved in the late '90s. Less now.

🍷▲🍷 NATTER. Kay's brother shouldn't have been driving if he had epileptic seizures. But I can understand why someone would be reluctant to give up their license despite that. Driving is so important to our lives and no driving would be such a great change.

I have to say one thing for my sister-in-law: she finally realized she could not drive and have epileptic seizures, and gave

up her license. Now she undergoes the indignity of having her daughters drive her. But it is better than the alternative.

🍷▲🍷 I know you have been spending a lot elsewhere. But when the wolf seemed ready to engulf me, I learned one thing: repairs are one thing you can't let wait. Ultimately, my car stopped running and I was in a pickle for several months.

Of course, losing your family computer would not be as bad as losing your car. Still, my understanding is that there are el cheapo monitors you can get until you are ready to spend money on a decent one.

🍷▲🍷 I hope you find out what this new back pain is. The worst thing is not knowing what illness you have. I was happy to learn I had multiple sclerosis. That explained a number of episodes I had had for which there was no explanation. And I could then take medicine to control those episodes in the future.

STEVE HUGHES

comments 15

🍷▲🍷 So much for surge protectors. However, it's the first time in years I have heard of lightening destroying computers. I am sure it has in the interim, but it's the first time in years I've heard. My wiring suffered a direct hit by lightning in the early '90s. And my computer should have been a gonner. But I turned it off. And then turned it on again. And it worked alright.

That Israeli Avi really made a good computer. I wonder what happened to him?

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. Oh, the appointees want Bush to know they exist. They are not civil servants like the deputy minister in *Yes, Minister*, but people who owe their jobs to him.

Of course, Bush can't know much about the doings of our organization. Usually, it can't be more than a blip on his screen.

The Administrator of our agency has made an attempt for brownie points by introducing competitive sourcing in our agency. While a policy extolled by the Bush Administration, few others agencies have done this.

The idea behind it is some under civil service are going to have to compete for their jobs with private enterprise. For that reason, the Administrator has gotten a lot of flack both from the employees and union.

On the other hand, I am not certain that the Bush Administration has taken the slightest notice.

🍷▲🍷 Well, so much for what I have heard. So it wasn't reason alone or love alone, in either the book or movie, that cured Nash. But both. A lot of people like the idea of a balance these days. I do too. I may even break down and see the movie and read the book.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Norm Metcalf. I wonder how the *Forbidden Planet* was based on *The Tempest*. Of course, how was James Joyce's *Ulysses* based on the Odyssey beyond the naming of the chapters? Or Petronius the Arbiter's *Satyricon* on the Odyssey, as some have claimed? Like these claims, the claim about *Forbidden Planet* sounds like pretentious goob.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Ned Brooks. I'm glad that we didn't hear why Justice Holmes said "falsely shouting fire in a crowded theater." That he was referring to those protesting World War I. While we all agree it should be illegal to yell fire in a crowded theater, fewer agree

about that.

H.L. Mencken may have been right that Holmes' Supreme Court had made it impossible for State and Federal officials to violate the Constitution.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. Did Bush know? I had heard that there were warnings in the Arab press and press close to Al Qaeda that a strike was imminent. As to where it would come or what it would be, no one was talking.

So Bush didn't know.

A lot of people haven't known. A *Wall Street Journal* article claimed that the number two man in Al Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, was in a Russian jail for six months. The Russians never learned who he was; so they freed him.

Could we have avoided 9-1-1 with the benefit of hindsight? You bet. But we wouldn't have needed jets on alert or other hi tech solutions. Forewarned passengers could have easily overcome terrorists armed with box cutters. This is the type of solution authorities hate, but it may have worked on the Pittsburgh plane.

A more authority friendly solution, is this: just closing the cockpit door so terrorists could not get in. And this measure didn't need that much hindsight. Crankpots had threatened pilots a number of times in the years prior to 9-1-1. Warnings the airlines wished to avoid.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Jeffrey. For once I will take a more Conservative position on property rights than you. You are probably right that the CD companies lost money by putting Napster out of business. And I am not certain the CD music men aren't bottom feeders and seek pennies where there are none.

But I can understand why someone

wouldn't want to lose their property rights. Doesn't set a good precedent.

STEVE HUGHES
random thoughts

🍷▲🍷 I have to disagree with you on the Clinton Administration. Robert Rubin did try to rein in '90s craziness. Maybe not all of his proposals were relevant to WorldCom or Enron, but he did try to rein the craziness in. And the plan to rein in auditors' conflict of interest was relevant.

The most detailed article I saw about this was, strangely enough, in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Of course, Rubin got his butt kicked by Congress. You are right: it took someone who was courageous to oppose the forces of the "New Economy." Maybe foolhardy.

🍷▲🍷 From what you say, investing is not the rational occupation which the followers of Adam Smith claim. And which is our current reason d'être of capitalism. In fact, investing can be quite irrational. And not only in the '90s. According to Charles Kindleberger in *Manias, Panics and Crashes*, a lot of observers have noticed that in the past.

This is not to knock capitalism but it definitely needs another reason d'être.

🍷▲🍷 You're right that at least WorldCom differed from Enron in having assets. But its crime did not differ much: misrepresenting its financial situation. And, it had less reason: as you say, WorldCom is a company apt to survive bankruptcy. It didn't really have to depend on accounting legerdemain.

Come to think of it: maybe I should buy WorldCom. Maybe it will come back. Which contradicts what I said to Irvin. I

hope it is still at 6¢ a share.

🍷▲🍷 You convinced me that the Enron executives were not being nefarious in their handling of their employees' 401(k). At least not about that.

GARY BROWN
oblio no. 141

🍷▲🍷 RAIN, RAIN. With the lack of rain the East Coast is getting, I wonder, if in time it will become a desert.

I had a theory once that it would grow out of the desert in Maine. There are forty acres in Maine of sand dunes, which have become a tourist attraction. I had heard it started on a small patch of land and just grew. Which would prove my theory.

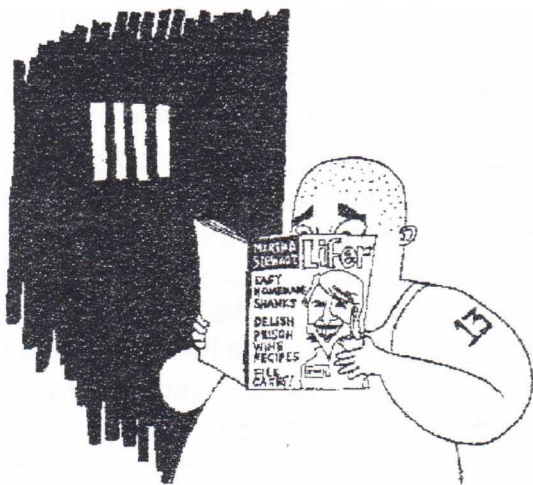
However, another source said that the top soil was thin anyway and there had been sand underneath it since the last Ice Age. Which would disprove my theory.

🍷▲🍷 JUST LIKE US??? The planets of 55 Cancri, are they like ours? The article later said that there were probably large planets before the Jupiter-like one it mentioned. So it may not look like our solar system at all.

On the other hand, would we need a solar system that looked like ours for life? The article said that the advantage of having a Jupiter is that our has deflected meteorites and comets – and asteroids. Of course, wouldn't any big planet do that? And couldn't we have planets with life in front and in-between them as well as in back of them?

Just wondering.

🍷▲🍷 CORRECTION. Do two wrongs make a right, like in the Wright cartoon? Because al Qaeda didn't give us the benefits of our legal system, should we treat al



Qaedans and Taliban as we want? Aren't we supposed to be the good guys here, and aren't we supposed to have some standards?

ct. Me. I think our secretary's problem was the shame of letting the world know her child had Down's Syndrome. A child she apparently loves dearly. And is intent on taking care of. The motives are understandable and her lie really didn't hurt anyone. Nor did she derive any great profit from it. So I can't take her too much to task.

Of course, I'm not a newspaper man.

It is true that since things change, i.e., Administrations change, we Feds can't be saddled with a mistake for decades. The problem is things seem to be one mistake after another at my job. The system seems to be broke.

The art of management seems to be a lost art. In my own area, public information, our bosses keep ignoring the employees, and instead act as gofers for whomever is the Administrator or Under Secretary. Everything is adrift.

One thing I can say is that my library

has great management. Of course, since it is a one-person library, the management is me.

The patriots hate it when they see anti-patriots. People who are a little reluctant to pledge allegiance. People who are embarrassed if they have to praise this country. That is a species patriots wish to eliminate. And they could have after 9-1-1, but they blew it.

They tried to make Patriotism unquestioning support for 'W's war. And his Conservative agenda. So it looks like they are going to have to put up with anti-patriots a little longer.

I have to say one thing: they are not the only people in politics who have failed because they overdid their demands. Liberals overdid their demands in the Carter Administration. The Republican Revolution overdid its Contract with America and anti-Clinton tactics. Politics equals excess.

I agree that no American President could get by without military action against al Qaeda. However, there is the thinking man's approach and there is the Bush approach.

We were floundering in Afghanistan until we decided to help the Northern Alliance. And I was not against helping them. But we should have figured out what we wanted to do before we went in guns blazing.

And if you really want to know what we should have done first, there was a plan by Clinton's Chief of Staff, General Shelton. We would send troops in immediately to get bin Laden. First thing. It would have been a small army over the area where bin Laden

was known to be. That would have been better than letting al Qaeda's fund raiser go scot free.

I suspect the plan was a nonstarter because it was considered a Clinton plan. And everything having to do with Clinton was regarded as wrong. Even though they kept on Dick Clarke, Clinton's counter-terrorism man, they wouldn't listen to him.

🍏▲🍏 As once and current President of my agency's Toastmaster Club, I have to say: instruction in public speaking is fine. But people have to jump in. After a while even people who cannot get rid of their stammers can speak in public. And be heard.

On the other hand, with some people, all they have to fear is fear itself. Like a woman who attended a few meetings recently and dropped out. She was shaking like a leaf and I bet she thinks she made a fool of herself. But her diction was perfect – maybe too perfect – and her thoughts coherent.

🍏▲🍏 Weight can worsen back problems, no doubt about it. It can also worsen arthritis. No doubt about that either. However, since weight loss seems to be a problem with you, maybe your best tact would be to exercise and lift weights.

While I have continued to keep off forty or fifty pounds: it is true: I am far from thin. And credit my weight lifting and walking with rolling back my arthritis.

🍏▲🍏 I get what you're talking about. People respected their priest too much and didn't believe he could be molesting children. Which a few were.

Of course, times have changed. Fathers were suspected of molesting their children ten years ago, and now holy fathers are suspected of molesting children now. I

get the feeling things are going in the opposite direction, and we are too willing to believe that.

🍏▲🍏 We may be remembering different Phantoms. The comic strip I remember twenty years ago and read recently on the web was a bore. There wasn't much intelligence. There was certainly no suspense. The Phantom had the jump on the villains from beginning to end.

I confess I haven't read any Phantom comics. He might be a better hero there. And I cannot, for the life of me, remember what he was like in the '50s.

🍏▲🍏 ct. Ned Brooks. Will we collide with an asteroid in our lifetime?. People are always trying to scare us. The Fear du Jour is childhood obesity, dirty bombs, underarm dingle dangle – and an asteroid colliding with us.

It could happen. But the Earth is not a large target. I believe the chances are better that, by the time it happens, deflecting it will be child's play. Or we will have devolved into amoebae.

🍏▲🍏 ct. Arthur Hlavaty. The invasion of Afghanistan went so well I suspect an October Surprise, where we invade Iraq. Or maybe the p.r. buildup for an invasion is the surprise.

A coterie of Conservatives has preserved the idea of a new offensive against Saddam as their key to success. They remember the excitement of the Gulf War. And figure a replay would re-create that excitement.

And they have convinced the Bush Administration that this will be another feather in its anti-terrorist cap. And win them the Congressional elections. I know Rumsfeld has been gung-ho on an invasion

of Iraq from the start.

But my take is that the public is not as enthusiastic about Iraq as some in Washington. This may not be Bush's ticket to success. I suspect the incredible feeling against Saddam and for driving him from Kuwait was a phenomena more prominent in 1991 than now.

It seemed like we were an impotent giant and people wanted us to kick butt. But there has been a lot of water under the bridge since then.

♥▲♥ ct. Guy Lillian. I gather the States had requirements for citizenship before the Federal government did. So I would imagine they go back quite far.

The typical requirement was that you had to establish you were a resident of a State for such and such period of time. So it had to be recorded somewhere when you arrived in the State and that you had lived there. It may not have been recorded centrally, though.

♥▲♥ ct. Don Markstein. It's all well and good to make bookmarks of great sites, like maybe Don's. The problem is that I have been bookmarking too many sites and I better look like organizing them, or I won't be able to find any when I need them.

♥▲♥ ct. Jeff Copeland. My leg cramps from driving seem to be gone too, and I can't figure out why. You changed your car and can blame it on that. But I couldn't blame mine on my car. It has remained the same. I couldn't blame it on exercise either. I was a couple of years into exercise when my legs started cramping.

In short, search me.

JEFFREY COPELAND

all the mailing comments that fit in print

♥▲♥ REVIEWS. Actually, it sounds like Cruise does have clear motivations in *Eyes Wide Shut*. He's a bubble brain. He's like a lot of bubble brains: worried that they are not getting enough sex.

And I can believe a frighteningly successful New York physician would be a bubble brain. Especially a frighteningly successful New York physician. They never had to grow up.

♥▲♥ What's the purpose in worshipping God if he is a capricious asshole like in Ted Chiang's *Hell is the Absence of God?* ... Of course, maybe that was Ted's point.

♥▲♥ ct. Me. The Catholic Church is certainly not monolithic, although a lot of people would like it to be.

I remember a joke from the '70s by Stiller and Meara. He's Jewish and she is Irish Catholic. She tells him her parents continue to eat fish on Friday. Stiller says he had heard the Pope had OK'd not doing that. And Meara replies that her parents are orthodox.

♥▲♥ Porn free on the web? Hell, you can't avoid getting it on AOL. Not with Barnyard Fun, College Girl Antics, Lengthen Your Penis, and other bits of erotica manqué.

♥▲♥ Didn't Reagan's Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, go farther than 'W'? Didn't he say that we didn't need to worry about the environment because the Second Coming will be right around the corner?

♥▲♥ I suspect the national security reason for why Padilla is being held without trial is that the dirty bomb thing is more of a

farce than we thought. As it is, it sounds like a farfetched possibility al Qaeda was looking into.



If Mencken is right and the best government is cynical, then Dubya's regime is among the best.



Even though I think the threat of abusive priests is in good part hype, I loved your "Father Francis Fondlebum Square."



I'm sure meditation is the idea of the Japanese tea ceremony; but not being grounded in it, I was bored to tears.



A desire to attack Iraq seems to be less of a thing for 'W' than it is for some members of the Republican Party. At least, the Republican Party in Washington. Rumsfeld even suggested we skip Afghanistan and attack Iraq. But 'W' felt that the public wouldn't understand.



Why did Anti-Saddam feeling catch on like wildfire in 1991? I doubt Saddam's use of nerve was the reason. I doubt that the Israelis disliked him, and were afraid he was going to get an atomic bomb, was the reason. It didn't prevent us from cheering him on against the Iranians.

I doubt the oil companies were the reason, although they have a whole history of wanting Iraqi oil off the market. Most people are not the stooges of Big Oil.

I doubt that Saddam is an SOB is the reason. The world has been filled with SOBs.

I take people's word for it as the reason. Too many people in 1991 were talking about how the U.S. had to kick butt for once to make us proud to be Americans. And Saddam was as good a target as any.



About Silberman's quote, it

reminds me of one of the corollaries of Murphy's Law: Never attribute to conspiracy what you can attribute to incompetence. And I have come out with a corollary to that: this is true especially when there is a conspiracy.

See what twenty-five years in Washington does to you.



I like the "Mauvey Russet"

Level of Alert against terrorism. Even that level of subtlety in Tom Ridge would be an improvement.



Actually, Walter Mossberg did say how the newest iMac was simple to use. For one thing, there was no trouble running Office 2000 on it. For a time, I considered getting an iMac. May yet.



My CD burner is older than two years so copying onto CDs is more reliable.

How reliable it is, however, depends on the method. When overwriting files on the CD by dragging files from the hard drive, it is very unreliable. When backing up files via my backup software, it seems reliable enough.



When you talk about the number of books in Medieval Europe, would the Moorish library count? Would the Moors count as Europeans, even in Spain?

...On second thought, you're probably right that Burke is sloppy. I bet because he writes fast. I bet because what he is writing is edutainment.



You're not the only one who has called computer techs propellerheads; I found propellerhead defined as a computer tech all over the web.



ct. Ned Brooks. I don't think what was pissing Nicholas Baker off is that

the conversion to microfilm was sloppy. Although that is reason to be pissed off. I get the impression that he is a conservative in the literal way, and believes we should never have given up newspapers, books, etc. for new fangled contraptions, like Microfilm. ...Electronic books too?

ct. Guy Lillian. Ah, yes, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* with Michael Rennie, the alien Klaatu. And his robot, Gort. Not only is it considered a classic in the world of movie fandom, but I hear it was the inspiration for a school of flying saucer wackos. Starting with George Adamski. He claimed to have flown around the solar system with beautiful beings from other planets who preached world peace.

I also hear he claimed to have seen rivers on the Moon.

So Phoebe is one of the smaller moons of Saturn. It figures. In an O. Henry story one character laments the fact that he was born under an unlucky star, Phoebe. And he would always point to the sky and say there it is.

The kicker in the story was that someone knowledgeable tells the narrator that Phoebe can't be seen with the naked eye.

For some reason, I decided not to go South but to go East when I tried to figure out how far a SFPAn could get from core SFPAns. Even though Janice was in Australia. Also, I took New Orleans as my base.

It does not matter much. Mount Everest is apparently the same distance from New Orleans as Perth from Georgia, about 12,500 miles. You can't get any farther away than that on this globe.

ct. Irv Koch. There is a great

advantage to Libya, Syria and Iran in funding Hamas and Hesbollah. It strengthens the leaders of those states in the Arab world: they get credit for avenging the Palestinians.

As for a Palestinian state or the actual state of the Palestinians in the here and now, they could care less.

By the way, you said Hesbollah was Iraqi rather than Iranian. Isn't Hesbollah Iranian and Shiite? It is an easy mistake these days: Iraq is being built up as the terrorist state par excellence for an invasion. But I wonder how much it is really involved in terrorism.

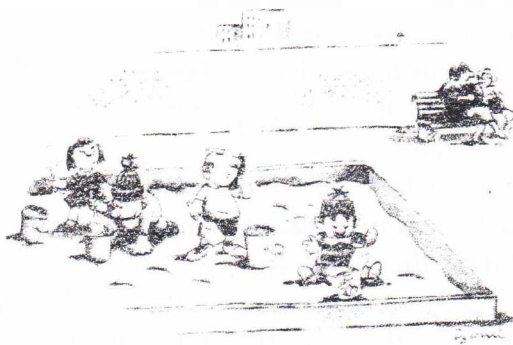
ct. Janice Gelb. About investments, I wonder whether the best thing to do might be to trade in corporations you deal with. Buy when they come out with a great new product and sell when they try to branch out or cut corners.

When I first did business with Amazon, I knew they were onto something. They had one of the best databases for books around. It seemed as good as *Books in Print*. Of course, when they tried to branch off into electronics, toys, etc. that probably would have been the time to sell.

You're right that nobody would give two figs about Chandra Levy if she hadn't been involved in an affair with Gary Condit. That is the only thing the big media are interested in these days, affairs.

What Arthur C. Clarke said in *Lost Worlds of 2001* was what would have been considered before the late 19th Century an Anti-Pluralist position. It would have been advocated by people who did not believe there was any intelligent life outside the Earth. ...Hey, any life.

That was the evidence for intelligent



"Come pick me up. This is going nowhere."

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and life: that the universe takes an intense interest in them. That God does.

However, by the time Clarke wrote his words, there were scientific theories about how planets and life were formed. And you didn't need a God. The whole debate had become a scientific argument rather than a religious or theological one.

IRV KOCH

offline reader. v1 issue 29

🍷▲🍷 Your final issue!! You can't do that to us, Irv!! ... On second thought, you can.

🍷▲🍷 I'm glad that your investing balanced out for you. And that what you lost in MBS REITs' value, you made up in payout.

🍷▲🍷 Forget about the Federal civil service register these days. It meant something in 1977 when someone found they had to hire me. But the PACE test the requirement was based on was thrown out as 'racist' long ago.

As you say, the IRS job looks like a better possibility than the Center for Disease Control. They need people at certain times of year, and maybe you might be able to stay. Your best bet, however, is with DeKalb

County Public libraries. You have some pull there – your wife. And if someone liked the way you handled the book table and the silent auction, you may have some pull with him or her.

🍷▲🍷 Your pain is at bay as long as you keep your blood sugar steady? It sounds like it's diabetes related. While diabetes happens more often in fat people: and I don't remember you as fat: it can happen to anyone.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. It looks like we're all going to end up with glasses, like you. One reason is glasses don't seem to be a problem for most people. I have them. My father has them. Of course, kids have them as well.

The only people who will remain without glasses are those vain enough to put up with the torture of contacts. At any rate, torture was the opinion of an ex-girl friend. Whenever she put on her contacts, she shouted "Torture time!!"

It also looks like we'll all end up NEEDING hearing aids if we live long enough. Wearing them is another thing. My sister asked an Eye, Ear Nose and Throat man about it. And he said a five year old will wear his hearing aid: it just says he is sick. Which is OK. A seventy year old won't; it says he is old. Like my father who says his is uncomfortable and won't wear it most of the time.

🍷▲🍷 It occurred to me that when stocks get as low as 10¢ a share, they're probably vaporware. It never was more than a whimsy anyhow. Which is why I could never get around to buying the stock: I didn't feel that strongly about it.

On the other hand, as I told Steve, I may yet buy WorldCom stock.

🍷▲🍷 According to the BBC website,

the Houston Astros renamed their park Minute Maid park in June. A sillier name than Enron stadium, but a much stabler company.

🍷▲🍷 Probably you won't get much for your 1983 Actrix with Perfect Writer. But you have to use E-Bay to gauge the market before you can know for sure.

A cheap price wouldn't mean old computers aren't highly collectible, however. There seem to be computer museums starting all over the place. And several years ago there was an article in the *Wall Street Journal* about people who collect old computers. But that may be because the price of old computers is cheap.

With all that collecting, though, the price is sure to rise. If you can't get a good price for your Actrix, as I said, maybe you should try again in twenty years. A friend of mine got into lightbulb collecting because old light bulbs were cheap. He even got an Edison for not too much. However, prices have skyrocketed in the past ten or fifteen years. And he has had to sell lightbulbs to buy more lightbulbs. That is the only way he can stay in the hobby.

🍷▲🍷 The idea here is not whether many people swapped components on slide rules, but whether such a slide rule would be computer. I think it fits Jeff's definition. Which means we probably should go back to the drawing boards about what a computer is.

🍷▲🍷 ct. GHLIII. What agencies are RIFing?

My agency hasn't gone quite that far. It is just starting to set up Competitive Sourcing: i.e., making Federal employees compete with the private sector for their jobs. Still, even if they go whole hog, that

need not mean RIFs. Fortunately, there are enough Federal employees near retirement age in my agency no employees may need to be fired.

By the way, with competitive sourcing, the agency seems to be reinventing the wheel. It began with the secretaries. Soon, secretaries under civil service are going to have to compete with Kelly Girls for their jobs. That is if Kelly Girls, or some other temp service, bids.

The agency did something similar in the early '80s. They got secretaries from temp services. Only cost apparently wasn't the criteria. While their secretaries cost 2/3 of what Federal secretaries cost in pay and benefits, they cost 1 1/2 times more after the services took their cut.

Of course, that was during the Reagan Administration when the temp services saw us coming. As did a number of other contractors.

🍷▲🍷 So you can program old cell phones to receive new numbers. I left Sprint in February primarily because they weren't honest. And I hooked up with AT&T, which so far seems honest. So now I have two cell phones. And I am wondering if I could reprogram them. Mention of reprogramming in your account brings hope.

EVE ACKERMAN guilty pleasures 24

🍷▲🍷 Eeehhhh, Harvard's virtues have been exaggerated. It has great professors but they don't teach; you get taught by a teaching assistant. Probably Raphi will get a better education at Brandeis.

On the other hand, at Harvard, you get connections. And employers bow when they hear the word Harvard.

☺▲☺ Gag gifts. They get different as you grow older. For a fiftieth birthday, the most popular gag gifts are Grecian Formula and a Back Brace. Fortunately, I avoided them.

Actually, the gifts Raphi got show that his friends liked him. A lot of people who are celebrating their fiftieth birthday at work aren't liked.

☺▲☺ THE WRITING BUSINESS.

Not a time for new writers, it seems. My sister had the same experience with agents. They don't want to handle anybody new if they can help it. As opposed to industry, which figures it can help it.

Maybe our best bet is Publication on Demand and Web Publishing. Their market share is small right now. But their product may grow more attractive after the big publishers exhaust their stable of experienced writers.

☺▲☺ Kids actually like the Lemony Snicket books about woeful orphans? I can understand why adults might be surfeit with the sweetness and light of kids' books, but would kids?

Or are the Lemony Snicket books about Lemony Snicket who toils at writing such books? Now that would be wicked and something kids would love.

☺▲☺ ct. Lillian. Your kids are better off than I am bodywise. I have been lifting weights for some years, but no way is my body going to be buff at fifty-seven. The chest is OK but forget about the stomach.

Alright, I admit there might be some way it could be buff, but I suspect I wouldn't want to know.

☺▲☺ ct. Strickland. There was a secret to the math part of the GRE when I

was taking it: learn how to estimate. It was also what got me through the PACE civil service exam, and got me a decent paying government job.

☺▲☺ ct. Robe. We thought

Rheumatic Fever was one of those diseases of the past, but Gary's Isaac comes down with it.

Also, another of those diseases of the past which is very real in the present, I hear, is lice. People no longer refer to things as "lousy." But, I have been told, lice actually flourish more on rich suburbanites than they do on the poor. It is a matter of how many kids your child comes in contact with in nursery school in the normal course of rough housing.

GEORGE H. WELLS

alien cows will make us know

☺▲☺ ct. Irwin. Yeah, Gnomes of Switzerland like pain. Which is why they are bankers.

☺▲☺ ct. Janet Larson. You better believe that the non-Muslims hate the Muslims in that part of the world. A Christian India Indian told me that the reason why Sikhs wrap daggers in their turbans was originally to kill Muslims.

Not all anti-Muslim diatribes are particularly partisan, however. My father has a porno novel from the '50s on supposed Muslim attitudes toward women. I wonder what Koran the author was reading?

☺▲☺ ct. Me. I hear the Korean language is very close to Turkish. As is the Japanese language.

☺▲☺ Light skinned Blacks passing for Whites is probably how we have so much Black blood in the White population. I know

that the person who created Krazy Kat was a Black passing for White, George Herriman.

He was even a conservative. Krazy Kat is attired as a liberal of the time, with a bow as a tie. And he loves getting hit on the head by Ignatz the Mouse, the anarchist. In short, Krazy Kat is one of those lily livers.

ct. Sheila Strickland. The daughter of Richard Poole was proud of her ancestors. And I am too. My Turkic ancestors. And I have no idea who they were. Crimean Tartars? Other Tartars? The Mongols? The Huns? The Ottomans? The Seljuks? ...Who knows?

But I am still proud of them. And the product they were known for: Steak Tartare.

Anita Blake and her softcore porn (?) books Methodist? No, since her fans have to be sheep lovers, she has to be Catholic. At least given all the hype.

ct. Liz Copeland. Come to think of it, maybe the last Anita Blake novel is porn. For people who have a desire for creatures with three eyes and five arms. It exists. I remember the Abe Burrows song, "The Girl with the Three Blue Eyes." Not one ♪ not two ♪ but three ♪.

ct. Ned Brooks. Buffy sounds confusing. But that seems to be typical of shows for youth. A friend had me watch the reality show *Big Brother*. I noticed two things. One, the prevalence of a lot of twenty-somethings. (Are they that old?) And, two, it was completely confusing.

The producers didn't seem to believe it was confusing enough, however. And my friend tells me they are always intent on inserting rules making the show even more confusing.

Do the alien cows have

Harlequin glasses, poodle cuts, and are they an awful shade of pink? Just wondering. How else would they have hidden knowledge like why Damon Knight did not like Charles Eric Maine, why Ace Books shortened lost classics, why Richard the Lionhearted refused to take Jerusalem – and the surprise ending of the Buffy series. And how to tie ties straight.

Too bad about your sleep problems. The rational thing to do is to get enough sleep. You know that and I know that. But we don't always do the rational thing.

GUY H. LILLIAN III spiritus mundi 190

So Ronnie Brodenheimer, respected jurist, turns out to be dope dealer, Oxycontin. We're supposed to be able to read minds. We are told how naive we are if we can't read minds.

And it is a fact: we can't read minds. There are all sorts of studies to the effect. The lie detector, of course, is a lie. Despite Maury Povich.

Reign of Fire may be a good movie but it can't compare to the *Monster that Ate Cleveland*. Which was made sometime during the '50s. What was so great about it was the monster didn't just nibble on Cleveland, it didn't play with its food either; it swallowed it down in one gulp.

Problem is I have had trouble finding the movie in the video stores.

ct. Me. Yes, I went to only this DSC in a propeller beanie. I was more nondescript last year. Maybe next year I will take my Tarot pack as well. I haven't used it in months at work.

Tarot, by the way, is easy to learn.

Why do I like DSC? I get to put faces on people I have been writing to for fifteen years. And I find I like a lot of SFPAns much better that way.

🍷▲🍷 An underclass has certainly helped make for gang violence. England did not get the gang and drug violence we have until Maggie Thatcher helped England get back its despised underclass.

However, in the late '80s and early '90s, there was another factor in the U.S., crack. It spread like wildfire among the underclass. But when it became widespread what it was and what it could do to you, its popularity diminished. And so did the violence.

🍷▲🍷 Yeah, Vonnegut attracts depressed college kids. Twelve year olds would be too sensible to read his novels.

Speaking of depressing books, I hear there was one publisher in '40s France who held a contest for the most depressing novel. The winner of course was published. And ballyhooed as the new great author.

Fortunately, the publicity was not enough for a reputation as a great author.

🍷▲🍷 Unfortunately, the quote about our non-Afghani war: namely, it was a great victory except for our objectives: was Arthur Hlavaty's, not mine. I wish it had been mine.

🍷▲🍷 As I said before, I believe the crusade against Saddam has been held in reserve by certain Conservatives. When Clinton bombed Saddam, it seemed like he would take some of the potential glory from this clique. So they denounced him as a wimp.

But the ending of the affair did not bode well for them. Clinton stopped

pursuing an anti-Saddam agenda, and the issue went away. People didn't care. Can they be made to care again?

🍷▲🍷 Actually, the "Under God" phrase in the *Pledge of Allegiance* does entangle us in specific faiths, if not any one of them. There are Atheists in the country and Wiccans. And on the other side are pious Christians who believe it sacrilege to pledge to the country "Under God." So it is probably un-Constitutional.

I have to agree, though: ruling against the phrase would be lousy politics.

🍷▲🍷 About Clinton peace and prosperity, no one has challenged me, so I'll tell anyway. How did Clinton's raising taxes HELP bring prosperity? In a series in the *Washington Post*, the authors claimed that he spoke to Alan Greenspan. And Greenspan told him that he would not lower interest rates unless the deficit was lowered.

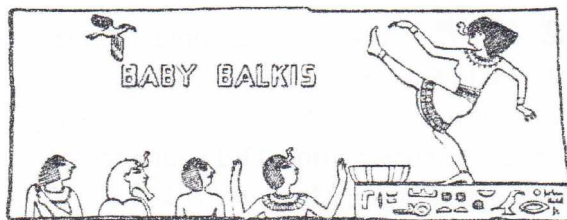
Well, because Clinton raised taxes and lowered the deficit, Greenspan did as he promised and lowered interest rates. So that is how raising taxes helped bring prosperity.

There were a lot of other factors as well. Certainly no President could have brought about the high tech revolution: internet, cell phones, etc. But Bill did his part – raised taxes.

Now the hi tech revolution is in surplus and we are going downhill. We will see whether Bush will do his part to slow our descent.

🍷▲🍷 Actually, I don't think displaying or mentioning a product as part of a movie or TV show has been Payola. I thought that Payola was bribing disc jockeys to play a particular tune.

I found out the word currently used for advertising as part of a show is Product



Placement. As far as I can tell, the first time it was used was in describing how the kids ate Reese's pieces in *ET* (1983). And in effect advertised the product.

I have forgotten the '60s word for Product Placement. I remember there was a *Mad Magazine* parody of the practice and the name is there. Someone suggested it was Plug, but I don't think that was what it was.

☺▲☺ You're probably right that talking to kids is good practice for talking to juries. You learn conversation rather than grand rhetoric. In fact, who is into grand rhetoric these days? Only academics as far as I can see. Not even politicians anymore.

☺▲☺ You can also buy used books through <http://www.bookfinder> And <http://www.addall.com>.

☺▲☺ If C-3PO worked on Uncle Owen's farm in *Attack*, why didn't he recognize C-3PO in *New Hope*. The answer is simple: C-3PO was in disguise the last time. In short, I tend to agree it is one of those inconsistencies that got through.

☺▲☺ ct. Rich. I get the feeling that the reason why subways in Eastern Europe do not have graffiti on their walls is that they are classier than Western subways. As Norman Mailer once said, the New York subways look like bathrooms for whales.

☺▲☺ ct. Tom. I notice the remakes of many Turn of the Century classics have

been avoiding their socialism. The two remakes of the *Time Machine* did. It is obvious the Eloi are the descendants of the decadent upper classes and the Morlocks the descendants of the working class.

And the *Time Machine* isn't the only work where that happened. Take the 1993 remake of Jack London's *Sea Wolf* with Charles Bronson: it avoided London's socialism totally. Which the 1941 version with Edward G. Robinson displayed prominently. Producers these days are probably right: the audience could not relate. They might not even know what the word socialism means.

☺▲☺ ct. Gary B. The one *Lois and Clark* I saw wasn't the greatest show in the world. But the action did take place in Superman's world and some of the bit players did know how to act – even if they overacted.

☺▲☺ ct. Jeff. The idea seems to be the same for the 1970 *UFO* TV series with Ed Bishop as for the *X-Files*: the alien invaders rarely made an appearance.

I guess the idea was that it made them more of a menace not less. You used your imagination. Of course, it doesn't do that for you, Guy.

☺▲☺ Actually Guy, I think 1 lb. a month is a better weight loss than 5 lbs. a month. You are more likely to keep the weight off, regaining being the bane of dieters. You are losing weight while eating a normal diet. Better than those crash diets, which turn into crash binges afterward.

☺▲☺ ct. Toni. I think Mr. Gibbs' does in fact believe that Elian is the equivalent of a Jewish lad being given over to the Nazis. Even if Elian doesn't end up in a gas chamber, he considers being in Cuba the

equivalent fate.

🍷▲🍷 PHOTOS.

Greg Benford: So Greg Benford did finally turn up for DSC. You should have introduced me. ...Well, maybe you didn't have to.

Planet Comics Covers: I have to agree with Hank they are neat. I wish you had photographed them so we could see them better instead of just this side view.

My Photo: I am completely unphotogenic. Do I look vicious there or just pensive?

GARY R. ROBE tennessee trash #47

🍷▲🍷 Great that Isaac no longer has to be forced to convalesce. It is sad when a kid cannot pursue his active life style. And, what is worse, because of it, Nick, a totally active kid, did not have a companion. That must have added to his boredom at Deep South Con.

I noticed you and Corlis were not as hard on your kids as you make out. I could see that you were trying to keep them both sufficiently busy. But I am sure it was an uphill battle.

🍷▲🍷 Bad Break. So not only runners, and walkers like me, sprain our ankles. It can happen in Taekwando. It happened to you. It's painful when it happens.

Fortunately, sprained ankles have gotten rarer for me with the years. I wonder if exercising my ankles: turning them four ways every other day: has helped.

Are you sure your doctor said you can do anything with your ankles depending on how much you can stand the pain? Wouldn't that still be giving your muscles

and ligaments too much punishment?

🍷▲🍷 I wish you had contacted me.

We could have met when you were in Washington, DC. While I live in Virginia, it is near the subway line. Did your sons see the Air and Space Museum? A kid's favorite.

Also, in the National Gallery, among paintings kids find boring, is one they find fascinating – and parents are grossed out by – Copley's *Watson and the Shark*. A man being eaten by a shark. The fellow who lost his leg from the incident commissioned the painting as a 'moral' example.

🍷▲🍷 So the beleaguered Mexican paint industry decided it would discourage Norte Americanos from attending their paint show. One way helped you personally. They decided not to have simultaneous translation, which would eliminate most Norte Americanos. But since your Spanish is good, it gave Eastman an advantage.

Of course, that and that they charged money will probably contribute to the show's failure. I doubt they found they made out like bandits. Not if Norte Americanos were discouraged because they took second fiddle and there was no translation, and Mexicans were discouraged by the admission price. As you say, Mexicans don't go anyway.

🍷▲🍷 Your two top books had the relation between faith and science, or at least reality, as the theme. It sounds like Connie Willis' novel *Passage* was the better written and deeper, but I would agree more with Neil Gaiman.

My problem with Connie's book is that we believe in life after death because it gives us hope. Science, with all its bounty, cannot give us hope; only faith can.

Because it opts for faith as a form of truth, I am more sympathetic to Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*. I have read elsewhere – but not that much – where the gods only exist as long as people have faith in them. I think H.L. Mencken said something about that. A possible objection of mine is mute. While the novel may be mixing faith and 'reality': which I am dubious of: it doesn't take itself too seriously.

Also, I like the fact that the Norse gods have been kept alive by being incorporated into the days of the week. People don't seem to realize that that is what they were named after. Nor do they realize that many of the months were often named after Roman gods.

🍷🍷🍷 In Robert Charles Wilson's *Chronoliths*, since I believe time travel only makes sense into alternate futures and alternate pasts, I would have one future with Kuin the monolith maker and one future without. And if he is a time anomaly, when his time period is destroyed, he is also destroyed from memory. And nobody knows of Sue Chopra's exploits.

Of course, these things might have happened in the novel.

🍷🍷🍷 In short, the deepest problem is faith. And the next deepest one is time. And that is why you, and others, have chosen novels with these themes as Hugo nominees. Of course, the authors have to be creative to carry them off.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Me. The reason why Fahrenheit chose the freezing point of salt water was something we moderns would never guess. We could not put ourselves in his shoes.

Not only did people not have the

same ideas about water we have, but they did not have the same idea about gold. In fact, the Middle Ages and Renaissance believed you could make gold; it was no big deal. I gather even gold plating made gold. And iron pyrites would be gold. Paracelsus used to sell 'alchemist's' gold to minters.

However, there was better gold and worse gold. The better gold was very pliable. The idea behind alchemy was not to make gold per se, but the better gold. In fact, to make the philosopher's stone that would make you the better gold.

🍷🍷🍷 So while we can make banners with inkjets, they are not as well known a feature as in the days of the dot matrix and track feeding.

🍷🍷🍷 Management in general seems to be a lost art these days. The sign of a good manager to his bosses is that he kowtows to them. And obeys their dictums no matter how ridiculous. Forget about morale. Which was a worry of managers when I entered the Federal government in 1977.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Ned Brooks. I lost a cousin when I was in my twenties. He committed suicide. Apparently the problems were with him. His father was easy going and his brother has been too. Also, both the father and the brother have done well in life.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Rich Lynch. I wouldn't make the cutoff point at 1901 for when good music took a nosedive. I would place it in the '20s. That is when the operatic repertoire, I hear, ended. Still, you cannot say good music went absolutely extinct even then. Some was still being composed in the '40s. Rachmaninoff wrote his famed *Symphonic Dances* in the '40s (1940). Khachaturian wrote *Gyaneh* (1942) then.

And *Spartak* in the '50s (1950-54)! Then you mention Aaron Copeland.

☞▲☞ ct. Guy H. Lillian III. My Aunt Esther was that way. She offered me ten tons of food when I visited her when I was about thirty. Too bad I was going through one of my phases of not eating much.

MIKE WEBER
send out the pace zamboni

☞▲☞ ct. S. Strickland. *Buffy* is beginning to pall on you? Well, what about the musical *Buffy*?

☞▲☞ ct. J. Copeland. The public goes for generals who are more into show than victory. I know you said that about Civil War generals, but I bet that goes just as well for the recent non-Afghan War. That is why bin Laden and Sheik Omar got away.

☞▲☞ ct. N. Metcalf. In addition to my glasses, I guess I am going to have to get a magnifying glass. Even with my glasses on, I cannot read the micro-type information sheets in bottles of pills.

☞▲☞ I AM NOT MAKING. I tried reading the Luann comic strip on Comics.com but the episodes I read seemed to telegraph their punches too much. May as well have been Western Union. On the other hand, these episodes you print don't seem to be too bad. So I may go back and take another look.

☞▲☞ STOP PRESS. Yup, the Roadrunner cartoons are a simple formula: same characters, same plot. Different pratfalls.

☞▲☞ You have your problems with jobs and money. But you're not as bad off as one SFPAn I remember. Her name was

Debra, I think, and she was involved in violent gang confrontations. Apparently exacerbating one. We didn't hear from her again after that episode. I hope the opposing gang didn't finally kill her.

MIKE WEBER
an unanticipated denouement

☞▲☞ ct. Me. I don't know. I seem to remember Campbell publishing stories of improbable futures and satire. A civil war over Segregation would not be out of place in his *Astounding*.

Still, the story I mention was definitely not in *Astounding*. Where exactly it was printed, I don't know.

☞▲☞ I'm not certain that the Mafia doesn't work as a cooperative union of gangs. That sometimes isn't so cooperative. So that difference between the Mafia and *The Syndic* gangs is out.

Another difference between the Mafia and the gang-o-crazy of *The Syndic*, I was toying with, is out too. The Mafia has not just been Italian. Senator Kefauver investigated it back around '51. And came up with "Greasy Thumb" Guzik and Meyer Lansky.

☞▲☞ You are very right that Kate Wilhelm's and Theodore L. Thomas' *The Clone* (1965) was the first title with the word clone in it. And not P.T. Olemy's awful novel. I should never have trusted Brian J. Ford on <http://www.sciences.demon.co.uk/zclone1.htm>.

Or should I? Theoretically I should check up on everything I read. Or remember. But I'm too lazy. And people should know not to believe everything they read. In addition, there are benefits to



printing misinformation. I get reader comments. Like yours. Which I wouldn't get if I had gotten all my facts straight.

🍷▲🍷 You are very right that Wonder Woman has been a DC comic. The covers of the first ones were on the web and they are all DC. So I shouldn't have taken the word of someone, whom I forget right now, that Bill Gaines played a part in it.

🍷▲🍷 You're very right that people's current idea of the Confederate Flag, the one you see on bumper stickers, was not originally the Stars and Bars. But it has come to be called the Stars and Bars. And, for all practical purposes, it is the Stars and Bars.

🍷▲🍷 Of course, the Repulsive Force can explain gravity. I think you can explain

nearly anything you want to with it. Can't you? It is just a gap in the equations.

🍷▲🍷 MORE CELLULOID. The problem with sex isn't with us having sexual feelings. The problem is with us broadcasting them. I doubt we should broadcast none at all. That's ridiculous. But we should show some restraint somewhere along the line. Or else we become annoying. *Two Live Crew* certainly became annoying.

🍷▲🍷 The problem with alluring women in comics is that it is difficult for me to get a hard-on over a cartoon. On the other hand, the horniest cartoon character must be Elmer Fudd, hands down. Do you know any cartoon characters who would be more of a turnoff to women?

🍷▲🍷 You like ladies in cat suits? I have a postcard with Betty Paige in one, somewhere around. Teddy Harvia sent it to me. A friend of mine considers it silly and something only '50s men could appreciate. ...But I appreciate it.

As for Josie and the Pussycats, there was a TV show that had live in the flesh Josie and the Pussycats. They were pretty sexy looking. At least the photos I saw of them were.

🍷▲🍷 ct. ghliii. Bradbury the only popularly accepted science fiction writer? Maybe at one time. Right now, I think it's William Shatner. And, yes, I know, all his material is ghosted.

🍷▲🍷 ct. N. Brooks. Norm is right that the translators may have made a hash of Jules Verne's science. But if you're right, Jules would have still had to fake a lot of his science. A cannon to the Moon is unlikely since its barrel must be 400 miles long. Robur the Conqueror's aircraft cannot be

created yet.

Jules was calling the kettle black when, I hear, he ripped into H.G. Wells' science. Which, he claimed, as opposed to his science, depended upon principles yet to be discovered.

🍷▲🍷 You're right Disney tends to make cartoon heroines' waists very narrow. Ridiculously narrow. The only characters I remember with waists as narrow were the women in Al Capp's *Li'l Abner* and Raeburn van Buren's *Abbie & Slats*. I hear Capp got the technique from van Buren.

Of course, Capp and Raeburn were doing caricatures while Disney has wanted his characters taken seriously by the families who have gone to see its films. I guess such is our need for thin-ness these days that these days we yearn to be caricatures. In fact, caricatures are respectable.

🍷▲🍷 ct. R. Lynch. The DynoVoice site seems to be right. "Lover's Concerto" from the Supremes' 1965 album *The Toys* was from Johann Sebastian Bach's "Notebook For Anna Magdalena Bach, Minuet In G," a five finger piano exercise.

🍷▲🍷 ct. N. Metcalf. Judge Lynch trying to prevent a lynching? I thought there was some controversy over how the word "lynching" came into being. And there are several Lynches who are candidates for the person for whom the word is named.

🍷▲🍷 ct. D. Markstein. I think you messed up the names. You say Joe of Bill Mauldin's Willy and Joe is the American Indian. And you introduce Willy as the non-Indian (Caucasian?). Then you say that Willy became a Caucasian, except that he retained his Plains Indian nose.

🍷▲🍷 MINORITY REPORT. Yeah,

Bladerunner is definitely not Dick. It is an action adventure devoid of Dick's somewhat perverse, somewhat philosophical sense of humor.

🍷▲🍷 Carnivores plants that might grab you any second. The movie *Minority Report* is not the first place where that happens. Nor Philip Dick's novels. I remember an Old East Side comedy starring Leo Gorcey, where there was a plant like that. And it had apparently become a cliché even then.

LIZ COPELAND

home with the armadillo #54

🍷▲🍷 I lost my Aunt Dora and my Uncle Lou, relatives on my mother's side, within a month of each other. And I had just seen them a month before after not seeing them for twenty years. It broke my heart.

I definitely went to Aunt Dora's funeral. And I am still kicking myself for not going to Uncle Lou's even though it was on Woods Hole in Massachusetts on Cape Cod. A twelve hour journey?

🍷▲🍷 I am afraid I am a deadhead in your book. I can't get worked up about fireworks – not that I don't like them. Just like I can't get worked up over ice skating, although some of the gymnastics are impressive.

🍷▲🍷 Like Alan Rosenthal, I have been a Golden APA member. But its best days seem to have past. We are remnants of the people of ye olde time. And I don't know whether there are any left who were disciples of Robert Anton Wilson.

Or are we just beginning? We've got a lot of new people with a lot of new ideas and shticks. People who have never seen an APA before. And it is apparent. We are

having a helluva time getting them to give reader comments.

☺▲☺ I hear there was a multi-State garage sale along a certain highway recently. No need to look for that like you and I have had to for other garage sales.

☺▲☺ Forcing James to do what he doesn't want: the way of all parents. But pottery class for a red blooded American boy? Maybe these days. On the other hand, games with grandmother, swimming, art projects. That was the type of activity my parents would force me to do. And usually, they would force me to go to camp to do it.

I can more heartily approve of forcing the kid to fix his game console, like in that cartoon; that gives him a leg up into the adult world. But his mother better clue him in about tech support. ...There is tech support for such things, right?

JANET LARSON
passages #14

☺▲☺ I am sure the fact that Buffy is quirky is why SF fans love it. Like they love *The Prisoner* – as pretentious as it got. It still remained quirky.

☺▲☺ Why do mothers get pregnant in the night? You're right it's probably because we are diurnal. That we hunted during the day. That at night we were in the cave protected against sabertooth tigers.

Also, we went to night clubs.
...SOOORRRYYYYY!!!

☺▲☺ I too was afraid of cantoring when I first cantored. In fact, I felt I had to get off the horse some way. Later on, I figured out that I just had to go with the flow. And that I could even gallop.

But has it been twenty-five years

since I have been on a horse? ...More.

☺▲☺ Am I a coffee addict? I guess I am. However, when I have had to go without coffee, it hasn't been the end of the world. In fact, it isn't even clear I'm more tired. I guess my coffee drinking has come close to being the archetypal habit with no organic connections.

RANDY CLEARY
avatar press. v22#22.

☺▲☺ UP FRONT. So what do you want for your SFC zine? I think I have material for an article on the time I visited DC schools. On the other hand, I have a lot of baaaddd fan fiction. What about the strange attraction between the Cthulhu and M&Ms? Or how about "The Carrot of Death," winner of the 1989 Killer Frog Award for Worst Short Short Horror Story of the Year?

☺▲☺ DEEP SOUTH CON 40.

Actually, I found you were more cheerful and helpful than you were the previous year when you were under influence of that radical diet. The only reason why I didn't strike up more conversations with you was it was apparent you were busy.

Thanks for telling me about the sandwich shop and Checkers nearby the hotel.

☺▲☺ I and George are not waiting for table scraps from Guy and Rosie, but gems of wisdom.

☺▲☺ So with all your responsibility, with SFC and art shows, how can you find time to waste time? Not make sense.

THE END

