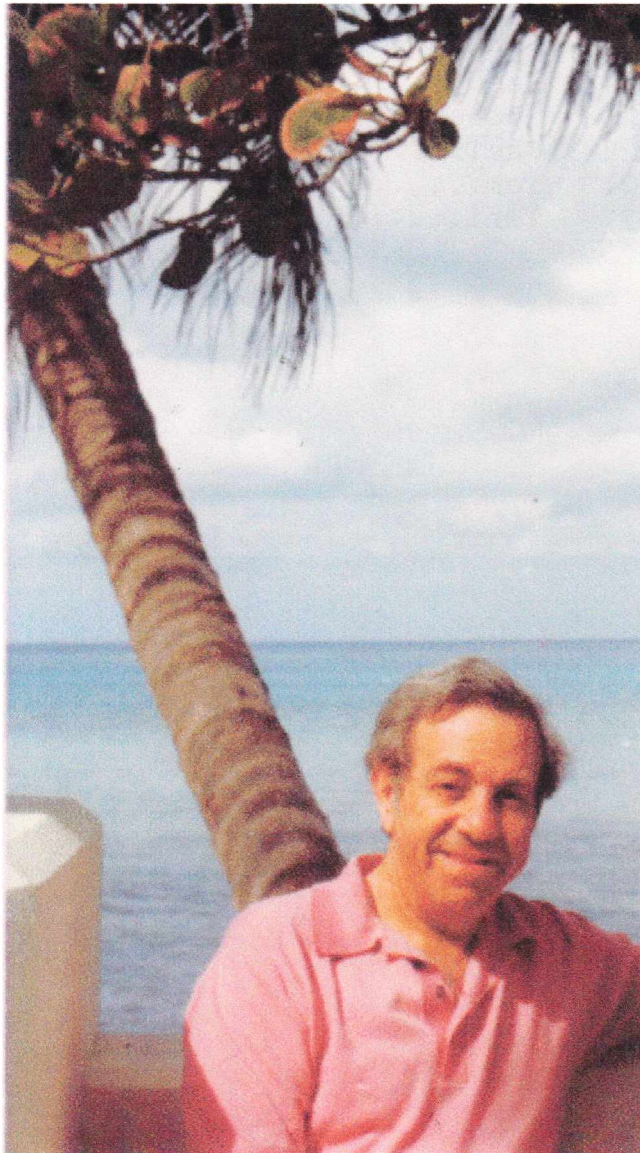


Twygodrasil And Treehouse Gazette #83

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Decided to put my father on the cover
again. Rest in peace, Dad.

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MY MOTHER-IN-LAW DIES

It's been a strange year. My father's estate has almost been settled. So what does my mother-in-law do? She goes and dies.

In effect, she committed suicide. There were no pills or guns or jumping off high places, but it is a certain thing she committed suicide. She kept up her habit of lying in bed for six months at a time. Twice before, that had caused heart failure.

However, there was something additional this time: she decided not to eat. The combo was deadly. It wasn't apparent at first: the doctor originally thought she would pull through. That at least is what he told my wife. Then it became clearer that was not the case. An hour or two later, he said she wasn't doing well. Then four hours later he called my wife to say she was dead.

My wife left the next day for her parents' place. And stayed for a week. I didn't go. I didn't figure her father would welcome the man who stole his daughter away. And whom he has very little in common with. I figured that his mourning would be better without me.

I have to admit when I called him mid-week, he was very polite. Maybe too polite; it was forced. But he was polite and I appreciated that. We talked mainly about the weather. Which has been bizarre enough to be a topic of conversation. Also, I invited him to Washington; and said, if he wanted, I personally show him the sights.

He may ultimately get up here although I doubt I will be showing him the sights. Going to Washington was something that his late wife had forbidden him. And her edict was law. However, as a veteran and patriot, I am sure Washington was a place he desperately wished to go.

In addition, we figure, his wife forbid

him to have a computer, although he claimed the reason was fear of viruses. He had been too enthusiastic about electronics all his his life, and too handy with them.

We know his late wife also forbid air conditioning in the house. And threw a tantrum until the one there was thrown away. We also know she had the sleeper sofa taken out so that if my wife ever came to visit, she would have to sleep on the floor. I imagine my mother-in-law would think that it served my wife right.

Finally we know, in her later days, she made it hard for the father to leave his home ever. Even for shopping.

In short, the mother wasn't a pleasant individual. It was obvious she had depression. But not to her. My brother, himself a doctor, claims the doctor told him that when he mentioned antidepressants twice before, the mother signed herself out of the hospital. She feared being manipulated. She thought it a better fate to commit suicide.

Nonetheless, my wife has been pining for her mother. She goes through periods of great sadness. Maybe not nonetheless. She is pining because the mother never saw the light, took antidepressants and lived a more normal life. My wife Heidi believes – perhaps beyond all reason – her mother could have seen the light, or been made to see it; and, in her declining days, could have been a relatively sane person. One who believed in living rather than being a fetus.

Some of the gloom is already dissolving in my in-laws' home. Already the father is making up for lost time by getting a cell phone and a wireless phone.

Will I go up. If the father holds a memorial service for the mother. It doesn't look like it, though. She wanted to be

cremated and that was it. I don't think she wanted a service for herself. She was hot to trot that my wife, as a kid, should have religion. But the mother apparently had no religion. Not even a social religion so relatives and friends could smooze and have a feast. Particularly not that, I guess.

No friends would have been there anyway; the mother had broken off with them long ago. When invited out, she always had to do her hair.

THE ROSICRUCIANS

Would you like to have the secrets of the ages, which have been preserved from those who would misuse them by a secret fraternity? Of course you would. On the other hand, would you like to see secrets wrested from an arrogant elite for the good of mankind? Of course you would like to see that too.

The two tendencies have been fighting each other since time immemorial. One would think the idea of depriving the arrogant elite is practically the theme of modern times. We like to think of ourselves as an open society, no secrets, everyone has the same chance.

But, of course, knowledge has become so complex much has been reserved for an elite, even while it is freely available in books. An elite which has spent years mastering that knowledge's complex jargon and complex details: e.g., doctors, lawyers. Even plumbers. Even beauticians have reserved for them knowledge unavailable to the 'vulgar.'

During the Middle Ages, it was different. Knowledge was much simpler; and, to keep their reputation for expertise, professions had to keep their special knowledge secret. Everyone did too. Not

only doctors, not only artists, not only craftsmen with their guilds; but peasants as well.

In fact, some theologians claimed that God often revealed secrets to humbler individuals because of their humility.

One of the best known books of secrets earmarked only for the worthy was *Secretum Secretorum*. Attributed to Aristotle but actually an Arab work. It counseled that its secrets should only be known to the worthy. Of course, in Medieval terms, it was a bestseller.

But then the modern mode came upon us. All secrets were revealed. It started in the 14th Century. There were even books then which told you how to make your friends think you knew great secrets. These techniques are known in modern times as stage type magic.

In the 16th Century, books revealing secrets started cascading. "Professors of secrets" became a whole genre; professors meaning that they revealed secrets to the public. They professed them. Those arrogant bastards were losing their power.

One of the best known professors of secrets was Alexis of Piedmont. He claimed he was a wandering nobleman and had collected secrets. But after someone died because of this, he decided keeping them was vanity. And it would be best to reveal them to the public.

One of his many secrets was the "Oil of Red Dog." A rather unappetizing recipe whose basis was a red-haired dog, which was boiled until its flesh fell off. It was Alexis' panacea. He claimed to have cured a gunshot wound, a withered arm and gout with it. Among other things.

One area, however, where secrets are still kept is the occult. Necessary knowledge is not as complex there. And one of the big

vehicles of secrets is Rosicrucianism.

People have often asked me what Rosicrucianism is. I say it is the idea that an elite has secrets. And you potentially can become part of that elite. People do not understand this. A group has to have some sort of doctrine or idea, they insist. No, the doctrine is unimportant in Rosicrucianism: many doctrines have been passed off as Rosicrucian. The important thing is that they are a secret.

And that the group calls itself Rosicrucian.

The biggest Rosicrucian group is very big indeed: the Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC). Especially big for an organization that claims secrets known only to a few.

They used to advertise in pulp magazines in my youth in the '50s. Now they seem to limit their advertising to magazines of an occult nature. They were the group commonly referred to when people talked about Rosicrucianism. What is advertised is a home study course, although they claim running lodges is more lucrative.

Another place you can find Rosicrucianism thriving is in Masonry. The 17th Degree of Scottish Rite Masonry is the degree of the Rosy Cross. Of course, Masonry is an organization that also pretends to secrets known only to an elite few.

Who were the first Rosicrucians. The AMORC people claim an impressive history for their tradition. It started in Atlantis and was then transmitted to ancient Egypt. Ultimately, Sir Francis Bacon, Blaise Pascal and Benjamin Franklin were Rosicrucians.

This is in line with the views of Paschal Randolph, the 19th Century mulatto founder of American Rosicrucianism.

Of course, I cannot let this account stand. I am going to do the modern thing and expose the AMORC people for the poseurs they are. To bring low that arrogant elite.

Who knows what the secret history of an organization is? Or isn't? The documents do not go back before 1614, before three Rosicrucian manifestos burst upon the scene 1614-1616. Proclaimed as the product of a secret fraternity, its authors promised to put in an appearance but never did. Still, many have pined for them through the centuries. And those who pine are also referred to as Rosicrucians.

The first manifesto related the life of Christian Rosenkreutz. Whose name in German means Christian Rosy Cross. And it also told how he had started the Rosicrucian order with secret knowledge he had acquired in the Islamic world, in Fez and the fabled city of Damcar. The second manifesto told about the uncovering of Rosenkreutz's fabulous tomb.

The third Rosicrucian manifesto is *The Chemical Marriage of Christian Rosenkreutz*. A novel which is a rather breath taking, alchemical allegory. As opposed to other alchemical allegories, which were dull mechanical contraptions. While *The Chemical Marriage*, like them, claimed to transmit in code the recipe for the philosophers stone, it did it with a plot, intriguing characters, dazzling descriptions and general brio.

About these manifestos, many legends have grown up around them. And these are bunk. First, there is the legend that Christian Rosenkreutz was a real person not an allegory. That was the view of the first Imperator of AMORC, H. Spencer Lewis. However, it is obvious from reading the manifestos that his name is an allegory. As are many of the items in his tomb in the

second manifesto. Because of this, later AMORC Imperators have only claimed he existed "in spirit."

Even more legends have grown up around the Rose Cross. And, of course, I have to puncture them. There have been all sorts of wild and woolly theories about its origin: the Ancient Egyptians, the ancient Persians, fire worshiping Buddhists, phallic worshipers.

These theories seem to be later: I know for a fact the fire and phallic worshipers are 19th Century. It would have been fairly obvious at the time what the Rosy Cross symbolized: Martin Luther's coat of arms. Coats of arms being a big thing then.

The authors were obviously under the spell of a Lutheran mystic, Simon Studion, who held the symbol of the Rosy Cross in high esteem. It is true Studion's Lutheran mysticism is screamed to the rooftops in his works, and is soft pedaled in the manifestos. There is little in the manifestos about his prophecies, his numerology, or the mysterious Militia Crucifera, which was to fight for Protestantism. However, otherwise theirs and Studion's views are quite similar.

Another legend to pop is that Johann Valentinus Andreae, who authored the last manifesto, betrayed the fact he was a Rosicrucian. The respectable and scholarly Frances Yates and Christopher McIntosh have claimed this.

However, after reading A.E. Waite, who came before them, it is obvious this is nonsense. Andreae was a writer of some fame at the time who penned a number of philosophical works. His books, when they spoke of Rosicrucianism, ridiculed it.

One argument evinced for calling him a Rosicrucian is he referred to the

Chemical Marriage many years later as a "ludibrium." McIntosh and Yates have tried to say that the word meant something noble. Rather than meaning a joke, as it would usually be translated. What cinches the argument that Andreae was not pro-Rosicrucian is, in the same passage, he called his book a monster.

Now that I have exposed the Rosicrucians, brought those 'arrogant elitists' to heel, a part of me says I am a killjoy. I have taken away mystery and enchantment. I taken away secrets.

About the visionaries who wrote the first two manifestos, the best I can do to build them back up is note they revealed a valuable secret. Of great dreams. The manifestos claim, with Rosicrucian knowledge, that alchemy, Cabala and magia work. And that the world can be made right. What greater dream is there today?

About the author of the Third Manifesto, Andreae, he reveals an important secret he does not even know himself: our humor has far more seriousness in it than we give it credit for? In the case of the *Chemical Marriage*, it does. Though it was a joke, a ludibrium, it was and remains a great work.

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COMMENTS ON SFPA 233

NED BROOKS

new port news 209

ct. Me. *The Secrets of the Psalms* has not been that well known in academic circles. What has been better known is the *Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*. That was because S.L. "MacGregor" Mathers, star of the famed first Golden Dawn lodge found it in the late 19th Century, and advertised its merits. And Mathers has been a darling of academics.

But, according to Trachtenberg's book *Jewish Magic and Superstition* (1939), the *Secrets* has been more popular all along. It even made it to the Papal index so Catholics even used it. I know it was big among the Germans in America and used as part of Black Hoodoo.

One would think that my mother's sketch would violate the prohibition against making "graven images." But the Ayatollah might have figured she was a Westerner and a lost cause. On the other hand, we have seen Khomeini's picture enough. I don't know whether it was an Iranian version or a Western version.

Who could tell whether any memory that appears is repressed? Especially since imagination is an integral part of the memory making process.

I had an incident happen to me concerning *Carmina Burana*. In my apartment house a number of years ago, these Blacks were having a party late at night and they were playing something. Fortunately, not too loud. But it sounded

familiar. So I listened closer. It was *Carmina Burana*. And they were Oooing it and Ahhhing as if it were the latest Snoop Doggy Dog.

About Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, basically it wouldn't matter even if he had gas or even atomic weapons. They are basically for show. Gas is not apparently all that effective if your enemy is expecting it. And atomic weapons can only be used for Armageddon.

So it doesn't matter to me whether they find them or not. For me, their existence wouldn't have been a good reason for an invasion.

...Of course, they haven't been found them, have they?

Microsoft claims all Free Cell games are winnable. A lot, I haven't figured out. Of course, I am a novice. And I usually don't have all the time in the world. And I refuse to make any in depth analyses of plays.

You're right the map book I remembered was J.B. Post's *An Atlas of Fantasy* (1979). And I imagine it is all around. At one time, you found it everywhere.

ct. Metcalf. Actually, pulp magazines were worse. The wealthier charlatans were glossier than they could be in email today. You can only dress an email up so much. Anyway, we can get only so many penis enlargement ads and we are inured to them.

If Cavourite just blocked gravity, it wouldn't repel items, either above or below it, unless they were big enough to have a gravitational field. Like the Earth



What my mother's sketch of the Ayatollah Khomeini really looks like.

does.

ct. Schlosser. I think the idea of Repressed Memories is associated with the old Freudian notion of repression. We repress ourselves, e.g., sexually, and it comes out in neuroses and psychoses. The worst of the repression we don't know about.

However, in Repressed Memories, it got turned around. It was some traumatic episode we were repressing. Preferably that our parents had sex with us or practiced Satanic rituals on us. And that was causing our neuroses and psychoses. The similarity has been good enough for government work, however.

There has been another difference between the old Freudian Religion and the more recent one of Repressed Memories.

With the Freudian religion, remembering what was repressed cured you. With the new Repressed Memory religion, you weren't cured unless the miscreant went to jail.

ct. Guy. So your nephew Joe finally decided that us old cockers were not his cup of tea.

No Islamic Democracies? Maybe but Morocco and Turkey, I hear, come close.

It's just as well that the DSC motel is overbooked. I can't come this year with all the time I am taking because of my father's estate. And, who knows, I may yet be taking time because of my mother-in-laws affairs.

Naw, Hank wouldn't make a good Muslim. He needs a skullcap.

RICH LYNCH **variations on a theme #20**

RACHMANINOFF's BIRTHDAY. Rachmaninoff had the happy/sad/beauty thing down pat. At least in his symphonies. It seems to me only someone with mood swings could carry it off.

And he had mood swings in spades. Sometimes, he scowled so badly it was notorious. Sometimes he was in a happy mood and made funnies with Fritz Kreisler. Sometimes, I hear he could be a maniac – when it came to speedboats.

Music apparently reflected his disease and music may have reflected the

cure. I heard this about the psychiatrist who brought him out of his funk after the calamity of his first Piano Concerto. He did it more as an accomplished musician than a man of mental science. An oxymoron in those days, and we won't say what it is today.

By the way, I heard that the conductor who conducted Rachmaninoff's first Piano Concerto drunk was none other than the famous Alexander Glazunov.

🍷🍷🍷 HARRY WARNER. We didn't know how erudite Harry Warner, Jr. was because his life was to some extent compartmentalized. That it was more compartmentalized for mundanes than for us fans was probably due to this: as Mr. Platou says, he feared being ridiculed for that "Buck Rogers" stuff. A great danger in ye olde days.

My fingers are crossed that the U of California gets his unorganized fanzine collection.

🍷🍷🍷 JOHN FOYSTER. Boy, what books John Foyster could have written. And what books I could have written. The saddest words are What Might Have Been. But that is because we don't usually include disasters in what Might Have Been.

🍷🍷🍷 FLORIDA AND BACK. Your niece has grown up, and so have mine. I remember when they were babies. Now, two are adults and one is an adolescent. Where do they get those slim bodies and long legs? Not from my side of the family.

They are growing up so fast I can almost hold a conversation with them.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Me. Cat Yronwode is a person of many parts. Not only was she in science fiction fandom; she has been into sexual liberation. In her 50s, she displays on

the web her Tantric partner, thirty years her junior. Also, she is into Co-Masonry. Men and women in the same lodge. In addition, she is into comics fandom. A point Gary Brown made. I remember when I was subscribing to *Comic Buyers Guide*, she had a column.

Of course, she is into Hoodoo. And its Jewish magic connection.

🍷🍷🍷 No excuse not to see the Party Animals? Certainly, I have one: my utter inertia when it comes to some things. Maybe it's not a good excuse, but it is an excuse.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Norm Metcalf. What Norm won't admit is that lots of hard science fiction is in good part fantasy. Even the master himself, Jules Verne. Some of his gaffes were little better than a recent SF novelette I read where someone built a time travel machine from an erector set. And that was meant humorously. Some of Verne's gaffes were not better than Groucho Marx's suggestion that a atomic bomb be made from the white of three eggs.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Steve Hughes. I'm not worrying about overpaying on taxes. Last year I got \$80 back from withholding from the Feds and \$25 from the State. I can live with that.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Gary Brown. My reading speed is slowing down too, damn it! I rue the day I ever had to comprehend what I read. Thirty years ago, I didn't have to. And I got 800 words a minute.

🍷🍷🍷 ct. Jeff Copeland. The Iraqi Invasion the right thing for the wrong reasons? That's to be seen. I think the war has one big demerit: it gives aid and comfort to bin Laden. And the Shiite Mullahs and the Iranian Ayatollahs.

The war could have a merit, however: if it gets rid of Saddam and means democracy for the Iraqi people. If it accomplishes that, I would give it one big merit badge. But Iraq is not a democracy quite yet. And if, as I suspect, Rumsfeld wants to be sultan of Iraq, it won't be during the Bush Administration.

Actually, things would be worse than that. It is almost a truism people prefer to be misruled by their own kind than ruled well by a foreigner. So the Rumsfeld regime may well not end up being on balance worse than the Saddam regime.

NORM METCALF
tyndallite v3 #107 April 2003

ct. Me. I am afraid I haven't read any of the Williamson stories on anti-matter. About the anti-matter planets creating the asteroid belt, a Tom van Flandern has more recently been promoting the theory of exploding planets. Unlike Jack Williamson, however, he has no explanation for them; just that the data says they happened. One or two exploding planets were in the asteroid belt and one was out beyond Pluto, I believe.

Van Flandern's credibility would be greater if he was not also promoting the Face on Mars as a construct of some intelligent being rather than an Indian Head of nature.

I think, with Bond movies, the only rule is that all the action has to be fast so the audience doesn't have time to think.

ct. Mike Weber. A friend of mine who tried to read the E.E. "Doc Smith" novels in paperback claimed that they were unreadable. It may be because Smith rewrote them. I have ruined a lot of material by rewriting it, and being too self-conscious, and too ideological. Rewriting doesn't always improve material.

On the other hand, things are usually worse if I don't rewrite. My first drafts are rarely ready for prime time. Often I have said exactly the opposite of what I wanted to say. Often I have made things too complicated for anyone to understand – even myself. Then there are the typos.

ct. Randy B. Cleary. Of course the smoke signals of Native Americans are really attempts at atomic bombs that went awry.

KEVIN L. COOK. Tarzan not racist? Given the political correctness of today, all jungle adventures with White hunters are racist.

WILLIAM N. AUSTIN.

Sumerians with bracelets that look like wristwatches. You are not as enterprising as Eric von Daniken. He would have said that the Sumerians had wristwatches. He said stylized Aborigine wall paintings that look vaguely like spacemen are of spacemen.

Von Daniken isn't the only one who finds modern implements in Ancient diggings. There was a '20s newspaper article claiming King Tut had a golden typewriter in his tomb. Yup, not something that looked like a typewriter. Of course, the article was later proved to be a hoax.

George Griffith's *Honeymoon in Space* (1901). The rich chap who takes his American bride into space is the eccentric Earl of Redgrave, a believer in Darwinism.

In this book, Griffith was a trailblazer in science fiction. The idea was that planets did not have to all develop in the same way. Which went completely against the scientific romances of the '90s and aunts, where they did.

Authors believed they had a framework based on science. A planet

always followed the same pattern. Life started in rain forests. Then the planet cooled down. As this happened, life became more intelligent. Finally, the planet became a lifeless Arctic waste.

Griffith preserved this pattern. But, within it, each planet had its own alternate development. For instance, the Martians become greedier and more brutal over time while the Ganymedeans became more virtuous. Similarly, the Selenites and the Venusians have their own unique development.

By this small step, Griffith set the stage for modern day science fiction where everything goes. Each planet can have its own separate development. Hey, each universe of each writer can.

ARTHUR D. HLAVATY **nice distinctions 1**

🍷▲🍷 BEYOND THIS VERIZON. I am afraid I am a deadhead as far as naming things of mine go. My library doesn't even have a name beyond Food and Nutrition Service Library.

Now my wife Heidi is different. She had a colostomy. And has a stoma, an artificial anus which empties out in front. And she has a name for her stoma – Madame. She often acts as if it is a slightly retarded human. “Madame, you shouldn't do something like that!”

Heidi is not alone in this either. I hear a lot of ostomates behave this way toward their stoma.

🍷▲🍷 I reached the same conclusion about the Fu Manchu books. As racist as they are, they are fun. In the opening of the first novel, a flower is being lowered from the ceiling of a hotel room. If it pricks the person down below, they will be silent and

unable to reveal some secret that will save the British Empire. Then they will die.

In short, Sax Rohmer, the pseudonymous author, didn't take this sort of thing seriously. There is another bit of evidence. Among the many groups that have to be watched, according to the novels, are occultists. And I know Sax Rohmer was an avid occultist.

🍷▲🍷 I can't take either Sullivan or Goldstein too much to task. People tend to think of Gay and Straight as either-or, when it is a matter of gradations.

I hear the original Kinsey survey found that 32% or so had a Gay incident at one time or other. 18% have had them recently. 8% are more Gay than Straight. And 2-5% are hardcore, i.e., never have a heterosexual experience.

When I tried to explain that to someone, it was like water off a duck's back. That is why partisans on the issue of Gay vs. Straight can quote any statistic they want.

🍷▲🍷 Colson Whitehead's *Intuitionist* has a great conspiracy in it: by Empiricist elevator inspectors against Intuitionist elevator inspectors. Conspiracies that are actually advocated by people are not so novel.

Some are strange, nonetheless. I remember reading that the U.S. Ambassador to China in 1945 was a Patrick Jay Hurley. And he believed there was a conspiracy between the Chinese Communists and a bunch of Midwestern Republicans.

SHEILA STRICKLAND **revenant #18**

🍷▲🍷 About the OCLC, if I cannot get an interlibrary loan from the National Agricultural Library, the National Library of

Medicine and the Washington Research Library Consortium, I go to the OCLC: as you say, the nationwide interlibrary loan database.

It used to be that I did my own OCLC searches at a branch of the National Agricultural Library, but the National Agricultural Library has clamped down. So I have the reference librarians there do them for me. And then I look up the codes, and I am rocking and rolling.

☹️▲☹️ Terry Pratchett may write juveniles but he has an avid adult audience. Michael Dirda, the *Washington Post* reviewer for academic and avant-garde books, goes gah-gah over him.

☹️▲☹️ The Matrix seems to be a cult favorite because it claims the entire universe is one vast plot. One vast computer program. Its attraction is many people want everything to be plot. It makes the world simpler. If it wasn't a plot, they might even have to blame themselves. ...Unthinkable!!

☹️▲☹️ ct. Me. So I see you like the idea of SFPA Slash Fiction. Who could I have you have sex with? ~~I'll stop here before you wring my neck.~~

Come to think of it, I'll write Slash Fiction about another SFPAn who shall remain nameless. They are quite vain so I would have them having passionate sex scenes with doubles of themselves.

☹️▲☹️ Your SFPA flag sounds great. But, since we are in the South, maybe we should combine the Stars and Bars with the Green, Yellow and Orange, Black power Flag of 'Africa.' That will confuse everyone.

☹️▲☹️ ct. Tyndallite. If Hitler had never been born, we might have been spared the horrors of Naziism. It is true when some

dictators have died, their regimes crumbled with them. That certainly happened with Franco. That seems to be happening with Milosevic. Post-Stalin Russia was quite a different place.

So it is possible that, if Hitler, Stalin or Milosevic had never been born, their regimes would never have existed.

But this belies all the leaders I see in everyday life. To a man, they are a collective effort. It sticks out like a sore thumb. The President seems to be a whole army. I myself have written White House correspondence.

So I prefer the view it was a good thing that Hitler was born. An actual competent Nazi ruler might have conquered the world.

☹️▲☹️ ct. Peter, Pan & Merry. I tend to agree. Forgetting things that are unpleasant is not the beginning of mental illness but a sign of mental health. We have had enough with letting it all hang out. Letting it all hang out makes us miserable. It makes psychoanalysts rich but the hang-er out-ers miserable.

☹️▲☹️ ct. Trivial Pursuits. I much preferred the first Peter Wimsey TV series to the novels. It was on TV with Ian Carmichael in the '70s. After a while, he had Peter Wimsey down pat. And while I liked a later Peter Wimsey series less, I still preferred it to the novels.

I confess maybe my sample for making this decision was not too good. I tried to read one. Nothing was happening for too long a period of time. So I decided to read something else.

☹️▲☹️ ct. Oblio. I like your joke about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. There is another joke about Saddam's death. You know spokespeople were claiming that what

you saw on his last appearance was a double. So one wag wrote a parody where experts claimed whoever was portraying saddam looked entirely too much like the sock puppet Elmo.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Hello Kitty. It's true that, no matter what happens, we will see Saddam's picture being pulled down over and over. And Dubya will never mention our troops being shot at, the looted libraries and the dead civilians. This is typical of the chutzpah of politics.

Whether Dubya can keep on getting away with it is another thing entirely. In politics, the worm often turns.

🍷▲🍷 AND TO ALL. You're too hard on yourself, Sheila. I found your mailing comments quite good and went over my quota of comments to respond to them.

TOM FELLER **frequent flyer**

🍷▲🍷 Our weather has been similar. At one time, I thought we were becoming a desert: during the Summer, there would be a drought. This year, it has been solid rain all May and into June. It was an exaggeration when the *Washington Post* said the Sun hadn't been out for a month. But not much of an exaggeration.

🍷▲🍷 HUGO NOMINEES. I disagree with David Brin's *Kill People*. Science will never be able to figure out what the soul consists of. It would take an artist or a mystic.

Nonetheless, science may otherwise be able to make doubles of us, someday.

🍷▲🍷 I am curious about how the Cro-Magnon could have killed off the Neanderthals in real life, like they did in

Robert Sawyers *Hominids*. There is evidence that the Cro-Magnon and the Neanderthals intermarried. The remains of what looks like a mixed Cro-Magnon/Neanderthal have been found.

However, the DNA of present day peoples has not a drop of Neanderthal blood. So before the Cro-Magnon without a trace of Neanderthal blood could have taken over, these mixtures had to have died off too.

🍷▲🍷 THE WAR. Bin Laden and Saddam were polar opposites politically. Saddam was a secular ruler with a vengeance. I hear one of his top officials was a Christian. And, unlike Saudi Arabia, Christian churches were legal.

Bin Laden has been a Fundamentalist Sunni Muslim. Who wishes to see all infidels defeated and converted to Islam. And his strategy of terrorism is a hairbrained scheme to bring that about.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. So the Air Force is still flying B-52s. Last time I heard about them was in the '80s.

🍷▲🍷 Jobs, like Anita's, pall. I am fortunate mine isn't that kind. As long as I don't need money, I can act independently. I created my library and am always remaking it.

🍷▲🍷 Sorry, I should have looked up where Gore moved his campaign headquarters to. But wherever he moved it, moving it from Washington, and the microscopic nitpicking of the press, was a great idea.

🍷▲🍷 Let's face it, the West with a pacifist religion has been aggressive enough to conquer large swathes of territory. The British controlled a good part of the world in the 19th Century. The Spaniards from the 16th

Century until the 19th.

This only proves the followers of a religion are more important than scriptures in characterizing a religion. I am sure the same is true of the followers of any ideology and its manifestos.

☹▲☹ Sure, Slash Fiction with you with Halle Berry and Anita with Bruce Willis in SFPA Slash Fiction. Sounds great. How does this sound?

“He had the power, the pleasure. It was seering through his veins. His eyes lit up. And then he dropped the credit card.”

☹▲☹ Martin Gardner, the skeptic, claimed that Joseph Campbell was an anti-Semite in private. This was based on statements students of his claimed to have overheard. While I am not certain this isn't somewhat sleazy, Campbell's essay seems to confirm it.

☹▲☹ ct. Don Markstein. I suspect the way to get rid of Spam would be to accept email only if the spammer has a working mailbox. I hear the last thing Spammers want is to be contacted. I bet it would be a simple thing to create software that would send them reply messages and see if they bounced. And if they did, the message would never reach you.

☹▲☹ ct. Richard Lynch. You and I both. My problem with News Groups and lists is also that their email is not well thought out or written. In fact, it is often quite perplexing. I was going to say only the senders knew what it meant. But I am not certain it was even clear to them. That it wasn't an example of “spontaneous me.”

RANDY B. CLEARY
avatar press v2 #27 may 29th, 2003

☹▲☹ I know how it is with your mother. Thirty years ago, I stayed in Boston long after I should have gotten out and to elsewhere. There were no jobs, most of my friends had left, I was aimless. But I was afraid of what was to come. When I finally left Boston, I found out: my life was much better. And my fears were baseless.

☹▲☹ Julie is a good looking woman. ... Can I say that these days or do I get into trouble?

☹▲☹ Your photos come out a lot better than mine. Do you print *Avatar* out on your home printer or do you have a good photocopy place you go to? – As opposed to mine.

☹▲☹ I was going to ask what Furries are. But I see from your example. I have also heard them called “Funny animals.” But the idea is the same: animals acting like people. Often more like people than people.

☹▲☹ ct. Me. Sure, you're a Big Name Fan. Not like the late Isaac Asimov or somebody like that, but you're a Big Name Fan. A lot Bigger Name than me, it seems.

☹▲☹ It doesn't seem you're a total bust with women. It seems like you are always on some project with one woman or another. I remember when you printed one's story. You must have known who she was. I remember, at my first Deep South Con, it seemed like there were women there who liked you. While I can't say that at my second Deep South Con, that could have been because you were too busy.

☹▲☹ The problem is that the *Sixth Book* is too shlocky to have power over me. And the *Secrets of the Psalms* was written by a decent individual who wished to do



From a Series: If We Lost the War.

decent things. And you can't do more than that with his book.

Of course, that might not cut any mustard with you. You might still find them an entrance to the Evil One. Traditionally, Christians have found all magic evil, no matter it's purpose. And learning.

🍷▲🍷 No, not all abuse is physical by far. But I suspect the definition of abuse needs to be narrowed a bit. Everything an adult does to a kid these days is considered abuse by somebody. Saying no. You can't be a good parent unless you say no. But some claim that is abuse.

🍷▲🍷 Repressed memories of happy times. Isn't that just forgetfulness. Why would someone become mentally ill from repressing happy times?

Now there is a whole Freudian

theory about why you would repress unpleasant thoughts. And get sick from it. Which, for most people, I regard as baloney. It posits more pride in any one victim than I suspect resides in the entire State of California.

DAVID SCHLOSSER
peter, pan & merry #49

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me.

That's the difference; Archimedes' test was a test for the purity of gold, not

the presence of gold. Later on, in the 18th Century, when people knew how much different materials weighed, I gather that that could be the test. But Archimedes didn't know.

🍷▲🍷 *Sorry, tempting though it may be for him, Guy & Michelle Pfeiffer doesn't qualify as "/" fiction.* Probably not. But when it comes to teasing people, I can't be bothered with strict definitions.

🍷▲🍷 About any sex between Luke Skywalker and Jar-Jar. I looked it up: Risathra is sex between different species from different planets. So I can name one aspect of sex between Luke Skywalker and Jar-Jar. But I can't name the other aspect: I have yet to find the word for sex with someone who hasn't been born yet.

abused, not just dope. My father always said so. Water, for instance, you could abuse. People do: they drown in it. And air, they abuse. I forgot how. Maybe with an overdose of oxygen.

What happens is a lot of dangers are more connotation than denotation. More our emotional reaction than any scientific evaluation they are dangerous. Smallpox has now become an epidemic in the public mind even though there have been no cases of it. Just the possibility of a terrorist using it as a weapon.

☹▲☹ There would have been a difference between the confederation imagined under UN Resolution 181 and the Articles of Confederation. There was supposed to be as little intercourse as possible between the Arab and Israeli sectors under the UN Resolution.

☹▲☹ When the people biographers like have flaws, are they ever considered flaws?

☹▲☹ ct. Richard Lynch. It doesn't seem a problem that a comet would have an outer shell one moment and turn to steam as it hit the Earth the next. It starts out as ice and it would encounter enough friction in our atmosphere to vaporize it.

That reminds me of Kurt Siodmak's film *Riders to the Stars* (1954), which answers the question Why meteorites don't burn up in the atmosphere. Of course, they do.

☹▲☹ ct. Steve Hughes. I have to side with Steve on this one. Supposing WE lose interest money when the government withholds our money. That doesn't mean that HE doesn't lose interest money when he pays estimated taxes.

☹▲☹ ct. Don Markstein. I don't believe it ever mattered whether there were Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq. As I said, anti-Saddam played in 1991; the Bushies figured it would play in 2003. And they were, to some extent, right.

☹▲☹ ct. Gary Brown. The problem is that the Democratic Party doesn't have a powerful enough myth, buzz, vision; and the Republicans do. Ecology and fairness for the poor and Middle Class aren't the big draws of patriotism and tax cuts. Not yet at any rate.

Of course, we wouldn't want the Democratic myths to be as powerful as the Republican myths are now. Myths that are too powerful override common sense and decency. And ultimately shoot their advocates in the boot.

☹▲☹ ct. Randy Cleary. You have to remember that there is hardware, which is the computer. And software, which is inside the computer. Then there are peripherals you plug in underneath the computer – underwear. ...I know, baaaadddd.

This, of course, was inspired by prattle about Janice's underwear.

☹▲☹ ct. TKFW. If we had administered the immigration law too strictly, we would have lost Philip Kahn. He came to the U.S. on a travel visa and remained an illegal alien until he became a millionaire as head of U.S. operations for Borland. His company, I hear, was responsible for a number of innovations in computer programming in the early days.

☹▲☹ That traditional Ten Commandments movie – which, I take it, was the '56 movie starring Charlton Heston – knew its audience: Christians. Comparing

Moses to Christ was brilliant stroke.
Unfortunately, not so good for many Jews.

T.K.F. WEISSKOPF REINHARDT
'yngvi is a louse' and other graffitos

♥▲♥ CHARLOTTE'S WEB. Just two things about your comments on the *Pirates of Penzance* DVD. First, I think the idea behind the song "Model of a Modern Major General" was that, at the time, a lot of learned books were by this Major General or that. I keep remembering books from the Victorian period with a Major General as the author.

A second thing about the *Pirates* DVD is I think the Russian dance you refer to is the Kazatski, where a male squats and kicks his legs. Maybe I'm wrong. Of course, there was someone on the internet who was irate that anyone would call it a Russian dance. He said it wasn't a Russian at all, but Ukrainian. Worlds apart.

♥▲♥ TONI READS THE KORAN. I'm sorry, Toni, the Koran still sounds like the rules in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Rules for nomads who have recently become farmers. They are very specific about how you live. Including inheritance. Including masturbation. There is not much tolerance for those who disobey either. And, also like the Koran, there are no restrictions against fighting aggressive wars.

Later law and tradition have mellowed out these original strictures in all the great religions. The *New Testament* mellows things out for Christians. The Talmud does the same for Jews. I can't give specifics, but I remember, in my studies, philosophy and legal precedent did the same thing for Islam.

On the other hand, many in all religions have been unhappy with what they

regard as namby pamby later rulings, and seek the vengeful God of the early Bible. Or the strict practices of the original Koran.

♥▲♥ About the Koran's language, the so-so writing may have more to do with the translation. Supposedly even Christian Arabs praise the Koran for its beautiful Arabic.

♥▲♥ ct. Eve Ackerman. I agree that we should all take stock of what percentage of our income goes to taxes. There is something else we should take stock of too. What government programs do for us both personally and for the public good generally. I take it you don't want to see the military cut, or the police.

♥▲♥ ct. Randy Cleary. Academics Communists? I don't know whether you would exactly call them Communists right now.

But there is a joke about Communism that fits in to what you say. It was told a lot during the '30s. Under Capitalism, man exploits man. Under Communism, it's the other way around.

♥▲♥ ct. Guy H. Lillian III. It's a conventional tactic in politics. In comparing your friends, you typify them with your own brightest hour; and you typify your enemies with their darkest one. Your enemy inevitably loses the comparison.

If you're racist, you typify White people with a Renaissance portrayal of the Virgin Mary, and Black people with the ugliest Black person you ever met.

In this case, I thought the idea behind the U.S. subsidies was not to decrease weapons in Russian but to prevent Russian weapons of mass destruction from getting into the hands of the highest Third World bidder. Doesn't matter, you got Al ...Of

course, you couldn't avoid getting Al.

Hmmm. I think I'll typify the Bush W Administration with having let bin Laden get away. And Saddam.

GARY BROWN

oblio no. 146, apr-may 2003

♥▲♥ Gary, you need an occasional respite from work. You know what they say: "All work and no play drives Jack *nuts*."

♥▲♥ TAX CUT. With allowing the tax cut to be whittled from \$760 billion to \$330 billion, the Repubs are setting themselves up. They can say if the tax cut doesn't work, it was too little and too late. And that, of course, was the responsibility of the Democrats. I doubt this is going to work if the economy really goes down the tubes – except among the faithful who will jump on any argument for their side.

♥▲♥ NEW YORK TIMES. Per the Jason Blair affair, having worked in a bureaucracy for many years, I can see how rot sets in. Among managements, there is a natural tendency to cover things up while there is no natural tendency to care what the rank and file is doing. It takes a stronger than normal sense of decency to care about putting out a good product. And to reward merit and punish bad performance, as opposed to rewarding personal likes and punishing personal dislikes.

That the *Times* is venerable may not mean any member of management cares. It more likely means that they have to cover up problems more than usual. Maybe even where they will inevitably be found out.

The same happened to Enron and Worldcon. Their problems, as far as management was concerned, had nothing to do with actual performance. It was the fault

of the accountants and auditors. There wouldn't be any problems if they could buy them off.

Of course, covering up problems meant that the problems would fester and kill the corporation. And send a few members of management to secured institutions at government expense.

♥▲♥ ct. Me. If the Russian space station is rebuilt like a doughnut, life may yet reflect Disney.

♥▲♥ I put two plus two when I was a young kid and saw my parents laying presents beside the tree. However, as an adult, I believe Santa Claus is real. Just not real in the sense material things are real. He is real instead like things of the heart are real. They exist – in the heart.

♥▲♥ A lot of people hate John Edwards' *Crossing Over*. It smacks too much of exploiting the bereaved. My wife hates him. I hear *South Park* does. In one show, John Edwards is kidnapped by aliens and wins the Scumbag of the Universe contest.

♥▲♥ What makes for a real beach that New Jersey doesn't have any while Florida does? In New Jersey, ours have sand and boardwalks. And, during the summer, luscious women in bikinis.

♥▲♥ No, I still don't think the Iraqi Invasion was about oil even though Cheney's Haliburton may have gotten oil concessions. There is too much evidence that this Administration is run on public relations, spin and shell games. And that is true even where their supporters see dollar signs in their eyes. You have to admit that, before the war, Saddam was less popular than a root canal. And you could see where

invading him might distract people from their economic woes.

♥▲♥ John Stanley's *Little Lulu* was the world as kids want it: where kids hang around with each other. Like adults, who wish to be part of an adult world where adults hang around with each other. Unfortunately, kids are afraid of hanging around with unpopular kids, which are most other kids. And adults are afraid of hanging around with unpopular adults, which are most other adults. Tubby, in real life, would be a person without many friends.

♥▲♥ ct. Rich Lynch. Recently an OE ended an APA I was in because the internet was taking away wouldbe members. Of course, in her case, that argument was just plain silly. She had in fact recruited a bunch of new members with new perspectives. It is true they had more than a little trouble with commenting on other people's zines, but they certainly carried with them new perspectives.

This does not mean she didn't have a good reason to discontinue the APA. I got the feeling the real reason was because it was getting to be a pain in the butt.

♥▲♥ ct. David Schlosser. I don't usually type the quote when I do mailing comments. I'm too lazy. I just try to characterize it briefly. Maybe too briefly. Maybe I forget. Then people are completely puzzled about what I am commenting on.

♥▲♥ ct. Guy H. Lillian III. Has Guy gotten Conservative in old age, and that's why there are no Mardi Gras bare breasts and no naked women in the last *Spiritus*. No, I think Guy has gotten married.

♥▲♥ ct. Janice Gelb. Oh, I bet Michael Moore got static for his comments,

as did the Dixie Chicks. We only like people standing by their beliefs when they reflect our own. "Brave" beliefs not our own are by cranks and crackpots.

Here is an example from my father. I shouldn't speak ill of the dead, and here I am. My late father would always demand that I go on a diet; he was obsessed with weight.

Then I would tell him I would think about it.

This was not a brave decision to him. This was a wishy washy decision. His answer was not to just think about a dieting, but to make a decision. And stick to it through thick and thin. That would be the brave thing to do.

Then I would make my decision: no diets. Forever. In fact, I would try to regain all the weight I had lost. He would end in full retreat urging me to be wishy washy and 'think' about dieting.

What is even stranger is that I pulled this trick several times. And could have pulled it several times more. My father never caught on. He wasn't dumb; he just didn't want to catch on. Per the point I was making, he didn't want to even conceive that someone could make a 'brave' decision that wasn't his.

♥▲♥ ct. Gary Robe. Given that more oil will decrease the price of oil, I bet Haliburton's contract will mean that Iraq's oil resources do not get exploited. That Iraq doesn't export a drop more of crude.

♥▲♥ ct. Jeff Copeland. Who knows what nation the Bush Administration is going to invade next. For some reason North Korea has cowed the Administration, who, after calling it part of the Axis of Evil, has backed down time after time.

Yes, I know the Administration

advertised that they had made North Korea back down on something. But I found out later it was after much horse trading. And nobody was telling the details of those horse trades.

On the other hand, Syria doesn't look like too good a target because it has been amenable to U.S. demands.

So Iran seems the next U.S. target. Except that we are apt to meet some really strong resistance there. From religious fanatics. So the Administration might always conclude that Syria is an easier target.

As far as I am concerned, they should invade for Weapons of Mass Destruction in Bhutan. Bhutan had only 10,000 people last I heard. It should be a pushover. ...How about a war with Liechtenstein?

JEFFREY COPELAND **it's because we're proud of you**

☺▲☺ Allie was fussier than I was in choosing a college. I went where I got in.

My parents, in fact, were fussy, too fussy. Having expectations of me that were somewhere in the Ionosphere, applied only to the Ivy League. Which took more than a B average or Jewish connections to get in.

The only reason I got into any college at all was that they applied to Boston University for me. Its pre-Med seemed to have been labeled semi-Ivy League. This was a stroke of luck. When I didn't get into the exclusive pre-Med, the university told me I could enter as a non-pre-Med frosh. And I got my B.A there.

☺▲☺ The problem for us Federal employees isn't that the civil service rules will be eliminated. The problem is that we are being made to "compete" with private

enterprise for our jobs. All over my building are members of the "new civil service," i.e., people working for contractors.

The party line is this will make the Federal government more efficient. There is a problem with that. You have to believe the pols who run the Federal government would know efficiency if it bit them?

☺▲☺ In short, according to Lt.

General Buckner, Mint Julips are not a drink; they are a paean to the Old South. An Old South that likely never have existed.

☺▲☺ ANDREW CHAIKIN. I hear The astronaut Cernan isn't the only one for whom space travel is a childhood dream. I hear that is what motivates the space program. And that is what makes it get off on some pretty strange tangents.

☺▲☺ We tend to forget. The 1991 military action against Iraq wasn't a crusade for Truth, Justice and the American way. It had the sole objective of kicking Saddam out of Kuwait. And it was inspired by Saudi Arabia, who reminded us of our alliance. And our promise to defend their fellow Wahhabis.

However, while the Saudis wanted Saddam out of Kuwait, they did not want Saddam destroyed. He formed a good bulwark against the Shiite Iranians. So we could only use their bases as long as we stuck to kicking Saddam out of Kuwait.

☺▲☺ I hear Koko the ape's talking is basically wishful thinking on the part of his trainer, Francine Patterson. His signing is not quite as clear as the subtitles would have you believe.

☺▲☺ Being singleminded when a war is on and giving up politics is nice. However, I don't believe any politician can

resist the temptation to play politics. Not even Winston Churchill. The Bushites go without saying.

There is a counter quote:

POLITICIAN: I am an American first and a politician second.

CYNIC: Spoken like a true American politician.

I took that from a song sung by the Chad Mitchell Trio.

♥▲♥ ct. Rich Lynch. No voting system is going to work if you have idiots for voters. On the other hand, if you have intelligent people of good will for voters all systems of voting will work.

♥▲♥ ct. David Schlosser. As I have said before, what Sharon did at the Temple Mount was not a casus bellum. On the other hand, he admitted he knew it would be a provocation. And so he had to do it.

♥▲♥ ct. Janice Gelb. I thought the cut the dividend tax is just for stocks. To encourage that type of investment. Steve isn't going to benefit from that particular cut. And you won't. And, with the bunch of bonds I came into recently, I won't.

I'm benefitting, however, from the cut in **Inheritance** Death Taxes in a previous bunch of tax cuts. Also, since there may be legacies to come, I may benefit from even greater cuts planned in the Death Tax.

Then, being a good liberal, after I get mine, I hope they repeal those cuts.

♥▲♥ No, I don't begrudge the Bushies taking credit for peace in the Middle East – if they do in fact create peace in the Middle East. Like I don't begrudge them taking credit for prosperity – if their tax cuts

do in fact create prosperity.

My fear is that all sides will act to prevent peace in the Middle East: the settlers, the Palestinian extremists, other Arabs states, Islamic fundies, Likud's propensity to take revenge. Peace to too many groups in the Middle East is a nightmare.

And Bush's leverage is limited by the fact that he can stand up to Arab intransigence but he can't stand up to Israeli intransigence. Given Republican politics, he couldn't even if he wanted to.

♥▲♥ I notice Toni and Hank have a tendency to use rumors to prove their point. Like that Second Graders had no trouble with the Florida ballot. Of course, my next door neighbor assures me that Second Graders were never tested with the Florida ballot.

♥▲♥ ct. Randy Cleary. It's the first *Star Trek*. Lieutenant Poppin' Fresh goes into the transporter and there's an accident.

MCCOY: He's *bread*, Jim.

GUY H. LILLIAN III spiritus mundi 195

♥▲♥ It seems like your DUFF trip matched the expectations Prequel. In fact, you are more enthusiastic about the trip now than you were then. And that's saying something.

You are enthusiastic about nearly everything: the monotremes, the marsupials, Rottneest, quokkas, vinyards, restaurants, dives, platypuses, fans, footy, Canberra, observatories, SF writers, artists, stars, parades, museums, the Sidney Opera House, homes beautiful, homes exotic, estates beautiful and exotic, Norman Lindsay, being

considered a comic book expert and God in Australia, bridges.

You were also enthusiastic about bringing Mardi Gras beads and Hurricanes drinks to Australia. The only thing you weren't enthusiastic about was being in transit. You didn't seem to care much for the train. Or the planes.

I was going to ask how to buy your DUFF report, but I guess when the time comes and you are prepared, we will find out.

☺▲☺ The Aussies (Ozzies?) take pride in their Aborigine heritage even though the ones you see are bums. We take pride in our Native American heritage. Half the streets in my area seem to have Native American names. But, of course, the Native Americans here are not doing so well.

☺▲☺ ct. Me. Thanks for your compliments about my essay on two manuals of ritual magic.

☺▲☺ I thought astronauts did need gravity or, over an extended, their bones became weaker. In fact, someone claimed that that was an insurmountable problem that would make space travel impossible forever. While I think that nonsense, I surmise zero gravity is a problem. And if people are going into space for any extended period, it is going to have to be solved.

☺▲☺ I don't think I contradicted the statement that my mother met the Ayatollah Khomeini in Paris and found him pleasant there. I said she DIDN'T meet him in court.

☺▲☺ If sarcasm and erratic criticism were considered child abuse legally, a goodly percentage of parents would be behind bars. Sarcasm and erratic criticism and spoiling kids are not such good things.

But they come too naturally to too many people.

☺▲☺ That's the problem with the names of ideologies in America: they are often non-descriptive. Political Conservatism in America is very radical now. Sacrificing rights, demanding tax cuts forever.

☺▲☺ *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* movie can't be as bad as the movie based on the phone book. Too many names you had to remember. Then there is the musical based on the First Aid Book – *Suture Yourself*.

☺▲☺ ct. Jeff. Does anyone care about the mess Bush W seems to be making of the world? A lot of people. Most people I know didn't like the Iraqi War. Most people I know don't like the tax cuts for the rich – even when we're the rich people.

I'm sure I and my friends and acquaintances are in a minority. I'm sure the Great Unwashed eat this stuff up. But apparently we're a big minority.

☺▲☺ Both Muhammad and Malvo are toast. And both, I am sure, are going to get injected. None of that under 18 shit. Ashcroft made sure of that when he had them tried in Virginia.

The maneuvers so far concern new ways to deprive Malvo of his rights. The same may be happening to Muhammad. However, he has been quiet: he confessed to nothing: so we don't hear too much about him.

☺▲☺ ct. Toni. Was the problem with the Dixie Chicks that they insulted their core audience? Or the owner of a core radio station that plays to their core audience? It seems the latter. This was purely a matter of

economic muscle rather than box office muscle.

As far as I can tell, the fans didn't seem to care what the Chicks' view of George W was. But that Republican contributor, station owner did. And he was able to force a public apology.

One thing about W's Administration is that it has been able to give the illusion that the Iraqi war is wildly popular. When I'm not certain, it is *wildly* popular.

ct. Sheila. The problem isn't the Great Unwashed. They have been led to believe that the U.S. is doing good. That Bush struck a blow against al Qaeda and Hitler with his war against Saddam. Also, they have been led to believe that prosperity can be created by giving them candy, i.e., the tax cuts. Who wouldn't want to believe that?

The real moral problem is with the Bushies, who never saw a photo op they didn't like.

Maybe a plane in Africa had its doors fly open, but Qantas apparently has an incredible safety record. Only exceeded by Japan Airlines, which, for many years, had no accidents. I think it eventually had ONE.

Anyway, Guy, you have to remember that millions of people fly each year in hundreds of thousands of flights. Looked at that way, you are safer on an airliner than you are in car. You remember the accident you had in your car, don't you?

Of course, telling you this is not going to get rid of your phobia. You're right booze and movies are the only things that will do that for you.

It's like most fears. They aren't rational. Telling people isn't going to convince them. People are still avoiding highways around here even though the

snipers have long since been picked up.

MIKE WEBER

a little behind, I'm afraid

No double entendre in SFPA?

That's nonsense: we need some SFPA lite. Otherwise, we drown in our own seriousness. Like I often do.

MOVING. Trying to predict the future is a bust. You plan to move and then you are laid off. When I got myself committed to half a dozen things this year, like being Toastmaster Club President and Toastmaster Area Governor, my father up and died. And I have had to go back and forth between Virginia and his home in New Jersey to help settle the estate. I have only been a part time President and Governor. And as far as other things go, I was no time.

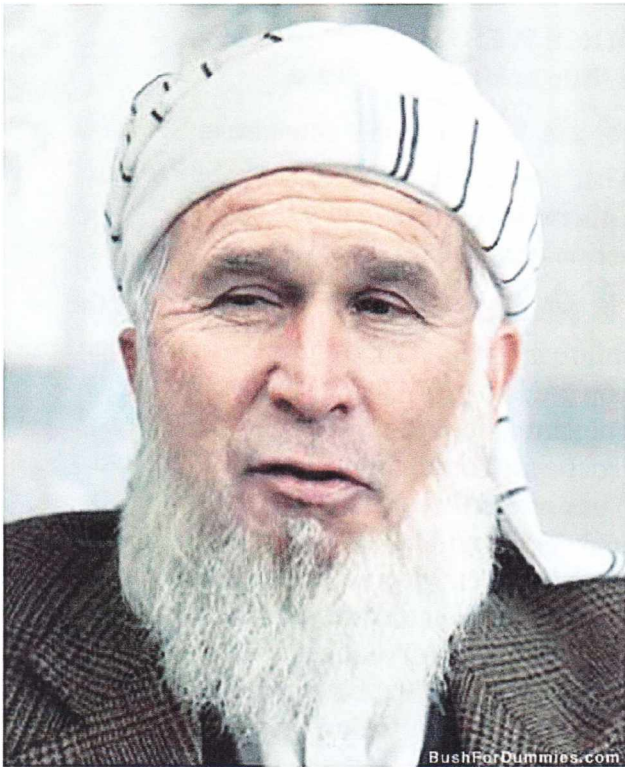
Of course, I don't blame my father. He wasn't able to pick the time and place of his death. It was an even worse example of our inability to predict the future than either mine or yours.

INTERESTING THINGS. You seem to have more computer problems than I do. And you're a tech. On the other hand, I gather you have to do the computer thing on the cheap. No alternative. Good luck.

Also, good luck on getting back your DSL. While I only recently got it, I couldn't go back. to dial-up.

Good luck too on your job hunt. I found that job hunting is serendipity. You have to meet two criteria. First, you have to be at the right place at the right time. Second, you have to be prepared to take the job. I bet you're prepared.

I wasn't back in 1975 when I was job hunting. I wonder how many jobs I missed. I know one I did.



From a Series: If We Lost the War.

JANET LARSON

passages #17

🍷▲🍷 Your medical odyssey is certainly a curious one. You start out with a bunch of symptoms. You're tired. You have lost your zest for living. You hate your husband. You hate yourself. You've lost all interest in sex. You've lost your self-confidence.

In the old days – 1950s? '60s? – it would have been regarded as some moral defect on your part. Even by people then who claimed to be liberated from morality. While I come from a more tolerant era, the late '60s, early '70s, it was an equally unenlightened. I was about to counsel more rest – even though you had gotten some.

But you apparently have hit the nail on the head. You needed some male hormones. Once you had them, you could resume your love life and your love of life.

Now that we're enlightened, however, what are we going to do with it? It is awful idea to many people that we're chemicals. They prefer to believe talking, true love, meditation, revelations would cure you before mere chemicals could. But mere chemicals were the only things that came to the rescue in your case.

My own belief is that it is no big deal that we can be explained by chemicals. That does not mean we can't also be explained by a lot more: by biology, physics, psychology, history, art, religion. Nor does it mean we can' be explained by things as far from science as we are from Ulaanbaatar. They're still valid explanations.

In this case, chemistry did the trick. In fact, I go farther than you. I am looking forward to the day when DNA research is more advanced and all medicine is designed to offset our DNA configuration. Or to replace it. In short, all bodily ills are cured by chemistry.

Even so, I still figure there will still be plenty of room for art, religion and whimsy.

GARY R. ROBE

tennessee trash #52

🍷▲🍷 FLOOR BENEATH. So the knee pad to protect your knees causes blisters on the back of them. That was my experience with pads in my shoes. They would protect one part so that another part could feel the brunt. And I wound up with blisters on another part of my feet. Finally, I had the good sense to the see the solution. Shoes that give the whole foot more support.

Of course, there is no counterpart to

Of course, there is no counterpart to that that would give you relief.

🍷▲🍷 I bet that fat kid is the most unpopular guy in your troop. In addition, to slowing it down up Mount Mitchell, he is fat.

Make no mistake about it: being fat is enough. In my childhood, I took my share of knocks for being a fat kid. If you don't believe me, believe Damon Knight. He said that, in writing classes, when it came to criticize students' writings, everyone would gang up on the little fat kid. In fact, that was what he called any person being ganged up on, fat or not.

The poor kid has another strike against him: he wears glasses. I remember, in my youth, that used to get you the name four eyes.

I hope he's not little too.

🍷▲🍷 Bush W may be a committed Christian, I don't know. But this presidency in particular is a collective presidency. I suspect that the agenda is not so Christian as Conservative. And a matter of public relations. Saddam, for instance, had been a bugaboo since at least 1991. And Republican activists have had him in their sights for that long.

As for the tax cut panacea, it dates back to before Reagan, and was the brainchild of some rather secular economists. It has always been more popular with the wealthy than with Christians, who are usually less wealthy. However, the Christian Right supports it because they are in an alliance.

🍷▲🍷 About separation of Church and State, it protects Christianity. Forget about the effect of separation on other religions. Christianity isn't as likely to be corrupted by

government. Where the church is established: Italy, Great Britain, Sweden: people are less likely to go to church. Not more.

I don't think it is a coincidence. The church reflects state policy. Often it's liberal. But a conservative policy is as likely to corrupt religion. Politics per se has different aims than religion. Religion aims at the sublime. And politics aims at the mundane. ... Should I say the ridiculous?

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. It is true that Judaism from the fall of the Second Temple until a few centuries ago tolerated a lot of magic. Given the precarious existence of many Jews, it had to.

Christianity, on the other hand, has not been very tolerant of magic. The usual fear has been that magic is done by demons, who seduce magicians into their evil designs. Faust, for instance.

Some thinkers inspired by the New Age have made fools of themselves trying to claim Christianity has traditionally permitted magic. They say this because they fail to make the distinction between magic and miracles. These people are completely obtuse. Miracles are as unlike magic as day is night.

In a miracle, God chooses the miracle worker. The miracle worker doesn't choose to be a miracle worker. Certainly, he doesn't learn techniques complex and simple like the magician. I admit some miracles include rituals close to sympathetic magic. But at base the miracle worker was chosen by God. No tome, no apprenticeship got him or her powers; only God did.

🍷▲🍷 SFPA flag? Maybe we could unite the stars and bars motif with a Black power, green, orange, yellow African motif; and tick off everyone. As Mort Sahl often

said, "Is there anyone I haven't insulted."

☹️▲☹️ Repressed memories exist. I have observed them in a few people who have done something that their pride tells them they shouldn't have. Robbed the till, committed adultery. Or else they experienced something their pride tells them they shouldn't have. Child abuse is one candidate here.

Of course, you can make up memories because of pride too. A lot of people, out of pride, wish to be victims. Especially of child abuse. It is a high status these days. And, voilà, they have memories of child abuse.

On the other hand, I don't think either creative forgetting or creative remembering happens that much these days. People don't have all that much pride anymore. And, given all the pride the world of the Repressed Memory advocates would require, not even the Victorians could have pulled it off.

☹️▲☹️ ct. Gary Brown. Your shaving off your mustache reminded me of this. I had a mustache during the hippy era, and was known as Stash. A pun referring both to a mustache and a quantity of marijuana. I shaved my mustache off in the early '70s. And I haven't taken illicit drugs in as long. So it is strange when people remember me from then and call me "Stash."

RANDY CLEARY, ed.

southern fandom confederation bulletin
v8, #2

☹️▲☹️ CLEARY COMMENTS. That picture on the Pioneer 10, I've seen it often. I figure real extraterrestrials who found the probe could deal in concepts that were more complex. Whom the scientists had to dumb

down the world for were the Trekkies.

☹️▲☹️ CONVENTION REPORTS.

JOY V. SMITH. The Evolution stickers with the fish with legs. The Fundies are attacking them on the grounds that fish don't have legs. Which seems to be the idea: i.e., the fish evolved.

☹️▲☹️ The writers on that panel should have had their "alien artifacts" analyzed chemically. They would have found that they were made from substances unknown on Earth. I am sure that would have been the case for that water pistol.

☹️▲☹️ CHARLOTTE SPINS. Now, we have to worry about volcanoes exploding and destroying all life on Earth. Or most of it, and making our gene pool into a drop. Yellowstone looks like a good candidate.

Before that, we had asteroids to watch out for. Which makes me wonder whether we can believe any of it? The last asteroid that was going to hit the Earth was miscalculated by 600,000 miles. Which shows spokepeople's propensity to proclaim the worst. — And scare us?

☹️▲☹️ ct. Lewis Murphy. That reminds me of Irvin Koch's convention, WeaponsCon. Everyone had to have a weapon. However, parents could register their kids as weapons.

☹️▲☹️ ct. Joseph Nicholas. Randy, I agree with many of Nicholas' views. Nonetheless, I would cut his letter in half and wouldn't touch him with a ten foot pole. It would only be encouraging him.

☹️▲☹️ ct. Yuri Mironets. Winter not bad in the U.S. this year? We had the snow of the Century this year in the DC area. And it was of the last Century. Of course, earlier

on, the winter wasn't too bad.

JEFFREY COPELAND leftover quotations, part six

☹▲☹ *The great tragedy of Science – the slaying of a beautiful hypothesis by an ugly fact.* Many people pay lip service to this. But when it comes to their pet theories, if the facts do not support them, they should be forced to. I have made myself very unpopular arguing against popular theories. Especially the ones held together with string.

For instance, I got into a brouhaha about cigarette smoking. The popular argument against it is a well-known logical fallacy, Ad Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc. However, when I point this out, it makes me as evil as the cigarette manufacturers. Which is another well-known logical fallacy, Argumentum ad Hominem.

I have tried to counter this tendency in myself by adopting a philosophy where the facts fall where they may. It would be based on faith and hope. And, hopefully, some charity. But most people cling too tightly to the facts to accept it.

☹▲☹ *How do I know? For this is what I have done. And I am Caesar.* I have come across quite a few quotes that were faked. There is a quote attributed to Aristotle claiming Plato made up his Atlantis tale. While L. Sprague de Camp quotes it as true, its source is completely elusive. And there is a quote attributed to Petronius Arbiter attacking re-organization. A concept inconceivable to the Ancient Romans but very conceivable to us.

Which reminds me about that quote attributed to Thomas Jefferson and Cesare Beccaria: *They disarm only those who are neither inclined nor determined to commit crimes.* Was there any concept of gun

control in Thomas Jefferson's time? Cesare Beccaria's?

☹▲☹ *yeah ok terrorism works i'm sorry to say it but it does.* – Michael R. Weholt. There are several quotes here made under the angst of 9-11. Terrorism works at reeking havoc. But was that bin Laden's objective? His objective is to have the West overreact so that the Arabs will become militant and take over the world for Islam.

It must seem like THE ANSWER to angry Arabs but, in reality, it is a Rube Goldberg device as zany as any that cartoonist drew. It may as well have a midget at its center. All it does is make Americans want revenge and enable Bush W.

☹▲☹ *Makes people feel their preachers have lied to them, their leaders have deserted them.* – Ken MacLeod. On the other hand, our revenge and Bush's escapades have convinced Arabs who were lukewarm or unconvinced before that bin Laden is right. Our efforts in many ways are as misguided as bin Laden's.

☹▲☹ I agree with Steven Harris on Cthulhu; just as I agree with the 1897, "Yes Virginia, there is a Santa Claus" original. However, the usual reaction is that the Cthulhu or Santa Claus has been scientifically proven. We have taken samples from chimneys and found giant tentacles far from the sea..

We have trouble realizing, like these editorials say, that there is truth in our feelings, fancies, dreams, visions, art and poetry. Not the truths that science or fact deal in, but other truths.

☹▲☹ *Thorough obliteration of everything you love.* – Bruce Sterling. Of course, in the end we are all dead. But there

is another way of looking at it: see winning in living a bit longer.



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

I beg to differ. Education teaches us very well what it was designed to: how to handle bullshit. Even niagaras of it. A good preparation for life.



Socialists know the value of everyrthing and the price of nothing. - Arthur D. Hlavaty. The same is true of all idealists in my book. Idealists meaning seekers after pie in the sky. Even idealists who advocate laissez-faire free enterprise know the price of nothing.



A large class of readers at least will not be too surprised at anything. - L Sprague DeCamp. No, no, we are always knowledgeable about some things and naive about others. In the '50s and '60s, the public didn't mind a little S&M in its illos, which isn't the case right now. And books had bathroom scenes. Which are similarly tabu today.

Compared to past centuries, we know nothing of Greek philosophy, which means that we often argue points without knowing what the hell we are talking about. Arguments about mind vs. body, nature vs. nurture, natural vs. unnatural have turned to gibberish.



I live in the fallen universe: the one where Janis Joplin, rather than Lou Reed, OD'd. - Arthur D. Hlavaty. Well, it's true we don't live in the eternal autumn of the 1960s. But you can still take heart: at least it's not the eternal winter of the '50s and we aren't all Republicans.

TWO EMAILS FROM GEORGE WELLS FOR SFPA

Subj: George Wells writes; about a zine
Date: 3/11/03 2:04:32 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: gwellssss@yahoo.com

zine: THE HILLS ARE ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF VAMPIRES THEIR BUTTS BEING STING BY A THOUSAND BEES BLACK BEARS WHAP THOSE BUTTS WITH SOME BOARDS OF HARD WOOD HOWLS ROAR AS THE VAMPS GET THEIR BUTTS FULL OF SPLINTERS #1 BY GEORGE H. WELLS, 8 SOUTH DORADO CIRCLE 2B, HAUPPAUGE NY 11788 started 3/11/03

You complained before you didn't have a dignified title, but there you have it: vampires being wapped on the butt. What's more dignified than that.

Hello, I am behind in doing a zine for SFPA, to whom (whoms) I owe 6 pages within months. So I am typing this. Starting 3/11/03. I am still in mourning for the lost of our cat Dana, but I will need to distract myself and head into goofier realms than the times call for, in order to do any pages. No disrespect to my beloved cat. With a tragedy in my life (the latter's death) and crises earlier this year this in, I can do no zine but a surreal, insanity defying kind of zine.

I fear you have pined for your cat more than I have for my poor father. On the other hand, you are competing with my wife's tears over her mother's death. And my sister's tears over my father's death.

And you are handling it well. You have enough silliness to fall back on.

People who have eliminated all humor from their lives because of some serious situation give me the impression

they are about to commit suicide. With others, their silliness is not enough. My sister got HBO to fill in her dark moments. But it is too much of a spectator sport. She probably needs silliness such as you are dealing in.

On the other hand, while others need your silliness, I do not. The whole idea of it is to escape from reality. And I haven't lived in reality in years.

...would particularly appreciate that blunt messages of "WHAT ARE YOU BOTHERING ME WITH THIS" nature not be sent to me now ; save those up for verbal abuse when I am closer to being back on my feet. I am in bad shape now. If "thanks anyway is too much just say "Not."

I'm not saying "Thanks" and I'm not saying "Not" and I'm not saying "Why Are You Bothering Me." I'm saying "Later." I will answer you later in the July SFPA mailing. ...Which is right now.

[About the approach of the Iraqi Invasion] I keep telling myself that boring world news is GOOD. It's like going to a scarey movie and being glad, as you drive home, that you have a BORING life and you haven't been attacked by monsters. Well, unhuman ones anyway.

If only the Iraqi Invasion were like the movie *Mothra* and we could have disbelieved it! ...A lot of it did stretch credibility, come to think of it.

Subj: A zine for SFPA...

Date: 6/9/03 9:47:03 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: gwellssss@yahoo.com

TUESDAYS WITH MOTHRA

#1

BY George H. Wells...started 6/9/03

*.....
...It would be nice if "mike weber" could send me his big zine that he's waiting to print as email but it would probaly be bigger than I could handle. Maybe he should apply for a government grant.....*

I have a cable modem now and could probably download Mike's zine in two seconds flat. But, for you, it might take hours. For dial-up modems as opposed to cable, Mike should send his zine in installments. You could wait for each exciting episode. And, in our lives, they would be exciting. Mike's zine has been far more exciting than a lot of soap operas I have watched.

I am reading Blood Lines by Tanya Huff. it's third in a series! The first one: Blood Price is extremely good. I call it the best serial killer book ever.

Best serial killer book ever? Are you dead by now?

I have continued to try to come up with something quotable to get myself included into one of Jeff Copeland's Quotation Collections.

How about this one.

"Give me liberty or give me death!!

— Joe Biden"

— Rich Dengrove

or

"Elvis is everywhere. If you squint in just

the right way, everything looks like it has long sideburns.”

-Rich

Dengrove

A tax cut is coming. So why is first class mail 37 cents for up to an ounce. Why not make it 37 cents for up to 3 ounces? Because poor people use email in public libraries instead of snail mail? Why give tax cuts to corporations and rich people? Why not HIRE them to do stuff for every body? Tax cuts for the rich are supposed to cause more new jobs! So if the new jobs don't come about there should be an equal LEVY on the people and firms that got the tax cuts and did not deliver. I'd rather the money was given to people in debt. Everybody could get a few months rent paid by the government. Including small businesses in tiny strip shopping malls.

I hear, to pay for the deficit and repeal of all taxes on the rich, Bush W is allowing a postal rate hike that will bring the cost of each letter to \$500.

Signing off for now an dhoping for the best...love, george wells

See you soon in SFPA or email. I am going to skip DeepSouthCon this year. Which, I presume, you will.

