

I am puzzled by people not filled with wonder and excitement when they encounter a passing train.

Madame or Sir! I wish to remonstrate as they grumble at this horrid imposition in their important schedules. This is the commerce of countries! That boxcar has traveled across an entire continent of mountain and desert to pass before us!

(Miscellany page, *Trains Magazine*)

Quote from one of the regulars on rec.arts.sf.fandom Fri, 28 Sep 2001 09:29:07 GMT:

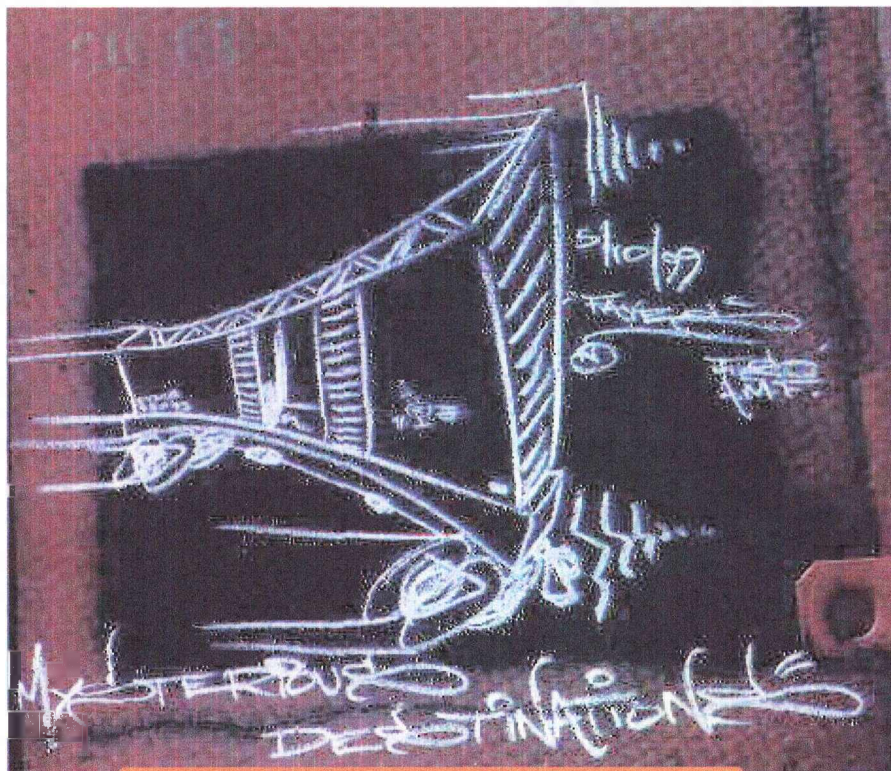
I don't know if it's seasonal depression setting in early or the world going to hell or what, but I could really do with some cheering news if anyone has any.

The kitten, Waif, who is about half-grown, has developed the most amazingly fluffy tail for someone who apparently stubbornly intends to be a slightly plushy shorthair.

When weighed a couple weeks ago, she was four pounds; Chi and Oz have both been weighed in at 12-pounds-plus. This does not prevent her mercilessly bullying and harassing Chi whenever she can catch him snoozing in his favourite armchair -- or anywhere else, for that matter. Her favoured manner of attack is to climb to the back of Chi's armchair as he snoozes, and then to pounce directly upon the big fluffy ball in the chair, which promptly results in an instant hissing snarly furball of kitty bad language and apparent vicious infighting.

I say "apparent" because i note that Waif is not using her claws (Chi is declawed) and while both of them are biting energetically, it's obvious that there's no real force behind the bites.

This is not to say that Good Ol' Uncle Chi



is enjoying these little romp sessions -- generally after just a bit of it he's standing by the back door, looking imploringly at any Big People With Opposable Thumbs in the area, begging to be let out, as Waif ferociously battles his big, fluffy, tempting tail -- but he hasn't yet attempted to annihilate her, as he certainly could without too much trouble if she really pissed him off.

Oz, meanwhile, who is four or five years older than Chi ((at least eight or nine years old, anyway, where Chi is four or five)) loftily ignores her until she makes a pass at him, in which case he may swat her one (without claws) or he may merely give her The Look and say something quiet but menacing in High Kittykat.

At which point she sets out to play Kitty Soccer. Or maybe Kitty Handball.

The fact that when Oz was her size he was living in a Bad Part of Atlanta and regularly dragged home dead rats bigger than he was may have something to do with the fact that he has the aura which allows this to work.

She has a jingly ball that she loves dearly -- she carries it into the bathroom, and drops it into the tub (and there is no doubt that this is intentional) and then jumps in after it and has a hell of a

Mysterious Destinations,

a SFPazine from
mike weber

162 Spring Place, Dawsonville GA 30534
706-265-7610

emshandar@mindspring.com
mike.weber@electrontiger.com

time swatting it all over and playing the banks and caroms off the various walls. When she's scored enough points, she picks it up and carries it away to its Secret Hiding Place. (My left boot, for preference)

When playing with the same jingly ball (and other things) she is the only Retriever Kitty i have ever seen -- if you grab the ball and flip it down the hall or whatever, she races after it, grabs it, brings it back and drops it for you to toss again.

Other cats come to the sound of a refrigerator door or an electric can opener.

Not this one.

She loves the sound of the ice dispenser in the freezer side door of the fridge, and will appear from nowhere when someone is operating it, looking up hopefully.

The icemaker produces those crescent-shaped chunks, about, what -- 3/4 inch thick, three inches or so along the straight side, and curved on the other, shaped perfectly for one of the little bastards to fit perfectly along the inside of a glass as you attempt to drink and block any chance of getting a sip -- and we always drop one or two on the floor for her, which she bats about for a few seconds, then cheerfully picks one up in her mouth (brrr) and carries it around, sometimes getting as far as the tub, for a round of Kitty Soccer Against Time as the "ball" melts down...

Meanwhile, step-daughter Helen, the kitten's nominal "Mommy" has gotten herself five hours of punishment drill in ROTC for flipping off a sergeant on the exercise field.

Apparently, Helen hasn't been doing all that well in PT, and they put her in "Remedial PT"; she was still running behind some of the others doing something called "lunges" across the training field and the cadet sergeant remonstrated with her over her slowness and she shrugged. He demanded to know how dare she shrug at a sergeant. She

inquired would you rather I did this? and displayed the digit.

Her own sergeant asked her about it afterwards when the report reached him, and she told him exactly what happened; he said he was surprised she hadn't tried to lie about it. She said why bother? There were plenty of witnesses...

So, five hours of marching around the campus contemplating her sins and memorising names off memorials...

I refrain with some difficulty from saying "I predicted something like this" as soon as Helen signed up for ROTC, as i was predicting both something more dire and a lot sooner; she managed to last almost six weeks and she didn't even hit anybody.

A Final Note: Lexmark printers seem to have the unfortunate characteristic that their printheads often clog unclearly upon sitting a few days without being used.

The cure for this is a new cartridge. I can't afford to throw away a nearly-full cartridge, so some colour illus or print in some copies of this zine are, im sorry to say, a little streaky.

The Real Budweiser: **Czechvar**

from Ceske Budejovice to the USA
... it really is what you think it is;
the beer you have waited 62 years
for...

What is Czechvar:

A European beer from the Czech Republic, uniquely full-bodied, slightly sweetish, with a delicate taste of hops

An original premium lager, made in Ceske Budejovice in the Czech Republic, right in the heart of Europe.

Czechvar is exceptional for its reliably outstanding quality, based on the beer-brewing tra-

dition of Ceske Budejovice, which stretches back to the 13th century.

An original premium lager which is once again on sale in the USA after 62 years, albeit not under its original name due to an agreement with Anheuser-Busch (...censored...)

Only the name has been changed to protect the beer

What you need to know about Czechvar:

"Czechvar" beer is distinguished by its fine, delicious, slightly sweetish taste, with a pleasant aroma of hops and bitterness. Its taste represents the perfect harmony of the specific flavor of Moravian malt, fine Saaz hops from northern Bohemia and the high-quality, crystal-clear waters drawn from the depths of the Ceske Budejovice basin, whose age is estimated at many millions of years. These properties of the basic materials are enhanced in B.B.N.P., which is currently one of the fastest-growing Czech firms, by the long tradition of generations of brewers,



who have elevated this beer to its current high standard.

All these factors combine to result in the top-quality taste that makes you want to keep drinking it. Brewers describe this as high "drinkability". This property is also one of the major virtues of the beer produced by this brewery, which has never sacrificed quality to business goals.

Czechvar's popularity stems mainly from the quality of the raw materials used: first-class Saaz hops, Moravian malt and extremely pure water from its own 300-metre deep artesian wells. What

<continued on page 21>

Some More of My Amazon Reviews:

Dark. Scary. Excellent. A New Direction for Crais.

Demolition Angel

Robert Crais

4 stars

I'm not going to rehash the plot of the book. It's too well-constructed to give you any spoilers, and it's too twisty to do justice to that way anyway.

What I am going to say is that this is the first book in i-don't-know-when that I was literally unable to put down. Once I got past a certain point, everything in my life went on hold until, a couple hours later, I emerged triumphantly at the end of the story.

Let me warn you *not* to expect the

same sort of story Crais has been giving us so well with Elvis Cole and Joe Pike -- though there have been hints of darkness in the Pike character and in the most recent book ("L.A. Requiem") particularly, the Cole mysteries are still pretty open, sunny stories.

Not this one.

This one is dark and closed in and twisty and it takes you down to where the worms and the bugs and the other dark things live and it shows 'em to you; Crais is working the edges of Ellroy country here, and it may be disturbing to some people (though I didn't find myself with the feeling that I'd been swimming in lukewarm slime that I usually have after reading Ellroy).

Carol Starkey, who is still trying to come to grips with having been dead for three minutes after a bomb she was working went off, is a sad, sick, brave cop who carries on because The Job is all that's left of her life. "Mr Red", the serial bomber who hunts cops, identified by ATF as the maker of the bomb that kills an LA cop to begin the story, is one of the scariest characters I've encountered in a long time. ATF Special Agent Pell, who works the case with Starkey, is almost as scary as Red.

And the world of explosives freaks and their computer interactions that we're shown is *really* scary, because they're *really* believable.

Judging by the preview for Crais's next

book in the back of this paperback, he intends to continue this darker and heavier trend and to not return to Cole and Pike for a while, which is fine, because after "L.A.Requiem", Pike and Cole need some time off.

If you can stand a somewhat dark and depressing setting, this is one hell of a good read that you ought to try.

When Johnny Comes Marching Home, Hurrah!

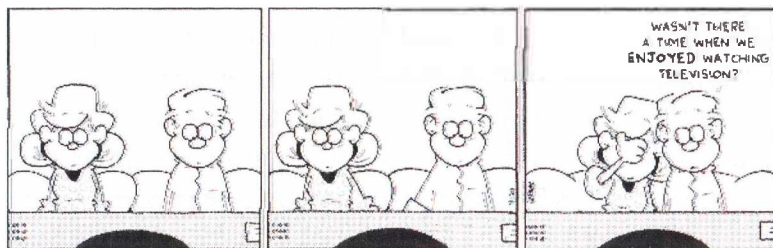
The Great War: Break-throughs

Harry Turtledove

3 stars

The cheerful "isn't-it-great-to-be-a-soldier" song, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" derives from an older and rather darker tradition, songs with titles like "Johnny We Hardly Knew Ye" and "My Son John" -- bitter songs about young men who came home maimed. But it's the cheerful, cleaned-up versions like "...Marching Home" that those whose interests wars advance want us to remember because, if too many remember "Johnny We Hardly Knew Ye", the next war will be harder to start, or, at least, as Kate remarks, harder to man.

As Turtledove brings his alternate World War One to a close, we can already see the seeds of the next war being sown, both in the specific activities of characters in this book



and by parallels to the real history of the world.

The treaties forced on the defeated Confederacy, intended to keep the CSA down and make sure it's never again a threat and, as well, to humiliate it in return for all those years of humiliation that the USA has suffered will certainly bear the same bitter fruit that similar humiliating and devastating terms forced upon Germany bore.

Certainly the Red devils (metaphorically) of revolution and politics released during the war will not easily be exorcised so long as the lot of the Black man is not materially improved, and (as another reviewer has pointed out) the embittered artillery Sergeant who has already begun keeping a journal chronicling his struggles and his thoughts on what is wrong with the System will very likely be Important in what is to come...

Structurally, this book is pretty much the same as most of Turtledove's alternate history war novels -- the "Worldwar" books and the earlier ones in this series -- being recounted in a

series of segments telling the actions and experiences of the members of a large cast of established characters (some entirely fictional, some alternates of real figures in history) whose

viewpoints cover virtually all of the actions of the War and of the effects on those civilians who actually encounter its results (sort of like what John Brunner referred to as "Tracking With Closeups" in "Stand on Zanzibar"). The segments vary from quite short vignettes to near-short-story lengths and are not -- in my opinion -- necessarily all equally necessary to advance the story; there is a redundancy here and there that i could have done without.

Another problem with the narrative technique that Turtledove has chosen, in my opinion, is that it tends to make it difficult to see the characters as people rather than as labeled cardboard figures. Thus, one is less likely to

be less interested in their problems and their fates than one is in the overall sweep of the narrative. (Though, to be fair, that might be

to some extent the author's intent.)

A problem specific to this book is that, having moved his main character from the Birmingham Alabama area into battle, Tur-

tledove doesn't go back there as much as he had been, and so we aren't seeing what conditions are evolving there as more and more blacks are working in the mills and foundries, doing white man's work and drawing almost a



Reprinted here the "Fox Trot" dailies for 9/24/01 to 9/29/01.

Roger Fox is usually a bit of a clueless doofus... But he gets it right when it counts.

white man's pay. Now that the whites are coming home, are those blacks going to go peacefully back to where they were before the War?

A sustaining enough read, but, as in the Real World, it's just a place to mark time for a while, since the end of the "War To End War" merely sets the stage for the Next World War.

Here's a frightening thought, given that in Turtledove's universe WW2 will be, to a major extent, fought between the CSA and the USA on the North American continent --

$$K_0 = Or_n Te_n$$

On Fri, 21 Sep 2001 08:02:36 +0100, in rec.arts.sf.fandom, someone typed

I think you mean

$$Freedom * Security = K.$$

We've been talking about this on rasfw (where it's being called "Niven's Law"), and came to the conclusion that the unit of freedom is the orwell (**Or**) and the unit of security is the teddybear (**Te**). I have as yet received no replies to my request for an estimate of

the value of K in orwell teddybears.

After thinking about this matter for a while, I replied:

I would guess that the basic value K is probably normalised to unity, for convenience in calculation. I further suspect that, like the farber, the basic units Or and Te will probably prove to be too large to be useful in day-to-day calculations and the actual units of usage will be **milli-** or even **micro-orwells** and **-teddybears**. (**mOr**, **mTe** or **μOr**, **μTe**)

In fact, the more I think of it, in all probability it may be most convenient to define different K, Or and Te (subscripted, perhaps, to distinguish them from the "Ideal K, Or or Te", which will be defined in terms of the hypothetical "Ideal Society") which, since they are essentially arbitrary numbers, can each be normalised, and be defined as having a value of unity when the society is in its initial, or ground, state...

Thus, at the founding of the Republic, the United States had

$$K_{USA} = Or_{USA(0)} * Te_{USA(0)}$$

and

$$Or_{USA(0)} = 1 \text{ and } Te_{USA(0)} = 1.$$

As we have, arguably, given up some freedoms in exchange for some securities, the val-

ues may well have changed so that currently, they are something like

$$Or_{USA(224)} = 872 mOr_{USA(0)},$$

and

$$Te_{USA(224)} = 1.147 Te_{USA(0)}$$

(since, by definition,

$$K_{USA} = 1 = Or_{USA(n)} * Te_{USA(n)}.)$$

[It is left as an exercise for the student to demonstrate that

$$(1) K_{USSR}, Or_{USSR(0)} \text{ and } Te_{USSR(0)}$$

do not equal, respectively,

$$K_{USA}, Or_{USA(0)} \text{ and } Te_{USA(0)}$$

and that neither the USA nor the USSR values (base or instantaneous) necessarily equal

$$K_{Ideal}, Or_{Ideal} \text{ and } Te_{Ideal}$$

and

(2) to determine the conversion factors between the USA and USSR units and between the USA and USSR units and the Ideal units.]

A Musician's Joke:

In the middle of a wide field is a pot of gold.

100 feet to the north stands a smart manager.
100 feet to the south stands a dumb manager.
100 feet to the east is the Easter Bunny, and
100 feet to the west is Santa Claus.

Q: Who gets to the pot of gold first?

A: The dumb manager. All the rest are myths.

A Hollywood Writer's Joke

A writer arrives home at his house way up in the hills. The place is totally devastated.

His neighbour tells him "Your agent came up here and he burned down your house and he cut down your trees and he poured liquid manure in your swimming pool and he plowed your lawn with salt and he raped your wife and he killed your dog and he sold your virgin twin daughters to white slavers and he..."

And the writer stops him and says "Wait a minute -- I can't believe my agent would *do* that.

" You're saying my agent came all the way up *here*?"

A Drummer's Joke:

Q: How do you get a lead guitarist to stop ringing your doorbell?

A: Pay for the pizza

A Guitarist's Joke:

A drummer decides he's tired of the abuse he takes from the rest of the band and decides to record a brilliant solo album where he'll play all the instruments, like Paul McCartney and Roy Wood.

He goes to the music store, and starts looking around.

"I'll have that red saxophone and that silver accordion...." he begins.

"And what else would you like beside the fire extinguisher and the radiator?" asks the clerk.

Two Lawyer Jokes:

Q: What happens when a lawyer takes Viagra?

A: He gets taller.

Q: Why do lawyers wear shirts with collars and ties?

A: To hide their circumcision scars.



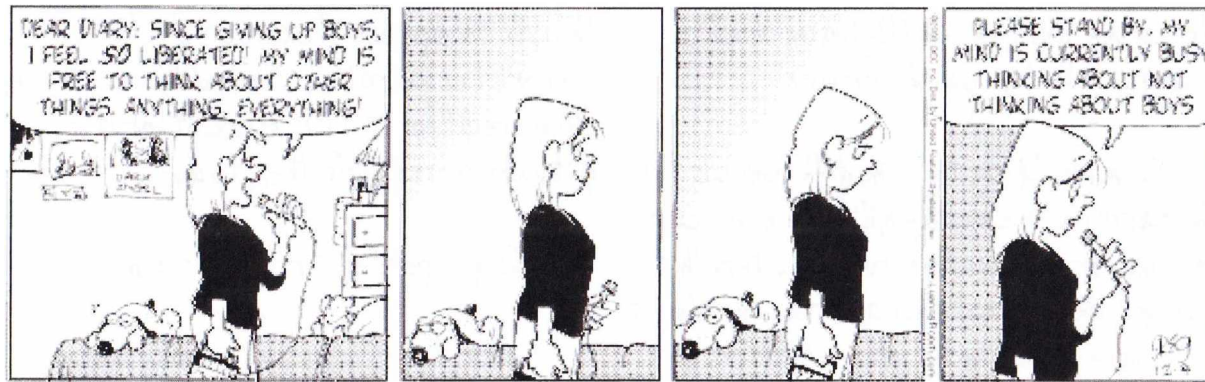
The Pluperfect Virus

By Bob Hirschfeld

A new computer virus is spreading throughout the Internet, and it is far more insidious than last week's Chernobyl menace. Named Strunkenwhite after the authors of a classic guide to good writing, it returns e-mail messages that have grammatical or spelling errors. It is deadly accurate in its detection abilities, unlike the dubious spell checkers that come with word processing programs.

The virus is causing something akin to panic throughout corporate America, which has become used to the typos, misspellings, missing words and mangled syntax so acceptable in cyberspace. The CEO of LoseItAll.com, an Internet startup, said the virus has rendered him helpless. "Each time I tried to send one particular e-mail this morning, I got back this error message: 'Your dependent clause preceding your independent clause must be set off by commas, but one must not precede the conjunction.' I threw my laptop across the room."

A top executive at a telecommunications and long-distance company, 10-10-10-10-10-123, said: "This morning, the same damned e-mail kept coming back to me with a pesky notation claiming I needed to use a pronoun's possessive case before a gerund. With the number of e-mails I crank out each day, who has time for proper grammar? Whoever created this virus should have their programming fingers broken." A broker at Begg, Barrow and Steel said he couldn't return to the



who used the word "snafu" said she had come to regret it. The virus can have an even more devastating impact if it infects an entire network. A cable news operation was forced to shut down its computer system for several hours when it discovered that Strunkenwhite had somehow infiltrated its TelePrompter software, delaying newscasts and leaving news anchors nearly tongue-tied as they wrestled with proper sentence structure.

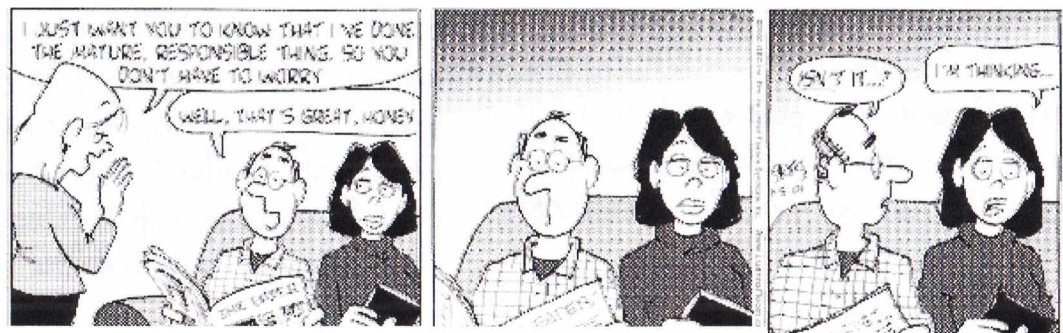
"bad, old" days when he had to send paper memos in proper English. He speculated that the hacker who created Strunken white was a "disgruntled English major who couldn't make it on a trading floor. When you're buying and selling on margin, I don't think it's anybody's business if I write that 'i meetinged through the morning, then cinched the deal on the cel phone while bareling down the xway.' "

If Strunkenwhite makes e-mailing impossible, it could mean the end to a communication revolution once hailed as a significant timesaver. A study of 1,254 office workers in Leonia, N.J., found that e-mail increased employees' productivity by 1.8 hours a day because they took less time to formulate their thoughts. (The same study also found that they lost 2.2 hours of productivity because they were e-mailing so many jokes to their spouses, parents and stockbrokers.) Strunkenwhite is particularly difficult to detect because it doesn't come as an e-mail attachment (which requires the recipient to open it before it becomes active). Instead, it is disguised within the text of an e-mail entitled "Congratulations on your pay raise." The message

asks the recipient to "click here to find out about how your raise effects your pension." The use of "effects" rather than the grammatically correct "affects" appears to be an inside joke from Strunkenwhite's mischievous creator.

The virus also has left government e-mail systems in disarray. Officials at the Office of Management and Budget can no longer transmit electronic versions of federal regulations because their highly technical language seems to run afoul of Strunkenwhite's dictum that "vigorous writing is concise." The White House speechwriting office reported that it had received the same message, along with a caution to avoid phrases such as "the truth is. . ." and "in fact. . ." Home computer users also are reporting snafus, although an e-mailer

There is concern among law enforcement officials that Strunkenwhite is a harbinger of the increasingly sophisticated methods hackers are using to exploit the vulnerability of business's reliance on computers. "This is one of the most complex and invasive examples of computer code we have ever encountered. We just can't imagine what kind of devious mind would want to tamper with e-mails to create this burden on communications," said an FBI agent who insisted on speaking via the telephone out of concern that trying to e-mail his comments could leave him tied up for hours. Meanwhile, bookstores and online booksellers reported a surge in orders for Strunk & White's "The Elements of Style."



"It Can't Happen Here"

It's the third of October, and this is the first I have written about what I feel about the events of 11 September (except for online conversation on the matter on rec.arts.sf.fandom).

So many many people — including some in government — appear shocked that such a thing could happen.

Why?

What difference is there between driving a truck loaded with explosives into the front of a Marine barracks in Lebanon knowing that you will die but that you will take hundreds of

the "enemy" with you, and flying an airplane loaded with fuel into a skyscraper?

Some would say that the difference is that the casualties are mostly military in one case, men and/or women who serve expecting that they may die and that the casualties are almost exclusively civilian in the other. Matters not, because there are no non-combatants in a terror campaign.

Some would say that the sheer difference in magnitude between Lebanon and 11 September makes them different — and I agree; that is, I hold that the sheer scale of the attack on the Trade Center raises appropriate response to it from treating it as terrorism to regarding it as an act of war, with all implications of that classification for whatever nation shelters and aids and abets the actual perpetrators. But that's from our end.

From the position of the perpetrators, the purpose of the act, whether it be a barracks in Lebanon, the Cole, a gay bar in Atlanta, an abortion clinic in Birmingham, a Federal Office Building in Oklahoma or the World Trade Center, is to create terror. To cause the populace to fear attack from which their government cannot defend them, to sap

the will to oppose the agenda of whatever terrorist organisation is behind the act or can claim credit for it. (Claim credit for it — as if it were a creditable thing to do.)

The purpose of terror is terror.

So far, the US has been virtually immune from terrorism; Oklahoma City — a domestic act — is about as bad as it's gotten. So many of us have watched other nations struggling against such acts, and been happy or smug or proud that "it can't happen here".

But of course it could happen here; we haven't had any overflow from the campaigns in Europe either because there's no point to striking in the US (certainly, the Basques, for instance, wouldn't appear to benefit from anything I can conceive they could do here) or because the "political" wings of the terror organisations were actually seeking monetary or materiel support here (as the IRA has for years).

But as the Middle East has gotten more and more hot, and as we've been more and more involved in it, it's been more and more likely that we would be hit inside our own borders sooner or later.

And we are going to be hit again.

But the way to deal with such a situation is to not let the bastards control your life.

Sure, take reasonable precautions — look at London, for instance, where there are, effectively, no public trash receptacles, there are notices in the Underground telling you what number to call for the Bomb Squad if you spot a suspicious packet, and people go on about their everyday lives as if nothing out of the ordinary were going on.

As to what we can or need to do about this particular attack, i think we do need to do what is necessary to capture Osama bin Laden and/or any other terrorist leaders whom we believe may be guilty of the act, and we need to give them scrupulously fair trials (unlike Nuremberg, where the kangaroos were carefully trained to hop in strict formation) and if they are found guilty, we should promptly carry out whatever the sentence of the court might be.

I cannot imagine that the sentence of a US court for anyone found guilty of 11 September would be anything but death. I am op-

posed to the death penalty strictly on the grounds that it is hard to unkill someone improperly convicted and that courts often err, but i doubt that there would be much room for doubt once the sort of evidence i suspect is being gathered even now is heard.

Life imprisonment, a la Hess, is another possibility, but probably not a good idea, as someone is always going to be ready to try something to rescue the "Great Leader".

That said, let me say something a bit more emotionally-coloured:

If the man cannot be brought to justice in this country, i for one would say that we already know that he is one of a number of possibilities for the leader of this attack, any or all of whose removal would certainly benefit the world in general.

As the mandarin in one of the Kai Lung stories remarks "Three having committed a Class One crime, three have paid a Class One penalty. Doubtless they were guilty of some crime, if not that exact one."

We know that bin Laden is

guilty of *some* terrorist operations, if not this specific one. We know the same about others whose whereabouts we have a pretty good idea of, up to and including the heads of state of a few nations.

Vermin control is a public necessity.

As Tom Clancy has said, "You don't have to understand them -- you just have to know how to find them."

A Related Subject:

For those who haven't contributed to the relief drive(s) for those affected by the events of 11 September, including firefighters' families and others, or would like to give more than you already have, i have placed a banner supplied by CoffeeCup Software on the first page of my website, at

<http://electronictiger.com>.

Clicking that banner will take you to a page where you can contribute to a number of different organisations and relief funds, selecting precisely which funds you wish to aid and designating exactly how much you wish to contribute.

Neither i, nor CoffeeCUP, nor any of the organisations running this website are making a single penny from it. Please help.



Yngvi is a Louse//
TKFW//Whoever "Allen K."
is, he Really Liked Steve Fabian's art.

Any real attack perpetrated from outside on the US proper was both "inconceivable" {"You keep using that word. I don't think it means what you think it means."} and "unbelievable" to the great majority of the populace, no matter what fiction may have predicted. The great majority of the populace can't imagine anything happening that hasn't happened already. The last war that actually involved fighting in the Continental US was over a hundred and sixty-six years ago, and we're too powerful for anyone to be able to do it again.

Hell, i'd bet that a fair percentage of the intelligence analysts who were warning against terrorism in this country didn't really believe in it, and i would guarantee that the majority of politicians -- in either political party, on either end of the spectrum or in the middle -- neither believed in nor understood the potentialities, because it's part of a politician's job description to firmly believe that things will happen the way he wants them to, not the way they actually do in the Real World. (Otherwise Republicans/"Conservatives" would give up on trying to stimulate the economy by capital gains tax cuts, Nader wouldn't have run for President, bin Laden wouldn't be expecting the en-

tire Islamic world to join his jihad and Democrats/"Liberals" would stop trying to legislate automotive gas mileage.)

We don't need a missile defense; it is Very Unlikely that any attack in the foreseeable future will come by missile. We need a "Go-Find-Terrorists-And-Deal-With-Them" defense.

Q: "I notice the NYPD ... aren't getting a whole lot of shit from the media either, these days. Why does it take so many lives lost?" A: Because, at the moment, the NYPD have something to occupy their attention, and don't appear to be whiling away the idle hour sodomising anyone with plumbers' plungers.

As to rudeness among New Yorkers -- in one of the 87th Precinct books, Meyer Meyer quotes a joke about a tourist in the (unnamed, fictitious, but clearly New York-based) city; guy's been in the city for three days and he's beginning to get a feel for how it goes there. He asks a local "Excuse me, sir -- can you tell me how to get to Diamondback or should I go fuck myself?"

Which series are you asking about? Asterix or the Saint? The Saint starts out at age 29 (ten years older than Charteris's own age at the time he wrote **Meet the Tiger**) and gradually ages to about forty, i'd say.

As to the second graders and the ballot, they were not having to figure them out in the voting machine, and they had been clearly informed in advance that these were tricky.

Nixon, as you say, unlike the Kennedys, Roosevelts, or Bushes may have had real financial worries; about the only other recent Presidents about whom i can say as much would be Truman and Clinton...

"Recent tests" of small experimental parts of the proposed missile defense system have showed that they ought to work when scaled up to useable sizes. Anyone who works much with engineer-



ing prototypes can tell you that this is an indication, not a proof.

Beyond this is the fact that the software for a missile defense system, by its very nature, cannot be tested until it's the Real Thing; consider that the code for such software will probably run to at least as much code as the national long-distance system, which has been heavily tested, and is being use-tested every day ... and still fails at least on a minor level some almost every day and catastrophically every so often.

Beside that, we have very little to fear from missile attacks in the foreseeable future, while the thought of five or six nukes smuggled in from, say, Mexico and distributed around the



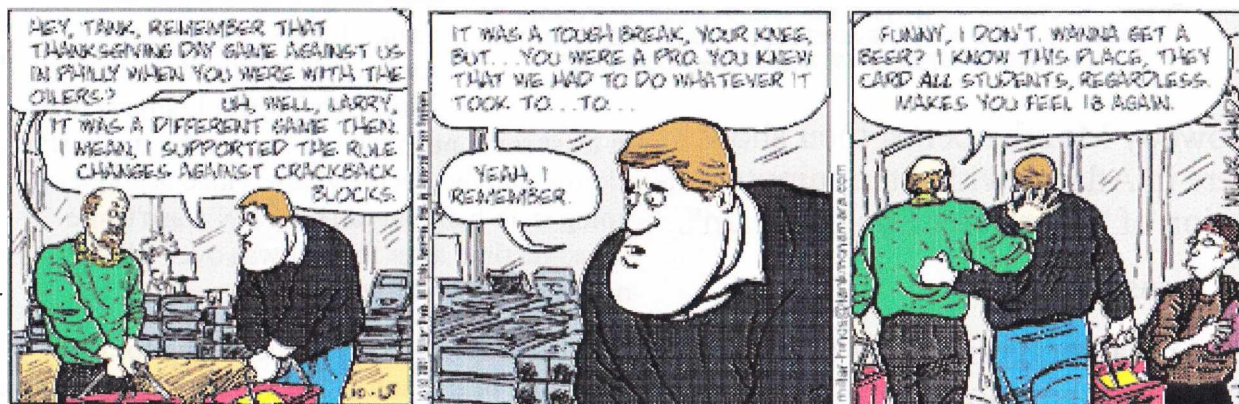
country on our excellent and totally open high-way system makes me cringe on a regular basis.

The "...award given for the most egregious example of waste every year" that you're thinking of would probably be Proxmire's "Golden Fleece", which tended to be given to projects which could be made to sound ridiculous in thirty-second sound bites. Often, if you actually looked into what was being studied, they turned out to be quite sound and worthwhile science. There's a reason Larry Niven made Proxmire the villain of that story...

Not covered so widely or loudly as the Elian thing, though i ran across a report somewhere, was a while later, in a situation similar to the Elian situation but with the kid inside and the father outside of Cuba, Castro's government sent the child to be with his father.

The two Green Linnet albums i crave new copies of were out of print last i looked; "Various Artist" collections put together by "Hokey Pokey" (the Richard Thompson fan magazine) -- one a Richard Thompson tribute called "The World is a Wonderful Place" and another called "Circle Dance"; i lost "Dance" in a move and "World" was stolen.

Well, "Old Dogs", on which "Still Gonna Die" appears is Waylon, Jerry Reed, Mel Tillis and Bobby Bare, so that might be country enough for you. OTOH, the first time i heard it was on an album called "Makin' a Mess" recorded by the late Bob Gibson -- another album of all Silverstein songs. Backing vocals were by various people including Dennis Lacourriere (the eyepatchless half of the "Dr Hook" front)



Important Zoological Information

Subject Reindeer
(E-Mail from a friend) -- According to the Alaska Department of Fish

and game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring.

Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen ... had to be a girl. We should've known. Only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night, and not get lost.

Rock 'N' Roll Will
Never Die

I never heard the Who perform live. On the other hand, last night



"WHILE GENERALLY ACCEPTING HIS UNEXPLAINED SEX-CHANGE GRACEFULLY, THE ATOM NEVERTHELESS TOOK EXCEPTION TO HAWKMAN'S 'SPLITTING THE ATOM' COMMENT"

good time.

As Joan Jett says:

*And even though you may think
it's funny,
I don't care if there ain't no
money;
I'm a little messed up but I
could be all right
If I could hear a loud gun
tan all night.
Oh yeah*

spiritus//GHLIII// I
have to agree; the image that came to me when the towers collapsed was indeed that of the dust cloud from Mt St Helens spreading, engulfing everything. Luckily, this wasn't a nuee ardent, just dust and some debris. But i believe that

Cowboy Mouth opened their show here in Atlanta with a ten-minute rendition of "Won't Get Fooled Again".

Jesus.

And an hour and forty-five minutes later, they closed with a thunderous version of "Jenny Says".

And in between, they demonstrated that one of the best remedies for depression and doubt and uncertainty is loud music and a hell of a

at least some people were harmed by the dust; i know that the doctor whose video account of going in to help out ran on CNN wasn't sure for some time after the fall was over whether or not he'd been blinded.

This strike was symbolic, trying for maximum loss of life and property with a relatively minor effort; if they'd been going for a true strike against the structure of this country, they'd have allotted the aircraft one per target (or added a co-ordinated strike using Oklahoma City-type fertiliser/fuel bombs) and hit things like dams -- to cause destruction and confusion -- and airports -- to disrupt com-

merce.

People online have recently been pointing out that virtually the entire population of Egypt is hostage to anyone who could manage a strike that would breach the Aswan High Dam; something like 80% of Egypt's populace lives downriver from that dam, and cutting loose the water in its impoundment in one flood would sweep the land clean all the way to the sea. (Israel paint-bombed the Aswan High in the '73 war, to make a little point about which side of the bread substitute had the ikky wax.) There are a couple of pretty large dams in this area, north of Atlanta -- i have been told, though i haven't verified it, that the Buford Dam that forms Lake Lanier is the largest earth dam in the country. Atlanta gets both water and at least some hydro power from Lake Lanier. The road that runs across Buford Dam (and one that runs very close to it) and the recreational areas near the dam have been closed since 9/11.

Meanwhile there's Hartsfield, the busiest airport in the world...

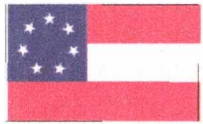
Well, stepping momentarily back to the world of everyday life and MCs --

Re:Ct:Ned: I get my film developed at WalMart; they maintain the one-hour lab well, and, as long as you don't need absolute perfection in colour rendition, their results are acceptable for everyday needs. I have two local WalMarts, the one near where we used to live and the one up the road in Dahlonega, trained to develop my Olympus Pen F's "half-frame" shots correctly. (Places that haven't seen half-frame negatives before -- which is virtually all these days -- invariably insist that they can't

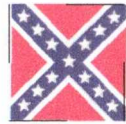
handle them. But they can, they just have to RTFM for the machine.)

Umm, i hope your comment about "the rare innocent man on Death Row" was sarcasm or irony; i forget the percentage of death-penalty cases that the Bar Association judged, on reviewing them, resulted in improper convictions. More than just "rare", however.

As a matter of fact, the Battle Flag (which is *not* the Stars and Bars, which was the official flag of the Confederacy from 1861 to 1863) was, as you may know, allegedly designed by



"Stars & Bars"; easily confused with "Stars & Stripes"



Battle Flag -- different design elements, different shape.

a Union officer who was wounded and captured and sent to a Confederate hospital. Apparently, it was part of his personal campaign to get to know the daughter of the hospital's Commandant. While he was telling her stories (suitably edited stories, one hopes) of his experiences in the War, he mentioned that the Stars and Bars and the Stars and Stripes were hard to tell apart on the battlefield, and he sketched something that would be completely different -- it was even a different shape, being square.

I have got to get hold of *Kavalier & Clay*. I wish i could find a copy of *The Boss Is Crazy, Too*, as well.

Ummm, the Larry Flynt decision spoke to satire, not parody, though parody is usually

satirical., but wouldn't involve "fair use", which is what the author(s) or "Done Gone" are claiming

Someone, somewhere within my circle of notice, referred to the (then) four Trek series as Classic, New, DS9 and The Three Hour Cruise.

Actually, what Sherman did, in the long run, was probably more merciful than the sort of "stand-up fight" you claim to want; i suspect that overall less people died and there was less true damage to the area. Remember -- Atlanta wasn't Cump Sherman's fault; they managed to do that to themselves. Sherman's March was, in many ways, the Nineteenth Century equivalent of Hiroshima; a sharp, shocking act of destruction that helped to prevent the war from dragging out longer and causing wider destruction than it already had. Remember, Sherman had served with many of the Southern officers, and he had been Commandant of a Southern military academy. He, like Grant, knew the sort of men he was fighting and knew that he could either meet them head-on and waste even more of the flower of young manhood of the nation -- on both sides -- knowing that they would not surrender while they still had troops who would answer the drum, or he could destroy the Confederacy's will to fight by proving that he could destroy its ability to fight.

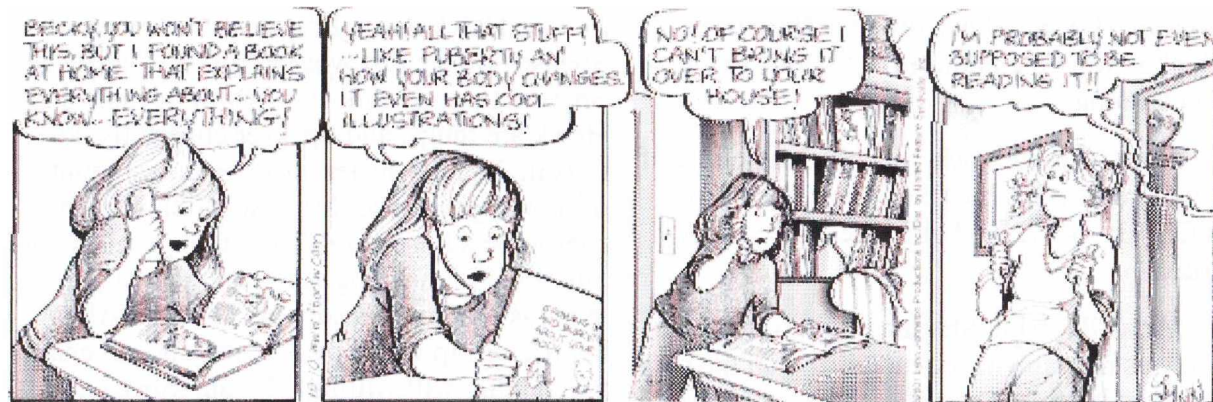
Speaking of bug-zappers -- did you ever stop to think that each time a bug rides the lightning in one it produces a widespreading invisible cloud of germ-ridden insect insides? Wonderful thing for the ol' picnic table area, neh?

Hawk's bullying is not presented as cool or admirable -- it's presented as part of Hawk.

We see Hawk through Spenser's eyes. And Spenser knows just what Hawk is -- it's what Spenser himself almost is. Both Spenser and Hawk are thugs, and Spenser cheerfully admits it. Neither suffers from undue amounts of morality; Spenser has just enough that he tries to be a Force For Good, though his methods should have long since put him in jail. What is presented positively about Hawk is his friendship with Spenser, the one covenant that neither will willingly break. Spenser bullies people just as much as Hawk, but it doesn't look the same, since we see the action from his point of view, as he rationalises his actions. But, in the end, a lot of Spenser's activities pretty much turn on "find someone weaker than I am and beat him up to find out what I want to know".

Spenser and Hawk are the clean and the scarred faces of Two-Face's two-headed coin; the difference between them is that Spenser does what he does mostly to right wrongs and Hawk does it for pay. But don't, for a minute, say that Hawk is worse than Spenser -- both of them are cold-blooded killers who will gun down an enemy in a heartbeat if that's the quickest way to solve a problem. Remember the time when Spenser arranged a meet with a couple of thugs he was fairly confident were going to try to kill him -- and had Hawk concealed onsite with a shotgun before either he or the Bad Guys showed up; set it up fully intending that Hawk would smoke them when they tried to kill him.

Spenser would die for Hawk and Hawk would die for Spenser, and they'd both die for Susan Silverman. And that's the important thing about them and their relationship.



Ct:Me: "Right down there -- below my own MC -- that's the closing comment I mentioned before." Huh? All i see more or less below your MC in "False Knight" is the second panel of the Dan O'Neil "Hug your elephant" strip.

Confessions//A.Hlavaty//Hell, even "the crudest entrapment" no longer appears to be a defence in "kiddy porn" cases -- the Gov't mails you kiddy porn they've seized in raids, pretending to be a dealer. If you order, they bust you. If you don't order, but they're fairly sure you haven't disposed of what they sent you, they raid your home and bust you for possession.

Yup. *Shockwave Rider* is the first usage of the term "worm" in a context similar to the way it's used in computer circles today that i have ever heard of; and *When Harley was One* is the first use of "virus". Most histories credit the terms to other, later, writers.

No, but Reagan Airport (the old Washington National) is certainly senile and

ought to be allowed to die with dignity. Unfortunately, it has doctors who keep applying heroic measures to keep it alive.

If you don't count people in movies about themselves playing themselves but simply appearing in the movie, there's Alice and Officer Obie and Eddie Egan and Sonny Grasso.

Devenant//S.Strickland//Since i mostly sit up computerising most of the night and sleep till noon or later, i was in bed when it all began on 9/11; Kate switched on CNN and immediately came and roused me out of bed. We watched the coverage all day

and the next, checking further news online and so on. While i was pretty angry (to say the least), and startled at the choice of target and the total collapse of the buildings -- after all, they were designed to withstand a 707 strike -- i wasn't particularly surprised (as many seem to have been) to see large-scale terrorism come to the US.

Indeed, "Comte Saint-Germaine" would have been a title, rather than a name. (Dunsany's name, in case you didn't know it, was Edward Drax Plunkett.)

VCRs often have better tuners than teevie sets, because a VCR needs a better signal to record than a teevie needs for you to watch. OTOH, recent production teevie sets have made large strides in quality and capabilities since those built as recently as twenty years ago; certainly, price points have come way down compared to sets built in the Eighties or Nineties.

Way back in '77 in Kansas City, a sign was reported as being up on the bulletin boards in all hotel Housekeeping areas that told the Housekeeping staff to start work later than usual because the majority of the guests for this convention would be sleeping till noon, or words to that effect.





Trivial Pursuits // J.Gelb/1

buzzed rapidly through Susan Cooper's "Dark is Rising" cycle, enjoying them greatly until about the last chapter of the last book, when she pulled something that turned the whole series sour for me. That experience was so unpleasant that i haven't even looked at anything of hers since.

If *The Wind Done Gone* uses the characters from *Gone With the Wind* without permission, then it is almost certainly a illegal derivative work, and the Mitchell Estate pretty much has an obligation to sue over it.

If i plan to write a trip report (as i did about my two Cropredy trips in '90 and '92) i make sure to carry a notepad with me everywhere i go and make notes as things happen.

Re: Cancelling NFL games after 9/11 -- DC Comics [who found themselves with a story featuring JFK as a character coming out the week of the assassination, and thus might be somewhat sensitised] agreed to accept full returns on a Superman title that

came out on 9/12 as part of the recent "Worlds at War" continuity. It featured a panel showing Metropolis after the fighting, which prominently showed twin towers resembling the WTC damaged and smoking.

Unfortunately, it sometimes seems as if clearing caches in either Netscape or IE doesn't actually clear them completely. Bill Brickle used to regularly spend time weekly reclaiming hard drive space by hunting down and killing the files IE and Netscape left scattered all over the drive.

My favourite Francis protagonist would have to be either Sid Halley -- at least in his first appearance -- or the non-affluent peer in *Flying Finish*.

Totally Missing the Point. Part 2:

ANOTHER CONSUMER REVIEW:
POSTED SEPTEMBER 26, 2001
ON AMAZON.COM

Howl's Moving Castle

Diana Wynne Jones

Not a master,
Reviewer: Brenda Matera
3 stars

I like to know what my 10 year old son is reading these days. His choices are the Harry

Potter books, Captain Underpants, etc. This book looks on the surface to be a good choice for him, but once I got into the story it is more like a twisted romance novel for pre-teens. The sentences are short and choppy with oddly placed words. Story-wise, it is not bad, but CS Lewis or JK Rowling it is not.

I love this -- "The sentences are short and choppy with oddly placed words." That the person who wrote that sentence could write that sentence about someone else's work pretty much tells us most of what we need to know.

Granted, "J.K.Rowling it is not". Thank goodness.

But then, C.S.Lewis J.K.Rowling is not, as Kate points out...



Avatar Press//R.B.Cleary//I've seen coyotes in Nashville and the Atlanta area. In exactly the same spot in Nashville, for that matter, different days in one week, i saw two deer, one coyote and one fox crossing the road.

Certainly, beer (of a sort) was brewed in ancient Egypt. I doubt, however, that they had hops, so it probably would have been Quite Different from what we today think of as "beer".

A classic story that indicates that (A) Advertising works, but (B) It doesn't always work the way it's supposed to, is the tale of Crindleman's Coffee. The agency representing the makers of Salada Tea came up with a teevee campaign in which each spot started out as an apparently sincere pitch for Crindleman's Coffee (which didn't exist). Shortly after the spot began, however, a guy plugging Salada Tea would come busting in and interrupt, driving the pitch guy for Crindleman's to greater and greater levels of frustration as the campaign progressed over about a year through a series of more and more over-the-top scenarios until the last one had the Crindleman's guy in a rubber room going "Well, at least that guy can't get at me here inside this asylum...", whereupon the Salada guy came busting through the wall like Superman.

Well, it did boost Salada Tea sales.

But people began asking store personnel where the Crindleman's Coffee was, too -- by name.

So, being a multi-brand company that did both tea and coffee, they put out Crindleman's Coffee in a can like the mockup they'd used in the spots.

And for years it sold Pretty Well without any other advertising.

Of course Buffy came back (though we don't get it on our satellite dish -- but they

have begun running the whole series five days a week in order from the beginning on F/X, a channel we *do* get. Hooray for VCRs with timers.). Someone quoted an interview with Joss Whedon (or somebody at the production company) who, upon being asked if Buffy would be resurrected said "-The show's named 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer' and we just signed for a sixth season. You figure it out."

Anyway, it's about the third time she's been slightly more or less dead.

Comparing Krispy Kremes of any vintage with anything remotely edible by a civilised species is repulsive. I can feel the grease beginning to coat my teeth when i so much as glance at a carton of the horrid things in a store.

The Ramones were the exemplars of a movement to strip rock'n'roll of excess ornamentation and any pretense of being anything other than Pure Entertainment. This made them Important Figures to many of us who regard rock'n'roll as Something Special that Anybody Can Do. (*Not that "Anybody Can Necessarily Do Well", mind -- just "That Anybody Can Do"*) They were almost in the position of High Priests of a Counter-Reformation that taught that anyone who wanted to could be the Pope of his own Church of the Sacred Music.

Da Bruddas Rool !!

"Making animation more realistic" is not necessarily a worthwhile goal, and (a related subject) producing special effects shots with

CGI instead of S/FX, mechanicals and stunt men, is not necessarily a good thing. As an instance: The original *Gone in 60 Seconds* is a cheesy, low-budget film with no real plot, lousy sound and horrible acting. But it's exciting and fun. The "remake" has a Real Plot (mistake one), at least some actors who can really act... and isn't much fun at all, really.

Why? Because the original has The Chase. Almost half the movie, some incredible number of cars traced, and that poor beat-up Mach One just keeps running. And the final stunt, the jump -- The Jump -- over the four-car wreck, is Simply Incredible.

The remake (made by people who think that runaway San Francisco cable cars explode in collisions, judging from some of their other work) has three or four unconnected car action gags that last maybe five minutes and do not constitute a chase -- and then stages the Big Jump in such a way that it *has* to have been done with CGI -- there is no other way for it to have been done.

Or take the whole demolition sequence in *Hooper* -- if you knew that those two huge brick chimneys falling, one crashing its tons of brick to earth mere feet in front of the car's nose, and the other even closer to its tail as it passed, were actually just CGI images, would the stunt still have the same impact?

Homeland? Rodina. Vaterland.

Well, the theme for cartoons this issue is mostly more or less risqué cartoons and drawings collected from various places on the 'Net featuring (mostly) DC super heroines.

(I'd really like to see the animated *Batman* episode that had Bat girl apparently have a grand ol' time riding the back seat of Catwoman's motorcycle. And doesn't Poison Ivy look a lot like Jessica Rabbit's long-lost kid sister in that shot with Harley Quinn?)



Alice Through Another Spell Checker

'Twas brillig and the slithy **stoves**
Did gyre and **gimbals** in the **wake**.
All **missy** were the **borogoves**
And the **moue** **rash** **outgrabe**.

"Beware the **Jabberwocky**, my son;
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the **Jujube** bird and shun
The **furious** *Bandersnatch*!"

He took his **furball** sword in hand,
Long time the **manxome** foe he sought
Then rested he by a **tumtum** tree
And stood a while in thought.

And as in **offish** thought he stood,
The **Jabberwocky**, with eyes of flame
Came **whittling** through the **bulgy** wood;
And burbled as it came!

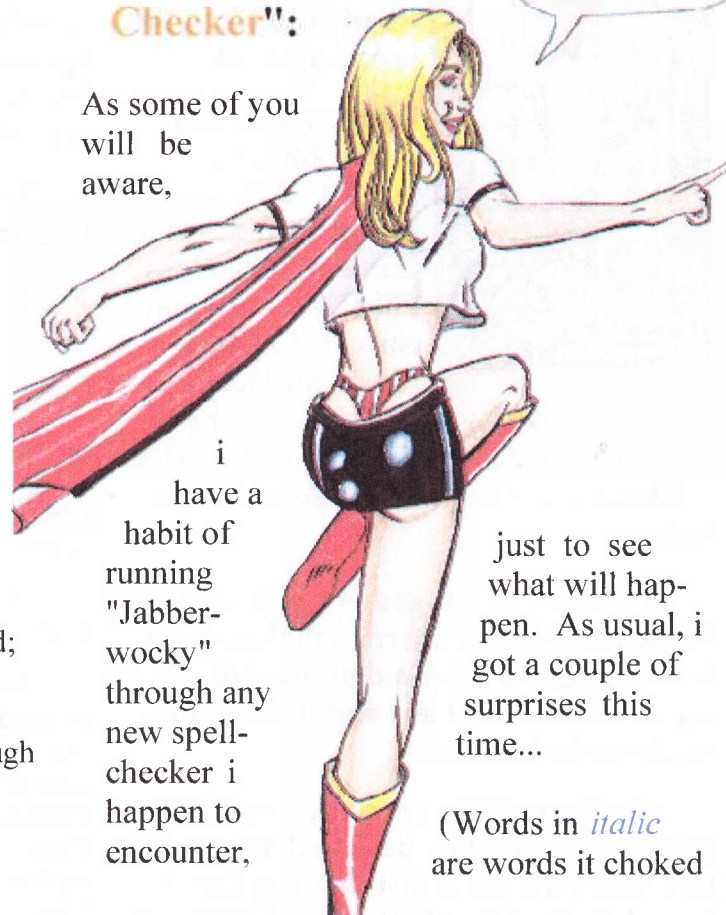
One two, one two and through and through
The **furball** blade went snicker snack!
He left it dead and with its head
He went **galumphing** back.

"O, **hash** thou slain the **Jabberwocky**?
Come to my arms, my **bearish** boy;
O **frabjous** day! **Callow** **Chalet**!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig and the slithy **stoves**
Did gyre and **gimbals** in the **wake**.
All **missy** were the **borogoves**
And the **moue** **rash** **outgrabe**.

Notes about "Alice Through Another Spell Checker":

As some of you
will be
aware,



i
have a
habit of
running
"Jabber-
wocky"
through any
new spell-
checker i
happen to
encounter,

just to see
what will hap-
pen. As usual, i
got a couple of
surprises this
time...

(Words in *italic*
are words it choked

on but had no useful replacements to sug-
gest.)

Note that, like many, this one will accept
"Jabberwocky" but not "Jabberwock".
Also, it was quite happy with "slithy", but
had no useful suggestions for "borogove"
or "tumtum".

Qblorio / / G.Brown / / I
started to respond to your
opening commentary but it quickly
became too long, too bitter and really
unrelated to your zine, so it's separated
out to another section after the MCs.

One thing in response to something
you said, though, about finding it
hard to believe that a plane had flown
into the building -- remember that similar
had happened in New York fifty-odd
years ago, when an Army bomber, re-
portedly lost in the fog, flew into the Em-
pire State Bulding. ((I say "reportedly"
because i have encountered suggestions
it might have been suicide by the sole
pilot of the bomber.))

As to Bush Minor not showing up
and making speeches earlier than he did:
On rec.arts.sf.fandom we talked about
this. It seems to me, although i wasn't
formally keeping track, that those who
were most vociferous in demanding to
know where Bush was hiding out and
why he wasn't making speeches in New
York City the day after were more likely
to not have military experience. Those of
us with military experience were tending
more to "What the hell was he doing
showing up in public so soon?"

Had it been fifteen or twenty years
back, while the Evil Empire was still in
business Bush Minor and Cheney would

have been up in Looking Glass or Knee-cap for a week before either of them were seen anywhere in public, and the Secret Service would have chained Bush to a post in a bunker in DC if he even suggested going on-site anywhere.

And even so, he should never have gone to New York. His mere presence (and the necessary security) interfered with rescue/clean-up efforts on the site.

Someone else who has Best Buy horror stories; i hate that place. I can't spend more than five or ten minutes in a Best buy without getting a headache...

That pic of the Microsoft staff in 1978 -- lower left corner -- "Dear, I think there's something wrong with the Beaver..."

The one about "...changing your position they never forget...", taken along with your comment about cartoons and comics being cut by editors who are afraid of the heat reminds me of the story about Boss Tweed trying to buy off or otherwise shut up Thomas Nast (a Thos. Nast cartoon [ironically one of Tweed as a convict] was used to identify Tweed when he fled to South America) -- Tweed didn't care what the paper said, but what Nast drew was another matter: "My supporters can't read but, damn it, they can look at pictures."

I tried to watch **Farscape** for a while, but, as you say, it was in the middle and there was too much backstory to figure out. And i hear rumours now that the character i originally wanted to get a look



at -- the blue woman, played by Virginia Hey, who played the Warrior Woman in **Road Warrior** -- has been killed off.

We may see **From Hell** tomorrow -- or possibly **Bandits**; we have to run down to Gainesville (Gainesville GA, of course) early to pick up a call phone for Helen, and

we'll try to catch a cheap show of one or the other. *[As it happens, it's weeks later and we still have seen neither, but we're a three-cell-phone family.]*

(A) Intelligence gathering by electronic means from international airspace is **not** spying; there is a definition of spying in international law and it doesn't include such observation.

(B) Their pilot, i am sorry to say, got pretty much what he deserved; same as a fool who cuts off a fast-moving Greyhound bus too closely in heavy traffic and gets squashed deserves what he gets for endangering not only his own but a score of other lives as well. I'm just glad he didn't take our crew with him on his way to The Place Where Stupid Pilots Go.

"There's bold pilots and there's old pilots. There's damn few old bold pilots."

Yeah, Meade was pretty much a Defining Element of the Southern Fannish Experience for as long as i've been experiencing it (which is twenty-nine years, last month). I just regret that i hadn't managed more to hang with him more than a few seconds at a time, and that not often, over the last several years.

Talkin' about My Generation -- it's beginning to thin out some.

"...ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States."

My fellow Americans, I come to you once more in a time of national emergency.

I come to reassure that I am prepared to take action against a global threat.

America's response to this threat will be swift and decisive. I have mobilised all of our military forces world wide. Under authorisation granted to me by the Federal Emergency Act, I am declaring a State of Emergency, against a cadre of criminals led by the terrorist known as (Osama bin Laden).

I have authorised deadly force to be used against these enemies of this nation. There is a 'shoot to kill' policy in effect until the surrender or capture of (bin Laden) and his cronies.

Rest assured that we will triumph.

President Luthor, live television address, "Last Laugh"#3, DC Comics. (Slightly edited)

Worth a look

[Http://www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org) (if you're not already aware of it) is an on-line international alternative/independent news co-operative with bureaus in a lot of cities around the world.

The overall slant, as might be expected, is one-world/Green/socialist/feminist/etc., but as was the case with the old-fashioned "underground" press, not to mention the establishment media, one can detect and allow for the slant most of the time

Well, it's moving down to time to wind this thing up. I'm afraid that i'm going to be missing doing a number of peoples' MCs, but then, i always seem to do so, no matter how big the zine gets. Poey.

New Port // N.Brooks //

It must have been the F&SF version of *Bring the Jubilee* that i read, also, now that i come to think. Can anyone tell us what the difference between that and the book edition would have been?

Actually, if you will consult Verne's *Mysterious Island*, you will see reference to an analog telegraph system that used magnetically controlled dials with letters on them rather than a single-bit code like Morse's to send messages; this may well be the sort of thing that Ernest Jones was referring to in

the lines you quote. Morse wasn't the first to invent a "telegraph" -- he was simply the first to invent an efficient system (i'd bet that without the equivalents of modern AC syncros that type of pointer systems were slow and tended to error) and to promote it successfully, just as a trend leading to a real need for it -- the expansion of railroads -- was beginning.

Verne wasn't talking batteries to make his *Nautilus* go -- he was talking magic to make electricity out of sea water, as i recall. Of course, the last Verne i read was in 1966, so...

Was the file Norton didn't like actually a text (.txt) file, or was it, say, a .doc file? If so, it might have carried a macro virus.

Manymany years ago, when i visited Mel. Clark and her husband in Hartford, where she was doing her residency, they literally lived less than a block from the Twain House. I thought (as i recall), when i'd gotten over my startlement at discovering what it was, that it was a rather nice house.

Distillation may not have been available in Biblical times (i'm pretty sure it wasn't), but anyone who lives where it freezes in winter can produce over-proof wines, beers, etc. by letting it partially freeze, pouring off the liquid/slush that

doesn't freeze solid and tossing out the ice...

One of the pictures that i have in the program that shuffles my Windows wallpaper is a strobe shot that freezes an armadillo in mid-air about two feet off the ground after something startled it.

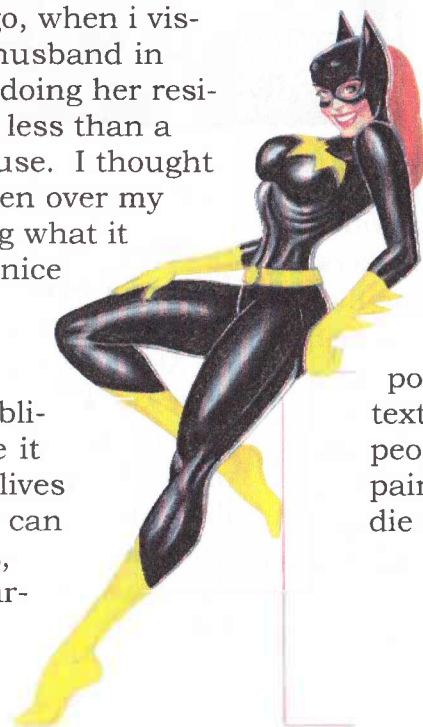
"False Knight" is more or less traditional, as it said in the gloss that i quoted.

The point was not that it was **likely** that an astronaut on the Moon would break a leg, specifically, but rather that if one **had** -- or suffered a stroke or heart attack -- or any other injury/emergency that made it impossible for him to climb the ladder on his own, he (and possibly the other Lunar

Module astronaut) would have died on the moon.

"...break a leg" is sort of a code-phrase for any number of disabling situations that might arise.

I forget if it was here or on-line or where, but relatively recently i was exposed to at least part of the text of the speech that Nixon's people had ready just in case a pair of Apollo astronauts did die on the moon.

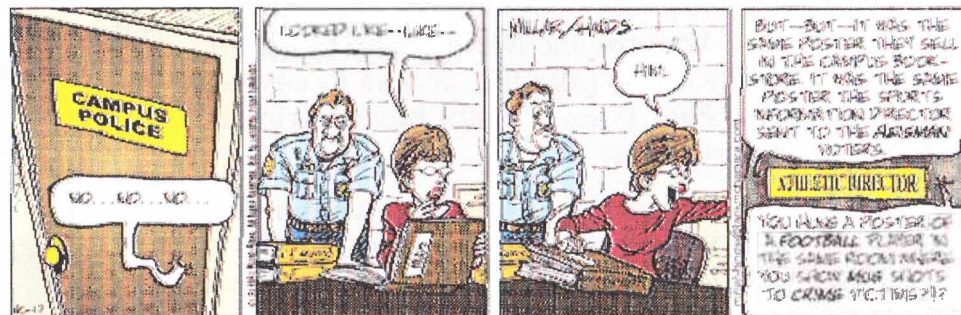




Variations on a Theme//
R.Lynch//Actually, if you will look a little more, i think you'll find that it was the bossman at Sony who is alleged to have chosen the 75-minute running time for audio CDs to accomodate his favourite Bee-thoven piece.

Let's just say that, speaking of the '57 Chevy Bel Air, that the majority of Car People disagree with Ned as to whether it was ugly. In fact, it is considered, in many circles, to be just about the prettiest American sedan of the 50's, right up there with the Loewey Studios-designed Studebakers (prettier than the Hawk, in my opinion, not as nice as the Avanti, which is simply one of the Great American Designs). It is also (though it would prolly share this with the '55 and '56 models) [though probably through no particular fault of GMs, given the state of chassis design in the USA in those days] very well-balanced and responds well to hot-rodding, both in road-handling and in its ability to actually

one of the few post-Thirties station wagons that can be and is rewardingly hot-rodded [a fact of which i was reminded when i saw a Very Sano Candy Apple Red Nomad with cheater slicks and blower at a



local parking-lot rod show recently].

There are CD units available for cars for under \$200 installed; i think one local shop i pass occasionally was doing a sale on Alpine CDs at \$99.95. Personally, i want one of the changers that rides in the trunk and feeds the signal to your FM.



put the power to the road.

As a matter of fact, the '56/'57 Nomad wagon -- based on the same chassis and body -- is

Well, actually, i want one of those cassette-on-a-string converters that go from the output jack of a portable CD player to the cassette deck of a car stereo, so that i can use my Diskman-type portable player that plays CDs and MP3 files off CDs -- with that, i can get up to 11 hours on one disk. (OTOH, some radio/cassette headunits have line-in jacks i could also use to feed the portable in by.)

Campbell had a '...famous rule about no aliens, which explains why Asimov didn't write about aliens until the 1980s'?

This does not seem to accord with my memories of reading his magazine, starting in 1955 (and including reading every issue back to 1941 and some before that).

May i advance, just for one instance, 'Robert Randall's *The Shrouded Planet* and *The Dawning Light* -- two *Astounding* serials featuring aliens in major roles. Or almost any Eric Frank Russell or Christopher Anvil story published in *Astounding/Analog* under Campbell's regime, virtually all of which turned on



aliens getting the short end of the stick when they first encountered humans.

Virtually any James Schmitz story; the entire 'Telzey' series hinged on Telzey discovering through contact with an alien race that she was a psi.

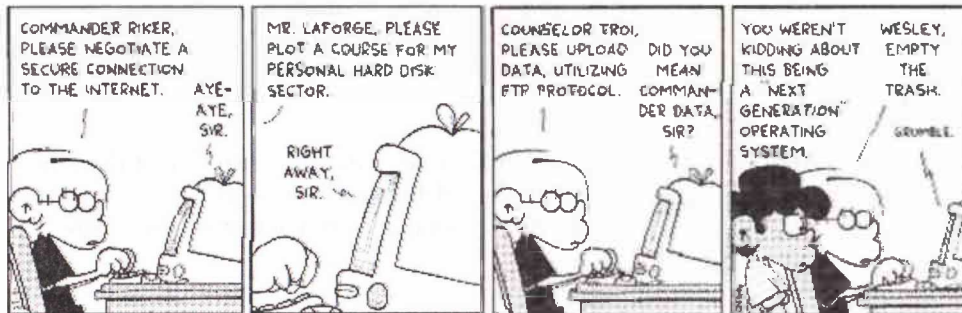
'Who Goes There', by 'Don Stuart'.

Or, I'd guess, at least one in every five or so *Astounding/Analog* stories from Campbell's era.

'WHAT MEMORIES THAT BRINGS BACK! ... THOSE WERE THE DAYS...', you said. Indeed.

Two DSCs and some other conventions and (arguably) a WorldCon and some feuds because Susan and I happened to be at Cliff & Susan's place when you guys called...

(MCs continue after next section, page 22)



herence to a brewing process that guarantees Czechvar's stable quality.

Why is Czechvar called Czech var:

Because of an agreement dating from 1939 the manufacturer of Czechvar cannot use its traditional (...censored...) export brand in the United States. The agreement was signed under pressure of a threat of litigation in the United States of America made by Anheuser-Busch and was also influenced by its timing, just before the occupation of the Czech Republic by German forces at the start of World War Two. For these reasons Czechvar's manufacturer gave up its right, on very disadvantageous terms, to use the brand (...censored...) in North American territory lying

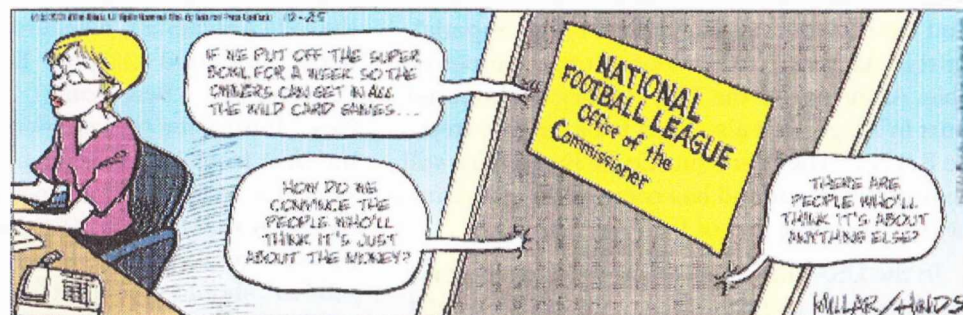
<continued from page 3>

is more, each brewing batch of the original premium lager ferments for 90 days. Last but not least, the beer's popularity is due to the very strict ad-

reason that the company decided to register B.B.N.P. as its export name. Under the 1939 agreement even the beer's town of origin, Ceske Budejovice, may only appear on bottle and carton labeling in "inconspicuous" form.

What the name Czechvar means:

The Czechvar brand name derives from a combination of two words, Czech and pivovar brewery, and thus means Czech brewery. The name was chosen to be comprehensible to both Czechs and Americans. The Czechvar logo and labeling is based on the same graphic design as the tradi-



tional brand of the B.B.N.P.

Why Czechvar is starting to be sold in the USA:

B.B.N.P.'s decision to start exporting to the United States was based on marketing studies revealing that imported European beers are starting to increase their market share and popularity in the USA. The company wanted to try out the survey results in practice and for that reason opted for trial sales in California as the first phase of its export operation. The demand for the Czech beer from Ceske Budejovice exceeded all expectations, both among Czechs and other Slav minority nationalities and among Americans as a whole.

Some of the history of Czechvar:

Good beer has been brewed in Bohemia since time immemorial. That is why Czech king Premysl Otakar II, when founding the city of Ceske Budejovice on the confluence of the Vltava and Malse rivers in 1265, granted its burghers the brewing privilege, i.e., the right to malt, brew, store and sell beer in their homes. Over the following centuries the quality of the local beer made it so famous that it gained devotees in the imperial and royal courts. In the years 1532 and 1547 the Czech king who was later to become Emperor Ferdinand I gave the local city council a special award for its delicious beer and then ordered it to send the brewer and his workers to the imperial court in Augsburg to brew beer for the emperor's table. At the end of the 19th century the imperial court in Klagenfurt also used to order beer from the B.B.N.P. The beer from Ceske Budejovice still enjoys royal favor and has come in for praise from the Swedish king and of the Prince of Wales.

In the USA the manufacturer of Czechvar is not allowed to use either the name of its product or the name of its company, and that is why it is called B.B.N.P. here.

Some of the history of B.B.N.P.:

Over the centuries small home breweries gradually disappeared and beer came to be brewed in larger facilities. Finally just one brewery, operated by local holders of brewing rights, remained in the city. Due to the enormous growth in beer production in the Czech lands in the last third of the 19th century, some mostly Czech holders of brewing rights decided to found their own brewery. On 15 April 1895 they founded Český akciový pivovar, whose current successor, B.B.N.P., carries on the local brewing tradition.

The problematic trademark dispute between B.B.N.P. and Anheuser-Busch over the (...cen-

sored...) trademark has been going on for almost 100 years. The first attempt to settle the companies' differences was an agreement from 1911, in which B.B.N.P.'s predecessor agreed to Anheuser-Busch's use of the (...censored...) trademark, with the exception of its combination with the word (...original...), so that customers were not misled into believing that Anheuser-Busch's beer products come from Ceske Budejovice. In this agreement B.B.N.P.'s predecessor reserved the right to label its products with the word (...censored...) throughout the world, including the USA. The dispute escalated after Český akciový pivovar, in line with the 1911 agreement, registered its trademark "Imported Original Bohemian (...censored...) Beer from (...censored...) City." It used the trademark on labels in the USA from 1934 to 1938 and, according to the information available, its exports were very successful at that time. In 1938 Anheuser-Busch put pressure on the company to accept terms forcing B.B.N.P. should give up its right, everywhere but in Europe, to label its product with all compounds and derivations from the word (...censored...). At the time the representatives of the B.B.N.P. described these suggestions as insulting and refused outright to discuss them. In 1939 the aforementioned agreement, which was very disadvantageous for B.B.N.P., was signed. It came about a week before fascist Germany annexed the border regions of what was then Czechoslovakia and all of Europe stood on the brink of World War Two.

New Subject:

Sometimes it becomes quite obvious that Some People have Entirely Too Much Time On Their Hands.



An example of this sort of Devil's Workshop *In Potentia* may be found at:
<http://groups.google.com/groups?hl=en&th=e9c222b6583a7ba6&seekm=3f62ee.0110241201>

Anyone who has ever suffered through an apa or online flamewar -- or suddenly realised with a start that they were part of one -- should appreciate the

CALLAHAN'S EXISTENTIAL & CONCEPTUAL FLAMEWAR.

(The URL is for the start of the thread on Deja-Google.

This whole thing began Wednesday night (10/24) so far it is the evening of Friday, 10/26, and there are already 211 (mostly) hilarious postings.

Back to MCs

Tyndallite//N.Metcalf//We may have a definitional problem here with the "first fanzine" question; most of the examples you evince prior to Schwartz's claim seem to have been amateur magazines that published articles about science fiction, whereas Schwartz's may have been the first that was primarily devoted to SF and fantasy. On the other hand, if the Siegel & Schuster are earlier, then that would seem to be that.

Well, Rotsler's art was not generally the strong part of Rotsler's art -- the strong part was the concepts, particularly his hu-

mourous pieces, which is what most people know him from.

There are important elements of Verne's *20,000 Leagues* which are not only not off-the-shelf at the time, but remain fantasy to this day.

Well, if well-done for what it is, media sf can be quite enjoyable, even brilliant.

The theory that one must have hope for the future to enjoy SF would seem to be at least challenged by the large amount of depressing (and successful) sf of the "New Wave" era.

I definitely disagree with the notion (which I missed in the original piece you're responding to) that potential SF writers should avoid "Scientific American". Maybe space-opera writers, who, so long as they can say "space warp" or "hyperdrive" or "inexorable all-annihilating vortex of negative energy" and get on with the story might get confused as they read about real science, but there are authors -- like Benford, who you mention (and Niven and Pournelle, for other examples) who get story ideas from news pieces in SA and/or various more-or-less (or not at all) "popular" journals.

Someone -- I forget who -- has phrased the "one fantastic postulate per story" as "You can use one piece of the Miracle Element bolonium (which can do or be anything needed) per story..."

As to switching between multiple heroes and narrative focii being hard to do well, Dave Duncan's "Man of his Word" four-book series, and its follow-on, the "Handful of Men" books, are, to my taste

quite successful in doing just that. "Man" has two main narrative threads following two main protagonists, which alternate through all four volumes. "Men" (which suffers by being a series in a world with a known backstory in comparison to "Man", a major part of whose charm is the revelation of the backstory as the hero and heroine learn it) splits its narrative at least four ways, with multiple protagonists to match.

And then there's *Lord of the Rings*...

But, even after Campbell finished turning Garrett and Silverberg's original story



inside out, *Shrouded Planet* is still, in my opinion, a story that could not have been published anywhere but in Campbell's *As-tounding*.

Ah ha. I hadn't realised that the "History of Civilisation" was a different binding than the blue cloth numbered/signed editions of the series that my dad had...

Okay, how about defining sf (as a tentative initial step) as stories that "...haven't taken place, could never take place as Things Are Now, but could plausibly take place given certain defined scientifically

-plausible-sounding changes."

What was it JWCjr said about wanting stories that could just as easily be published in the *Saturday Evening Post* "...500 years from now.?"

Twyggdrasil & Treehouse Gazette / /R.Dengrove/ /As I

understand it, your sister would have a hard time being a sabra; she'd have to be born again.

I assume you're aware that J. Allen Hynek can be seen as one of the observers at Devil's Tower in *Close Encounters*.

"Science extrapolated into alternate timelines" -- *A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah!*, perhaps? Possibly the 700/800 numbers on a two-block street were parallel to the same numbered blocks in a longer street as part of a unified grid scheme.

No -- according to Those Who Claim To Actually Know, dogs cannot translate a two-dimensional representation into an equivalent 3D mental image.

Then you get outfits like the Brian Setzer Big Band (Setzer was guitarist for the Stray Cats), which are continuing the Big Band tradition

You can make a sort of wine out of about anything with a lot of sugar in it.

Turok and his friend were American Indians trapped in a lost world.

The Guardsmen at Kent should not have fired at all. Under the "One bullet/one dead kid" theory, we would have some indication that they were at least aiming at specific targets rather than randomly firing into the brown.

Whether Haliburton fed the four-year-old Lama porridge or not, he had a photo of him in his book "The Flying Carpet".

The only thing we've had driver trouble with with W2000 was our old modem and our scanner. Which we're replacing as soon as we can.

This section started out as an ME to Gary Brown's zine. Reading his opening section and his comments on his feelings has led me to think through some of my own...

I was asleep on the morning of 9/11 until Kate called me in to see what was on CNN. I got there in time for the second strike. Tomorrow it will be five weeks since i sat there (here) splitting my attention between the television and the computer for most of two days.

I think there's something wrong with me -- no, i know there's something wrong with me -- have known it for forty or more years. I am almost completely affectless most of the time; i have no access to my own emotions for the greater part. When an emotion is strong enough to get through my firewall, it is often so strong that i am incapacitated by the experience.

As i sat there seeing the towers fall over and over -- seeing the almost cartoon-like airplane-shaped hole in the South Tower for the fraction of a second before the blast roared back -- hearing about the firemen and rescue workers who had unhesitatingly piled in, whose professionalism and heroism had bought them a terrible death -- seeing the video shot by the

Scaring Myself

doctor with the video camera who had dashed in to help out -- hearing about how horrible the last moments for all of the passengers on the four planes but

particularly for those on flight 93, who knew what was going to happen must have been...

As i sat there... I couldn't cry.

I couldn't really grieve, even though i knew thousands had died or were dying.

All i really felt were two things. One was almost frightening to realise i was thinking it -- i was thinking "I've known this or something like this was coming for years." I was thinking "Maybe now more people will understand just what the Real World is like." I was feeling, God help me, justified for my years of seeing everything in the blackest terms, in the most pessimistic light.

And the other was like unto it, frightening -- i had forgotten my own capacity for rage and hatred. Grief, shock, sorrow -- all were pushed to the back, to be dealt with later when i can work on it. All i was really feeling was a red and black killer's rage, the kind i sometimes find myself in and have to suppress and hold down and not let show at all, because it scares people.

It scares me.

If you had shown me Osama bin Laden at almost any time during those two days, i would have killed the man or died trying. If necessary, i would have torn out his throat with my teeth if i had no other means.

That was five weeks ago.

Since then, i have cried a little bit over some particularly poignant individual story of loss or heroism. I have thought again how much admiration i have for firemen and rescue workers, and how i could never handle the horrors they routinely see and have to work with; thought how horrible it must be for firemen, cops and paramedics all over the country to have seen their brothers die helplessly and, even worse, have no lives saved to make the sacrifice meaningful. I have felt sorrow for all of the families who lost loved ones on the planes or in the buildings or on the ground below...

I've lived, on the surface, a relatively normal life; laughed and joked a bit with Kate and Helen, went shopping for a new cell phone and the like.

But mostly yet i have still not permitted myself to feel any really strong emotion.

Except that rage. It's still there, turned cold and acid.

I want them. I want every single one of them who had a hand in planning or facilitating this.

I want them dead. I want them buried in unmarked and dishonoured graves.

I want to send them to the judgement of that God in whose name they profess to kill innocents and civilians by the thousands.

I want them burning in the deepest pit of whatever Hell they claim to believe in.

I want to hear their screams as they are burnt alive, but I'd settle for a bullet behind the ear for each of them.

Most of all, I want to see bin Laden himself suffer the punishments that the religion he professes to be fighting to preserve prescribes for apostate, perjured murderers and defilers of the Holy Word.

I'll say it again — God help me. God help me, because I want to kill him with my own hands and I want it to take him days to die.

I thought I was past that sort of thing.

I thought I was safe to be around by now.

Guess you can never really tame a wild beast.

I'll be all right eventually.

Or I'll be dead.

Except for Kate and Helen and my family, I see no reason to choose one of those two possibilities over the other.

But I do have those responsibilities...

On a Lighter Note:

Bob Dylan wanted tighter security for his current tour, but he didn't expect to be held up at the door before his own show because he didn't have a backstage pass.

Dylan, traveling in support of his new album "Love and Theft," was set to play Medford, the last Oregon stop on his tour Tuesday night when he had trouble getting through a checkpoint at the Jackson County Exposition Center.

It wasn't clear whether the three security guards, all in their 30s,

recognized Dylan. "If it was George Strait, they probably would have recognized him," said venue manager Chris Borovansky.

But even if they knew who Dylan was, the guards had strict orders from Dylan's security director that no one -- no one -- was to get backstage without an official credential.

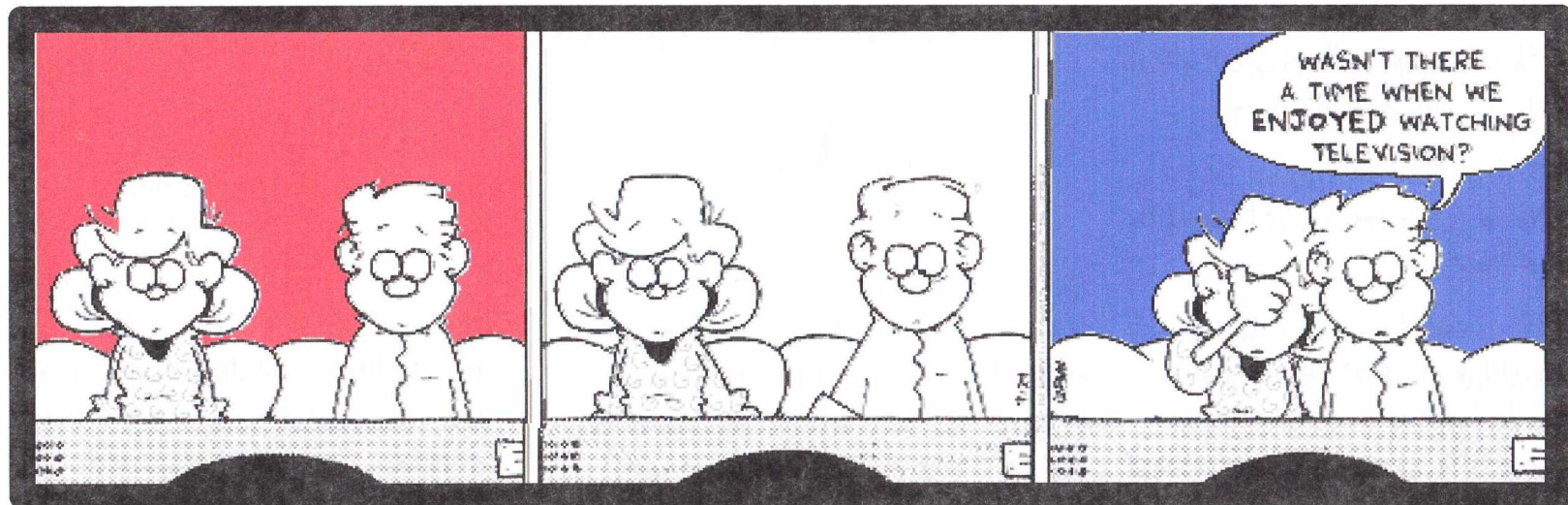
"He said no exceptions," Borovansky said. "Absolutely none."

So when a slight, wild-haired man tried to walk through the checkpoint, the guards stopped him. Dylan was surprised, and a brief scene ensued. One of the guards put her hands up and gently stopped Dylan. After his security director came over, incensed, both he and Dylan demanded that the guards be thrown out.

Borovansky complied, although he said, "We prefer the term 'relocated'." But he said he later told the guards they did "a great job."

Foxtrot
9/24/2001.

We must not forget.
We must not harm the innocent through hasty ac-



tion, but we dare not allow
the guilty to go unpun-
ished.

And, above all:
We must not allow our-
selves to be cowed.