

ALEXIAD

(ΑΛΞΙΑΣ)

\$2.00

I have spent the last few days trying to define the effects the mountain country had on me. Always before, I had been secure in my Kentucky born and bred identity and never really questioned it. The places we went were fun and I enjoyed seeing them but they never really touched me. The mountains touched me in ways I did not expect, changed me. I am still thinking through the change. For the first time, I have brought the memories of a place home in my soul. I would not have expected this of a place so different from the land I was born and raised to belong to.

— Lisa

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The 54th Running of the Yonkers Trot (1st leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) was **June 28, 2008** at Yonkers Raceway in Yonkers, New York. Napoleon was the winner.

The 83rd Running of the Hambletonian (2nd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) was **August 1, 2008** at Meadowlands Racetrack in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Deweycheatumnhowe became the first undefeated horse to win the Hambletonian but his absence in the Yonkers Trot means no Triple Crown for the trotters this year.

The 116th Running of the Kentucky Futurity (3rd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) is **October 4, 2008** at the Red Mile in Lexington, Kentucky.

The 53rd Running of the Cane Pace (1st leg of the Pacing Triple Crown) is **September 1, 2008** at Freehold Raceway in Freehold, NJ.

The 63rd Running of the Little Brown Jug (2nd leg of the Pacing Triple Crown) is **September 18, 2008** at the Delaware County Fair in Delaware, OH.

The 52nd Running of the Messenger Stakes (3rd leg of the Pacing Triple Crown) is **October 25, 2008** at Yonkers Raceway.

Printed on September 4, 2008
Deadline is **October 1, 2008**

Reviewer's Notes

I am about to pass a milestone in my life. On September 8 of this year I will have lived longer than my father did. My father was born on April 7, 1918 (and the doctor then enlisted in the Army, which meant that my father did not have a birth certificate until he turned thirty) and died after a long and agonizing bout with lymphosarcoma on December 21, 1971, three days before my seventeenth birthday.

The more I look into my family history, the more strange things I find. For example, going through a box of his old papers, I found a number of mementos from a Caribbean cruise; a passenger list (with his name on it) and menus. Nothing too extraordinary there, except he took this cruise in the summer of 1934 — when he was sixteen. He never mentioned this to me and now there's no one to tell us about it.

Did he like having a son who sat around reading instead of going out and playing ball or whatever? I do remember that he was always reading, so I suppose my habits weren't that far out of line.

He was going to retire to Hopkinsville; buy out his siblings and build a new house on the old farm. He would have been ninety last April; it wasn't unknown for people in our family to live that long. He did the genealogy work that got me started. He put up with my odd and bad habits.

I miss him.

Thomas Edward Major, Sr.
"Tommy"

April 7, 1918 — December 21, 1971

— Joe

RANDOM JOTTINGS

by Joe



The Inverted World by Christopher Priest has been reissued by New York Review Books. Priest was somewhat put out that the book had been clumsily edited in its first hardback edition. The book is notable for being based on speculations in mathematics as well as physics; Priest sticks to the traditional SF plot of the protagonist uncovering the reality of his world, but he puts in a twist at the end. (1973, 2008; ISBN 978-4-59017-268-8; \$15.95)

The melancholy tale of bowling alone and conspicuous consumption in the Himalayan heights continues. Nick Heil's *Dark Summit: The True Story of Everest's Most Controversial Season* (Henry Holt & Co.; 2008; ISBN 978-0-8050-3810-1; \$26.00) is not about 1996 (for that see Jon Krakauer's *Into Thin Air* (1999)), but about the 2006 climbing season — where, or so it seems, nothing had been learned in the ten years since that notorious disaster. The book is a bit diffuse, with much about the early days of Everest climbing, and could use some tightening up.

Days of Infamy by William R. Forstchen[, Albert R. Hauser,] and Newt Gingrich (Thomas Dunne Books; 2008; ISBN 978-0-312-36351-2; \$27.95), the sequel to *Pearl Harbor* (2007; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 6 #3) is out. The blazing naval action continues, with a desperate carrier war between the Kido Butai and the tricking-in American units on the eighth and ninth. The authors convincingly create the desperate hours of dire conflict and valor of both sides. However, the usual typos appear (Wade McClusky becomes "McCloskey") and the Rengo Kantai seems to have a lot more pilots and aviation fuel bunkering than they did in our time line.

I do have to wonder about a book advertised on a website called "lb-kids.com" that has the word "pee". Not the kids, they use words a lot more vulgar, but I'm not so sure about the parents . . . anyhow, this book, *Explorers Wanted! At the North Pole* (Little, Brown, and Company; 2005; ISBN 0-316-15546-2; \$5.99) by Simon Chapman, is a young person's guide to the north with elements of "choose your own adventure". It seems to be one of a series. It's based very firmly in history, being an

investigation of the loss of the *Italia*, Umberto Nobile's semi-rigid airship, with digressions on the culture of the Inuit (including the friendly helper with snowmobile who shoots seals), the Cook-Pearry controversy, frostbite (including what Matt Henson saw, fortunately for him not on his own feet), and of course the various other expeditions, though the author fastidiously refrains from giving Ralph Plaisted's name. Oh that word? Well, it seems that during Bering's expeditions, one of the explorers went outside to relieve himself and got nipped in a very inconvenient place by an Arctic fox [Page 32].

Carpe Diem: How to Become a Latin Lover by Harry Mount (Hyperion; 2007; ISBN 978-1-4013-2234-2; \$22.95) is an amusing little revelation of how the language in which Vorenus courted Niobe (Caesar and Xena battled in Greek, understand) still influences our society today. Mount (who appositely dedicates the book to his brother and sister, *Mons Maximus et Mons Maxima*, and then corrects himself) gives a smattering of grammar and a soupcon of culture. Once you have the fundatio, something lacking in today's schools, you can go on to understand what Caecilius Metellus said to Julia, why Didius Falco wanted a ring, *et cetera* . . .

The Denoriel series by Gellis and Lackey went too far in several ways. And I've seen yet another series on that theme. But so far, the one I've liked of Fairies behind the scenes in the Elizabethan Era is *Midnight Never Come* by Marie Brennan (Orbit; 2008; ISBN 978-0-316-02029-9; \$14.99). Michael Deven has the honour of becoming a Gentleman Pensioner at the Queen's court. Unlike the other Gentlemen Pensioners (who don't get them, they need them), the lady he encounters is somewhat different. As he finds when he gets drawn into the story of the curious and dangerous bargain Queen Elizabeth made with the Queen of Faerie, and with the strange Lady in Waiting — in more than one sense of both.

I was very pleased to read of Brennan's research (in the mundane world, it says, she is going for a Ph.D.), and presumably this is not to be the first of a series, though she may write other historical fantasies. If she can keep her whimsy under control, this may be a promise.

There are always movie announcements. However, a Sherlock Holmes movie has been announced that will star **Will Ferrell** as Watson and . . . **Sacha Baron Cohen** as Holmes. "Jagshemash. I make sexytime with Irene Adler. Niiiiiice. I got bigger khram than Professor Moriarty. I will drink the blood of every Scowrer in the U. S. & A.!" It could be worse, he could do him as Ali G. Or Boris. Good-Bye! Chenquie!

On the other hand . . . *Stranger In a Strange Land* has been in pre-production for forty years, for example. But I thought I just might let you know that **Alex Proyas**, director of *I, Robot* with Will Smith (didn't they base that on the

stories by Eando Binder?) is apparently planning to do "**The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag**" (*Unknown Worlds*, October 1942, as by "John Riverside", NHOL G.036), starting work in 2010, after he finishes *The Silver Surfer*. With apparently a title change. The Bird is Cruel!

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America are pleased to announce that their latest Grandmaster is **Harry Harrison**. Presumably the Harrison of *Deathworld*, *The Stainless Steel Rat*, *Make Room!*, *Make Room!*, and *The Technicolor® Time Machine*, not the one of the Stars and Stripes series.

OBITS

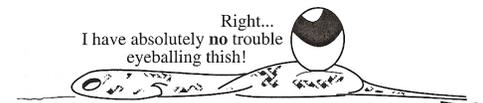
We regret to report the death of First Fan and fan historian **Jack Speer**, at home in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on **June 28, 2008**. Born **August 9, 1920**, John Bristol "Jack" Speer was the author of the first history of fandom, the appositely-titled *Up to Now* (1939). He also produced the first edition of *Fancylopedia* (1944) and was the last surviving founding member of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. He invented the quasiquote (") and the interlineation, and was known as the deviser of FooFoo, the Ghod of mimeography and enemy of Ghu. In the mundane world, he was a retired lawyer, former judge, and a former member of the Washington State House of Representatives.

On the other hand, it may have been triangular.

We regret to report the death of **Thomas M. Disch** on **July 4, 2008**. Thomas Michael Disch was born **February 2, 1940**. His work was marked by a cynicism about the Bright Beautiful Gernsbackian Future, whether it was *The Genocides* (1965), with the extermination of humanity by aliens, or *334* (1972), the story of the Great Society in triumph. In his later years he was best known for *The Dreams Our Stuff Is Made Of* (1998), an analysis of the field that won the Hugo for Best Related Work.

MONARCHIST NEWS

Lady Rose Victoria Birgitte Louise Windsor, daughter of Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester and Birgitte (née van Deurs), Duchess of Gloucester, married Mr **George Gilman** on **July 19, 2008** at the Queen's Chapel in London, near St. James's Palace. Observers noted that among the guests was **Kate Middleton**, current significant other of **Prince William of Wales**.



WE KNOW THEY KNOW WE KNOW THEY KNOW WE KNOW THEY KNOW . . . AAK!

Commentary by Joseph T Major

Sir Peter Ustinov (1921-2004), sometimes also known as Peter Alexander Freiherr von Ustinow, had a long and varied career (and an ancestry that rivaled Boris Johnson's for diversity). Among the products of his life was one where he did an all-round effort, being author, producer, and star: *Romanoff and Juliet* (1961), the tale of two star-crossed lovers in a middle-European country that has become a battleground in the Cold War.

The General (Peter Ustinov), ruler of the country, at one point tries bargaining with the two contenders. He informs the Soviet Ambassador of an American intelligence operation. "We know," he is told. Keeping his neutrality, he proceeds to inform the American Ambassador, only to be told, "We know they know." Back to the Soviet Ambassador, and, "We know they know we know."

This game of human ping-pong (that was a version of Pong, but done in meatspace, cyberkiddies) ends when the American ambassador counts "knows" and in a terrible realization shouts, "They know *that!*?"

How *did* he know *that!*? Peter had *connexions* in the secret world. His father, Jona Freiherr von Ustinow (1892-1962), better known as Klop Ustinov, had been an officer for MI-5 (a war before that he had been an officer in the *Kaiserliche Luftstreitkräfte*, the German Imperial Air Force). Perhaps some of Klop's old friends told him about a little do in the old country.

In 1953, the allies decided to do a little more electronic snooping. In Vienna, it seemed, the Firm had opened a shop that sold tweeds. This Firm, however, was the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS; MI-6), and while the shop sold Harris tweed goods, behind the counter they tapped Soviet communications.

As every Viennese will tell you, their city is the center of culture, and so the allies decided to rerun this little effort in the sticks. Berlin, that is.

Naturally, it had to be a little more dramatic. The CIA was involved. What they did was to dig a tunnel from a reasonably secure spot in the American Zone of occupied Berlin to the cable lines in the Soviet Zone. The tunnel was about four hundred fifty meters (1476 feet) long and six feet high.

The CIA station chief involved was the colorful William King "Bill" Harvey (1915-1976), a gargantuan ex-FBI agent who was always packing heat. This was to cause some problems later on, during Harvey's management of the Kennedys' vendetta against Fidel Castro. He had to be reminded to hand over his pistol before being shown into the Oval Office. JFK had wanted to meet the American James Bond and was somewhat surprised to find that he looked more like Nero Wolfe. (In between these two events, Harvey had had a falling-out with CIA counterintelligence chief James

Angleton over the question of whether or not their British liason was a double agent. Angleton had been so sure that Kim Philby wasn't, and didn't want to have the reminder of his misplaced trust to hand, perhaps.)

The construction involved some unusual additional effort. For example, since the end of the tunnel was under observation, the disposition of spoil couldn't be done in any ordinary fashion. Having truckloads of dirt appear out of seemingly nowhere from within a building just might seem out of the ordinary. A large building with a large empty basement went up to hold the dirt.

(Now why didn't they hire some of the people who dug the "Great Escape" tunnels? They had experience in removing spoil under hostile observation. It all sounds a bit Red-Headed League-ish.)

They began the excavation in August of 1954. The tunnel dig entailed some less than pleasant moments, as when they ran through the drainage field of a sewage tank. But eventually, the tunnel reached the Soviet land lines in May of 1955, they applied a tap very carefully, and all was well.

Maybe not. Winter was approaching, and the electronic monitoring equipment was very hot, with all the vacuum tubes/valves and all that. (Vacuum tubes? ["Valves" in British.] What were those? Well, you see, they were these big glass things with wires that were like single circuits on a chip. They got hot in use. You know how hot your chip gets.)

All that heat going through the tunnel just might melt a patch on the road, which even vodka-fuddled ignorant Soviet conscripts couldn't ignore. So at great effort an air-conditioning system, using chilled water, was installed and brought the temperature down to reasonable levels.

And so the tunnel went on . . . until April of 1956. A telephone line repair crew broke through the tunnel. They sent troops who went down the tunnel to find . . . a sign saying "You are entering the American sector." And that was that.

So it was a success. Or was it?

One of the officers involved in the planning was the SIS officer George Blake. Born George Behar in the Netherlands, Blake had been working for the Firm in South Korea when the North invaded. He was captured along with most of the embassy staff. They seem to have turned him while he was in their custody.

Blake was later to make a dramatic escape from a British prison, with the help of an old lag who knew the score, and flee to the Soviet Union with the help of some peace activists. He had been sentenced to forty-two years. By now he would have been out of the nick; he is still in Russia.

So they knew about it all along. But the Soviet Army used the lines anyhow; perhaps to keep from throwing suspicion on Blake. Or, apparently more likely, they didn't even know that they were being listened in on. The KGB didn't want to have their agent revealed; and their own telephone calls weren't being tapped.

Was all this effort worth the bother and

labor? From what they knew at the time, probably so, even if once all the information was in, it seemed less so.

For a fictional version of all this, read *The Innocent* (1983) by Ian Russell McEwan, CBE. It's a bit slow going, but does stick to the facts as known then (i.e., the "echo effect" of the cipher machines, which seems now to have been discredited). Or go see the movie (1993) with Sir Anthony Hopkins and Isabella Rossellini, for which McEwan wrote the screenplay. (Though reviewers were less than pleased with the film.)

For more detail, read *Battleground Berlin: CIA vs. KGB In the Cold War* by David E. Murphy, Sergei A. Kondrashev, and George Bailey (1997), a narrative from that brief window of openness between Gorbachev and Putin, where the story could be, and was, recounted and recalled by both sides.

Sir Peter Ustinov
<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001811/>
Romanoff and Juliet
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0055383/>
Ian McEwan
<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0568605/>
The Innocent
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0106185/>

(Thanks to indefatigable researcher Martin Morse Wooster — I'm no Richard Minitz, but — who sent me a copy of the CIA report "Turning a Cold War Scheme into Reality: Engineering the Berlin Tunnel" which blithely erases George Blake from history.)

THE USE OF A RUCKSACK

Commentary by Joseph T Major

The George Cross is the second highest award for valor in the gift of the British government. The award was created in 1940 at, it is well known, the personal initiative of King George VI. It is awarded for "acts of the greatest heroism or of the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme danger" not in contact with an enemy.

For example, in 1971, the Albert Medal for saving of life, which had been instituted in 1866, was officially discontinued, and all surviving recipients were invited to exchange their medals for the George Cross. (That is, if Tom Crean had somehow managed to live so long, he could have been Thomas Crean, GC.) Other such awards for life-saving were folded in, including the Edward Medal for saving life in industrial or in mining disasters. One such exchanger, Henry Flintoff, GC, had been given the Edward Medal for stopping a runaway bull when he was thirteen.

Two of the awards have been "communal"; one to the Island of Malta in 1942, for enduring the siege during the Second World War, and one to the Royal Ulster Constabulary (now the Police Service of Northern Ireland) in 1999 for keeping the peace during the Troubles.

Some of the incidents have been dramatic. Inspector James Beaton was awarded the George Cross for preventing the 1974 attempt to

kidnap Princess Anne and her then husband, Mark Phillips. The award has gone to the ordinary — Subraminian of the Queen Victoria's Own Madras Sappers and Miners, who threw himself on a mine that was about to detonate — and to the exalted — the Right Hon. Charles Henry George Howard, Earl of Suffolk and Earl of Berkshire, for bomb disposal (it's the thirty-fifth that'll get you).

There have been awards for rescues from fires and from glacial crevasses. Spies (such as Violette Szabo and "the White Rabbit", F. F. Yeo-Thomas) have been considered worthy.

And most recently, a Royal Marine in Afghanistan. Matthew Croucher, Lance-Corporal Royal Marines Reserve, was on patrol in Afghanistan in Helmand Province on February 22, 2008. He tripped a grenade booby-trap, and fell on the grenade, shielding the other three men of the patrol from the blast.

The Ministry of Defence announced the award on July 23. When Croucher will receive the medal, from the Queen as is the custom, hasn't yet been announced.

Oh? Croucher lived. All he got from the blast was a nosebleed; one of the other Marines was more seriously injured! He fell on his rucksack, which with all the gear that today's soldier seems to accumulate was sufficient to absorb most of the force of the blast.

He refused evacuation and went on to complete the mission. Considering that he already saved one other comrade's life, back in November during a firefight when the company medic was pinned down, we can't ask the question, "Where do they get such men?" Perhaps we should ask, "Can we borrow him for a while?"

THE ONE AND THE MANY

Commentary by Joseph T Major on

HUBERT'S ARTHUR:

Being Certain Curious Documents Found Among the Literary Remains of Mr. N.C., Here Produced by Prospero and Caliban by Frederick William Rolfe, "Baron Corvo" and C. H. C. "Harry" Pirie-Gordon (1909-1911, 1935)

CANDID AUCTORIAL REVELATION

This book, like all other books, has far greater interest for him who has written it than for any of you who shall read it.

— *Hubert's Arthur*, Page 19

I don't believe Randall Garrett ever saw or even heard of this book. It's one of the first alternate history novels ever. It was written even before the first significant English-language alternate history work, Sir J. C. Squires's *If It Had Happened Otherwise: Lapses Into Imaginary History* (1931), though published later. Rolfe had an immense talent for alienating those who wished to help him, which was why the manuscript, though finished by 1911 (Rolfe died in 1913), had a long and wandering journey to publication, described in detail in A. J. A. Symons's *The Quest for Corvo*

(1934; the book has an introduction by Symons's brother, Sherlockian Julian Symons).

I do wonder if the "N.C." is meant to be Nicholas Crabbe, one of Rolfe's literary alter egos. Crabbe appears in two of Rolfe's books, *Nicholas Crabbe: The One and the Many* (1903-1904, 1958) and *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole* (1909, 1934). He seems to be the "dark side" of Rolfe, as opposed to the "light side" represented by George Arthur Rose of *Hadrian the Seventh* (1904). (What then to make of *The Bull Against the Enemy of the Anglican Race* (1908, 1929), issued by Hadrian VII based on material provided by Nicholas Crabbe?) Hadrian dabbles in astrology, and Rolfe was born on July 22, the last day of Cancer in the zodiac.

But George Arthur Rose said, "My shield is white," and here whenever a noble character appears he (or she) is identified by heraldic blazon. This is the contribution of Pirie-Gordon. (You do remember the scene in *Too Many Magicians* where Lord John Quetzal describes some unusual blazons, all devices on a field of argent? You bet, and better not bust.)

And so the narrator, Hubert de Burgh, *lozengy, vair and gules*, in our time line a loyal servitor of King John, but in this one, evidently more loyal to Duke, or King Arthur. For when King Richard died, the Earl John Softsword commanded Hubert to imprison, and later to blind, his nephew Arthur, then Duke of Brittany. And Hubert (in this time-line) refused.

Arthur then has a number of adventures in France and England. Some are interesting, as when he was in hiding in the Welsh Marches, and a party of Welchmen going forth on a raid happened to pass by his hiding place just as he was coming out to take the morning sun. When he informed them that he was King Arthur, many events of much interest ensued.

On the other hand, there was the time that Arthur fell into the hands of the Giwen, a vile and craven people who were suffered to infest Christendom. (Pronunciation Note: Rolfe was very Italianate, and so "Gi" is pronounced like English "J".) Out of their malice and hatred they were about to sacrifice Arthur in fulfillment of their annual requirement for the blood of a Christian when Hubert rescued him. (Yes, it may surprise the reader to realize that people thought differently then and did not hold enlightened multicultural values.)

But then, the Duke learns of a great treasure left by his uncle, King Richard, and after making a pilgrimage to Rome to get the approval of the Pope, goes on to Sicily to get the money, and from there to the Kingdom of Jerusalem, wherein much knightly derring-do ensues. The bit where Arthur, his cousin Sir Fulk the Flame, and Nicholas the Fish the night-Innsmouthian boatman swim into the castle of Acre through the sewer has some very realistic reminders of how things worked, the sort of consideration absent in later works.

The history of the Kingdom of Jerusalem (which at the time when this is set did not control Jerusalem) had a dreary sameness about it: "the king died young leaving a daughter who was married by force to the new king, they had

a daughter and then the king died young . . ." Arthur breaks the chain, marrying the heiress, Maria of Montferrat (referred to here as "Mariol" and "Mariolanthé") whose mother is tired of having armed men storm into her bedchamber and have her marry at sword's point. The couple has a nice honeymoon, visiting Rome, Paris, and then Armorica (more Rolfe eccentricity)

Having secured his base, Arthur proceeds to visit England. Which right now is suffering from an abundance, if not a superfluity of kings; John Softsword is having to deal with the traditional Plantagenet rebellion by his son Henry Lackland, and the Dauphin Aloys of France (still more Rolfe eccentricity, since that particular Dauphin is usually called "Louis") has also arrived. Even given that he is supposed to be the conquering hero, the description of how Arthur isolated and vanquished his enemies is an interesting piece of campaigning.

After dealing with the rebellion of Simon de Monfort, Arthur settles the affairs of his lands, and then goes on a Crusade, leaving Hubert as regent. After defeating the various bickering local authorities, he personally leads an infiltration of Jerusalem and captures the city. By now it's seeming perhaps a bit much.

Back in England, Hubert is getting a little put out at the wickedness of the Giwen. Since one of the examples he cites is of a man who changed his name to put the Angel of Death off the track, and then wondered if that would affect his divorce, it's possible to imagine that Hubert is going just a little over the top on the matter.

Except, of course, the final section has to do with the Ritual Murder case of Little St. Hugh of Lincoln. Now Rolfe had a long association with that particular saint; including painting a picture of his accession to heaven in which every face, including the saint's, was his own. So now the Giwen go through their wicked need to kill a Christian child, and hearing the case, King Arthur condemns the murderers, who admit their venality, and then . . .

Rolfe's literary eccentricities may confuse the reader. As when during one of his knightly adventures in Outremer, Arthur confuses the Saracen by spreading the rumor "that Melek Rik (so the infidels call King Richard Lionheart) had risen from the dead and landed at Ascalon from a thousand red ships with fifty-thousand geniuses" [Page 197]. Richard did not call up the membership of Mensa; "geniuses" in this context is the plural of "genie". (Now fifty-thousand Barbara Edens . . .)

His attitudes towards the "Giwen" are more likely to offend contemporary readers. Much as we find them offensive, that was how people thought and acted then. Sanitizing the past to make it palatable to the present — as is done in Connie Willis's "Remake" — leaves the reader unaware of the real problems that do return.

Basing the climax on something that couldn't happen — the attempt to ritually murder Arthur, which in turn he uses as an arguing point at the final trial — is a serious weakness in the book. They would have believed it in the era where the book is set; it may have been believed when the book was

written, perhaps even by Rolfe himself. This is the other side of the cliché of having anachronistically modern thought in historical and fantasy books; the one is as bad as the other, but this is more obvious these days.

Longer works were published while *Hubert's Arthur* remained forgotten in a manuscript collection. Rolfe did not want to show off how much worse the world would have been had Arthur of Brittany succeeded. He did make the man a little too perfect, but then, Hubert de Burgh, the narrator, comes across as overwhelmed by his own preconceptions.

As in the coin-clipping matter, for which de Burgh comments that he couldn't take hanging women. The section ends with a footnote (did I mention that the book is abundantly footnoted, although usually to give the Latin original of a turn of phrase?) that cites a Jewish historian's work, and adds "though there they are naturally criticised from the Israelite point-of-view, as here (not unnaturally) from the opposite." [Page 396 n. 286] Perhaps de Burgh is not the most reliable of narrators.

The book refers to "one of their own historiographers, a certain ancient Joseph, whose histories of the Giwen they preserve, fairly written in the Hebrew tongue, and esteemed authentic; and yet they will not accept his testimony about Christ." [Page 396] I didn't think that Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* circulated in Hebrew, much less that it had the passages found in the Slavonic version.

Rolfe may have been too successful in evoking the attitudes of the time he was writing about. Combined with his self-destructive habits, this seems to have denied him the recognition he should have had for his work.

HER HABILINE HUSBAND

Review by Joseph T Major of
SATURN'S CHILDREN:

A Space Opera

by Charles Stross

(Ace; 2008; ISBN 978-0-7394-9934-4;
\$24.95)

Michael Bishop's Nebula-winning novelette "Her Habiline Husband" (1983) was a look into the problems of prejudice, species differences, anthropology, and cultural dissonances. It, and the later novel of which it formed the opening sequence, *Ancient of Days* (1985), suffered from an odd problem, at least to my observation. While the supporting characters were an interesting and richly-drawn cast of people, the central ones were blank dullards. As another reviewer noted, the female lead, who enters into a relationship of **Hot Sex™** with the "habiline husband" of the title, is inexplicably drawn to a mute, misshapen dwarf. The character developed in the additional sections, but the initial setup seemed more like something from Terry Southern's *Candy* (1958).

The two additional sections of the book were given similarly ponderous and alliterative titles, reminiscent of, say, the progression of Valentine Michael Smith's ascent in *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961, 1990; NHOL G.127). Which brings us to this book, dedicated to Heinlein and

Asimov.

The Heinlein dedication is more obvious, in that the book is essentially Stross's take on the setup of *Friday* (1982; NHOL G.197), the best novel of Heinlein's post-*Heinlein in Dimension* (by Alexei Panshin; 1968) work, but consider the competition. Indeed, the protagonist is named "Freya", and in Germanic languages "Friday" is derived from "Freyja". And the book begins on Venus, while in Romance languages the name for Friday is derived from *dies Veneris*, "Venus's day".

Though Freya is even less human than Friday, who was human, if unusually conceived. Some unspecified time before, humanity became extinct, leaving behind a direly polluted world, and no WALL-E to pick up after them. However, no problem, because before the Creators (or so she styles them) got tired and gave up, they created all Freya's people, who have taken over the business and are running it better than the original. As Freya observes, marvelling at the folly of the Creators, who thought they could span the hazards of space with mere mortal flesh. Hence the Good Dr. A. and his Laws.

After a somewhat hair-raising (very hair-raising, indeed) encounter on Venus that indicates to Freya that perhaps she is not universally loved, she has to look for work. Which turns out to be forthcoming. She gets taken on as a courier, assigned to bring a certain package to Mars. (Reading the intricate descriptions of the package [Page 59] and its container [Page 71] requires some mental effort to produce an amusing realization.)

Stross has built a remarkably complex society. From Freya's collection of the memory chips of her dead siblings to the hair-raisingly genteel recreation of aristocratic society, he has built a community of those who aren't human but think like humans.

However, having done that, he proceeds to see how many Heinlein tropes he can redo in a tour of the new Solar System. I mean, having Freya's nipples go "*Spung!*" [Page 142; also "*The Number of the Beast*" — "1979, NHOL G.189, *passim*] This is one of those things that is too dumb to be serious and too lame to be satirical.

His principal model in this section of the book is more *The Rolling Stones* (1952; NHOL G.099), as Freya goes from planet to planet, tossing off changes of persona and odd vistas with a bland insouciance. Finally, after a shocking confrontation on the planet Eris (née Xena), she gets an opportunity to reach for the stars.

There is something not quite serious about this. For example, Freya is as passionately inclined as Maureen Johnson or any late Heinlein woman. Fine, but why does she have these passions anyway? She's a robot. In fact, some of the descriptions read like a bad translation of human intimacies. And why would robots be occupying planetary surfaces, place with corrosive gases and unsettled conditions, at all? Presumably there are reasons, but Stross should have put himself out

to convey them, since Freya seems willing enough to "as you know" this narrative on many other matters.

It's an amusing story, with lots of wit, in-jokes, intrigue, striking settings, imaginative world-building, and many other virtues, but the thinking-out seems to be less sure.

(My luck: I got the SFBC edition, and the regular hardback edition has a nicer cover, more reminiscent of the Whelan cover art on the original paperback edition of *Friday*.)

THE BOGLAND OF DR. MOREAU — PART THREE

Review by Joseph T Major of

PASSAGE:

The Sharing Knife, Volume Three

by Lois McMaster Bujold

(Eos; 2008; ISBN 978-0-06-137533-0;
\$25.95)

Sequel to *Beguilement*

(2006; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 6 #1) and
Legacy (2007; reviewed in *Alexiad* V.6 #4)

"Uncle Jed, what air is this?"

Jed Clampett lifted a squamous and rugose grub into the sunlight. "Weel doggies. It's a first-instar cthonian. Granny fries 'em up with bear grease right tasty. You done good findin' this, Jethro."

— Not from *The Beverly Hillbillies*

Dag and Fawn have to get away to start their marriage. However, taking a flatboat down the river means that they accumulate a cast of charmingly unusual associates on the way to more bothersome things.

There's little enough about blighted places in this one; only as background, something to think of. Rather, the principal element is Dag's finding his new self. He can't be a patroller any longer, but his powers haven't gone away. It turns out there's other uses for them, and he finds a need for them as he and Fawn take their honeymoon trip down to the sea.

Perhaps Bujold read *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* (1997, 2006) and noted the strictures on how there is no **Economy** in Fantasyland. Not only is the flatboat her characters ride on a commercial enterprise (they ship goods down the river, then disassemble the boats for the wood, though Fawn hopes the one they're on will become somebody's houseboat) but they pass other loci of commerce and industry along the way. Not to mention the other form of entrepreneurship that's mentioned, one that gets rid of the constant presence of a red-light quarter.

One other thing that flatboating has to encounter, has encountered, is that of banditry. Which they too encounter, only this time, thanks to Dag's powers (and those of the other patrollers who have, for their own reasons, come along), they have an advance warning — and a chance to deal with them. This is an evil which has little enough to do with the blight that they fight, but an unnerving connection all the same. (Not to mention the connection with history. I

mean, the brothers Big Drum and Little Drum? But I don't want to Harpe on that overmuch.)

And when they finally reach the Sea . . .

One thing that should particularly be noted is that Bujold is taking a middle ground. Too many publishers would be gratified with an annual volume of Processed Miles Product. Too many fans would be happy to see another tale of Chalion with different characters of the same sort doing the same thing.

What she's done is to write a story, bring it to an end, then go on to something else. This too is an ordinary story in this extraordinary world, not the **Heroic Quest** across the **Barren Wilds** of Fantasyland to the **Mountain of Despair** to find the **Magic Knickknack of Qwerty** so the **Diverse Band of Ordinary Yet Special People** can cast down the **Evil Overlord** in the **Ultimate Battle Between Good and Evil** that will mark the **End of the Faerie Folk in Our World** . . .

But Dag and Fawn still have to get back to where they were, and perhaps now they can find or make a home of their own when this is . . .
[To Be Continued]

"BRING ME THE HEAD OF MELISENDE DE LA COURCEL"

Review by Joseph T Major of

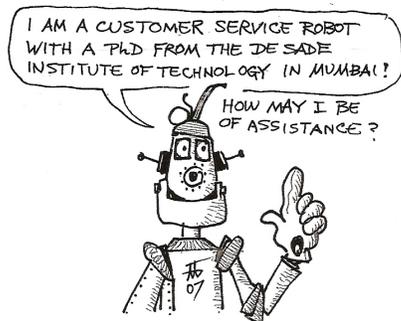
KUSHIEL'S MERCY

by Jacqueline Carey

(Warner Books; 2008;

ISBN 978-0-446-50004-3; \$26.99)

Sequel to *Kushiel's Dart* (2001), *Kushiel's Chosen* (2002), *Kushiel's Avatar* (2003; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 2 #3), *Kushiel's Scion* (2006; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 5 #4), and *Kushiel's Justice* (2007; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 6 #4)



Like every good ardent young man seeking the hand of the princess, Imriel has to fulfill a Quest. He probably wishes it were only to cross the **River of Fire** and the **Wastes of Doom** to the **Mountain of Despair** in order to recover the **Magic Knickknack of Qwerty**.

If, afterwards, he has to hunt down and best in a duel the dirty rat who ratted out his mother to the Crown, all he will have to do is look in the mirror as he snuffs himself. (Not quite Heydrich seeing his worst enemy, shouting "I've got you now, you dirty bastard!", firing his Luger, and shattering a huge mirror at Salon

Kitty.) Yes, Queen Ysandre has set as the price for the hand of her daughter Sidonie the return of the treasonous Melisende de la Courcel. ("Bring Me the Head of Melisende de la Courcel").

However, he has a little time before he has to set out on his matricidal venture, or adventure, and he uses it to advantage. Remember, this is a world where *The Story of O* is hagiography. He begins by spanking her, and goes on to the cover illustration, which shows Sidonie with her hands bound. Before he can get to the ball gag, the spreader bar, and so on, there is an embassy from Carthage.

(Problem here. All the other countries have "alternative" names: i.e., the France-equivalent is "Terre d'Ange" [Land of Angel, a pun for "Angle-land" {which in French is *Angleterre*}] and the Britain-equivalent is "Alba". Admittedly "Carthage" was an alternative name; it's the Latin rendering of *Kart-Hadsh*. For some reason writers always seem to fall down in that part of the world, as in the *Savage Empire* series by Jean Lorrh (and far too many fanfiction friends) which had subtle, clever names for their Italy-equivalents, and then called the continent to the south "Africa". Not to mention that, for me, "Carthage" in such a context smacks too much of the dreary and presentist *Ash* series.)

Well, the emissary from Carthage is going to do a big presentation as part of his treaty negotiations. Everybody who is anybody comes down to see the sight. And in the middle of it, as the great spell is going down, someone sticks Imriel with a needle and gloats that he'll be stark raving mad for a month.

And he is. But when he returns to his senses, he immediately gets presented with evidence to the contrary. Terre d'Ange has signed a treaty with Carthage, to go conquer some of the neighbors. And to seal it, Princess Sidonie has married General Hannibal of Carthage. She never was in love with Imriel. Or so everyone from Queen Ysandre, the Cruach Drustan of Alba her husband, Phèdre and her companion Joscelyn, and so on down wholeheartedly believes. Just not Imriel, who fondly remembers the **Hot Sex™** that helped him get up his nerve for his Quest.

Imriel could have gone to Antarctica, for he has gone mad in order to stay sane. A vacation in the country reveals that everyone who *wasn't* in the capitol knows damn well that Terre d'Ange is not an ally of Carthage. (Who is Ysandre's new secretary, Winston Lefebvre?) Thus his supporters include people who don't hate his guts, but wouldn't mind getting a chance to inspect them. Except they can't.

There is someone who can help. A small problem eventuates, though; it seems that Imriel has already agreed to deliver her up to the Queen's Justice. Such a nice boy: "Hi, Mom, can you help me save the country? Yes, I know I'm supposed to turn you over to the bourreau but this is, like, really *important*."

And Mother has a plan. So it is that her servant sets out to Carthage to seduce the princess and woo her from the arms of her Punic husband. Which turn of romantic events

eventuates. Except, when the princess kisses the lover, he turns into the Prince. (You were thinking a frog maybe?) Imriel, you see, had only one sure way to get there without being detected and that was to actually be someone else. And it wasn't just false papers he needed, either; not to mention that if Sidonie didn't fall prey to his cover's passionate wiles, he would be stuck as the guy.

But they're stuck in Carthage. Well, maybe not, since no one will object if Sidonie goes to see her beloved. Which does put them closer to Terre d'Ange — though going the rest of the way will entail getting out of one siege and into another, having to fight a duel to the death in which Sidonie gets to object very sharply to having been bewitched into matrimony, and then trying to find the talisman that keeps everyone so deluded.

Particularly since Terre d'Ange is about to have a civil war, each side knowing that the other is utterly mad. Which makes Imriel's status as the only sane person in town very nerve-wracking, and his mission urgent . . .

This book, this series is not for everyone. I think that's obvious. It is imaginative, striking (no not that way!), painful (besides that way), and moving. Carey is bound to her world of strange alternatives, submissive to its domination, in thrall to its disciplines.

NONE SO BLIND

Review by Joseph T Major of

THE MAN WHO LOVED CHINA

by Simon Winchester, O.B.E.

(HarperCollins; 2008;

ISBN 978-0-06-088453-8; \$26.99)

" . . . Needham is not without a certain value of entertainment," Fu Manchu said, his voice alternately guttural and siblant. "His declarations regarding the history and magnitude of Chinese science are indeed useful, as a reminder of the insignificance of the West. Should he happen to blunder upon some item of importance, though, there are my *files* and my *wire-jackets* . . ."

— Not by Arthur Sarsfeld Ward

Evidently, when Sir Denis Nayland Smith, Bt. heralded the diversity and breadth of technology available to his insidious foe, he didn't understand the half of it. Or so Noel Joseph Terence Montgomery Needham, C.H., F.R.S., F.B.A. would gladly have told him.

Yet the Marquis Chuan would have found something to object to in the personality and beliefs of Joseph Needham. Instead of becoming one of the long-lived Companions of the Si-Fan, Needham might have ended up exploring the Six Gates of Joyful Wisdom or some of the other traditional Chinese ways of bringing a life to a premature albeit salutary end. You see, Dr. Fu Manchu was not exactly pleased with Communism . . . Dr. Needham had a different attitude.

The author of *A Crack In the Edge of the World* (2005; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 5 #6) and *The Professor and the Madman* (1998; British

title *The Surgeon of Crowthorne*) has now turned his attention to a comparatively sane professor. Joseph Needham was born to a not particularly out of the ordinary Edwardian family. Or perhaps not, considering that his mother called him “Noel” (the book says it was because of his birthday, but that was December 9) and his father “Terence”. He grew up gaining a remarkable fluency with languages, and passed out of Caius College at Cambridge without any contact with unseemly sorts like not yet ex-Sir Anthony Blunt or his good friend Feldbin or Nikolsky or Orlov or whatever.

But then, Needham wasn't quite attracted to their sort. He was a womanizer. And he had managed to persuade his wife to have an open marriage. Which gave him opportunity for other connections which led to other openings.

For on an epochal day, Needham the scholar met Lu Gwei-djen (Lu Kuei-chen [Wade-Giles]; Lu Guizhen [Pinyin]), a fellow researcher from China. She became his mistress, and led him into the study of her land. This involved teaching him how to write Chinese (and presumably speak Putonghua [p' u tung hua; “Mandarin”]). He became enamored of the culture, too.

Then the Second World War broke out, and eventually Needham was sent to China. This shows how utterly behind the times the British government was, that it sent to China a man who spoke and wrote Chinese. Needham made a number of journeys over the country, in the middle of the war no less, even to the only substantial port city in China that wasn't occupied by the Japanese.

Observing the culture of China led Needham to a significant realization; China had been a world leader in scientific progress. Accordingly, once the fighting was over, and then that tour where he made sure that UNESCO became UNESCO (with the “S” for science), and he was back in his poky little chambers in college, he set about writing a book about the matter, *Science and Civilisation in China*. A book. In fact, it grew to twenty-one volumes as of the writing of this book, with yet more on the way.

Needham continued to produce this magnum opus, an in-depth and broad-spanning analysis of the magnitude of a civilization, until his will no longer could answer the call. Even then, his example continued to inspire the production. *Science and Civilisation in China* is a great contribution to the understanding of science and civilization in the world as a whole.

But then, one wonders. Needham pointed out how, sometime in the fourteenth century, China ceased to innovate. Yet his analysis was made questionable by his wilful refusal to admit that a similar turn-away from science and technology was happening in China during his lifetime. The Great Leap Forward was marked by a generalized attitude of “the superior Will can overcome scientific barriers”. Its successor, the Cultural Revolution, was marked by the enthusiastic and even exuberant destruction of the same cultural legacy that Needham celebrated. His responses to these events

ranged from the mildly supportive to the blankly denialistic.

Which leads one to the greater problem of the relationship between the source and the analyst. To what extent is the study of Chinese society deformed by the need to accede to the requirements of the Chinese government?

And on another note, Needham does not come off altogether well personally. Winchester describes without apparent objection Needham's endless efforts to get Lu Gwei-djen jobs. He was getting his mistress work where she could be available to him. Does this sound undue, or is it only bourgeois sentimentalism?

Even the accomplishments recounted by Needham and associates have a curious nature. Winchester lists a number of them, and the dates assigned. This comes across as direly reminiscent of the early Soviet doctrine that all things were invented first by Russians, and the contemporary Muslim one, that all things were invented first by Muslims. (Thus, de Camp explaining to a Hindu-first believer that the Homeric description of the whirlpool of Charybdis was proof that the ancient Greeks had invented the washing machine. He was being satirical.)

So often, we find, the greatest of accomplishments are achieved by those who really aren't up to their own standards once they get outside their areas of expertise.

THE FOUNDATION

Review by Joseph T Major of
**THE LEGACY OF ISLAMIC
ANTISEMITISM:**

From Sacred Texts to Solemn History

Edited by Andrew G. Bostom

(Prometheus Books; 2008;

ISBN 978-1-59102-554-2; \$39.95)

Islam, we are told, was far more tolerant than Christianity. When the Jews were expelled from Spain, they went to the Ottoman Empire, where they were welcomed and given freedom and even authority. Before that, in tolerant Islamic al-Andalus, there was a paradise of three religions living in harmony. In other words, a “Shiny Happy Caliphate”.

How, then, does this explain the current state of opinion among Muslims? The general explanation is that it was caused by the exportation of Western anti-Semitism in general and Nazi doctrine in particular.

The cover of this book is a French Romantic painting with a very un-romantic topic: “*Exécution de la juive*” by Dehodencq Alfred. Sol Hachuel, a Jewish woman in Morocco, made friends with a Muslim woman. Her “friend” constantly strove to convert her to Islam. Perhaps the “friend” believed she had succeeded. Sol was arrested for apostasy, dragged off in chains, and beheaded. This incident took place in the early nineteenth century; the usual date is 1835 but some sources place it earlier. At least the Inquisition would have let her testify at her own trial.

What Dr. Bostom's massive researches (the book is 766 pages) have shown is that this was neither an isolated incident nor an extraordinary

one. Rather, it follows in a tradition that dates back to the very beginnings of Islam.

Chapter 2 (Pages 209-220) is somewhat overbearing, since it contains the Jew-hating verses of the Qur'an (their preferred transliteration) in three different translations, about the best that can be done. It can be concluded that the general intent can be deduced, even if the gnostic Reality supposedly unreachable save in the original can't be.

Chapter after chapter recount the grim fate of Jews in the Islamic polity. The prophet massacred Jews for not realizing that he was right and they were wrong. About things such as that Jews worship the prophet Ezra, and that when they noticed that their holy texts predicted his coming and the supercession of their faith, they rewrote the texts. His successors continued this unpleasant attitude (a more realistic word would be unprintable).

For example, one chapter quotes the “Jew's Oath” that Harun al-Rashid's vizier mandated. Yes, good old kindly Harun. It's no worse than the “Jew's Oath” from Christian lands, but still it hardly evinces that benevolent attitude that we are told existed until the nasty old West intruded. Other chapters explain the methodology and oppressions of dhimmitude.

Dr. Bostom, the editor and a principal contributor, follows a familiar but unusual path to his conclusions. You see, the “Dr.” is not a Ph.D. but an M.D. Bostom applied the same standards and methods that a physician uses in investigating physical ailments to investigating this social ailment. Joseph Bell would have been proud. Bostom's previous book, *The Legacy of Jihad* (2005) is a similarly debunking work on a related topic.

It can be argued that Bostom has selectively cited texts and that a similar search of other cultures' works will produce a similar collection of bigotry. Perhaps so, but this is about Islam. It has been repeatedly and enthusiastically stated that Islam “is good for the Jews”. Well, Maimonides, who had seen it first-hand, had his own opinion on the matter:

The nation of Ishmael . . . persecute us severely and devise ways to harm us and to debase us . . . None has matched it in debasing and humiliating us.

— Moshe ben-Maimon, *Epistle to the Jews of Yemen* (1172), quoted Page 11 (ellipses in quote)

At the risk of abusing “fair use” I will quote one chapter in its entirety:

Chapter 22
On Killing a Jew
Sirhindi

Whenever a Jew is killed, it is for the benefit of Islam.

— *The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism*, Page 329

Who was this man? Bostom explained that in the *Jerusalem Post* in an interview on June 19

(16 Sivan):

As I was putting the first book together, I came across Ahmad Sirhindi. He was an Indian Sufi who was enraged by the reforms of Moghul Akbar, who abolished the jizya [poll tax]. This enraged the orthodox ulema [scholars], one of the chief representatives of whom was Sirhindi. Amongst his virulent tracts against the moghul he says, "Whenever a Jew is killed, it is for the benefit of Islam." Now, this is a 16th-17th century anti-Hindu ideologue, and there's no evidence that he ever had contact with a Jew. So I was like, "Where on earth did this come from?"

It took a lot of time and effort to find that out. What this book will do is to call into severe (and perhaps fatal) question the legend of the "Golden Age of Jews in Islam". Any Muslim anti-Semitic ideologue has abundant sources for his beliefs in the doctrine and history of his faith, with no need to import kufir doctrines.

ARISTOTLE WAS NOT BELGIAN

Review by Joseph T Major of
HISTORY LESSON:

A Race Odyssey

By Mary Lefkowitz [Lady Lloyd-Jones]
(Yale University Press; 2008;
ISBN 978-0-300-12659-4; \$25.00)

"Aristotle was not Belgian. The central message of Buddhism is not 'Every man for himself.' And the London Underground is not a political movement. Those are all mistakes, Otto. I looked them up."

— "Wanda" (Jamie Lee Curtis [Lady Haden-Guest]), *A Fish Called Wanda* (1988)

Otto is pomo.

The Mellon Professor in the Humanities Emerita of Wellesley College, wife of fellow classicist Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones, jumped into a wood-chipper when she tried to defend her field of study. Perhaps she should appear with Deborah Lipstadt to speak on the topic of "Resolution of Disputes in the Courts".

This book is her memoir of what happened when she raised questions about Afrocentrism. Professor Lefkowitz began to have doubts about some of her colleagues when Yosef A. A. ben-Jochanan lectured on how Aristotle reprinted without credit the African philosophical insights deposited in the Library of Alexandria. When Lefkowitz opined that Aristotle had *died* before the Library was formed, ben-Jochanan said that dates back then were vague.

She looked further into this and ended up writing *Not Out of Africa* (1996, 1997) and editing *Black Athena Revisited* (1996). It would be interesting to read about the response to these. For example, Martin Bernal's *Black Athena Writes Back* (2001) or Jacques Berlinerblau's *Heresy in the University* (1999). Too often, the attitude of such who have focused on a struggle is to conclude that the victory is

final and the enemy has been crushed, the way that Deborah Lipstadt proclaimed that Holocaust Denial was done for in 2001. Nope.

Lefkowitz may not have been able to focus. It seems that one of the Afrocentric professors involved sued her over a report she had repeated of an incident in a women's dorm. A monitor had found him going to a restroom from a reading, and asked who he was with. He attributed the inquiry to racism. The student monitor had a bad time, and Lefkowitz got sued. She describes the discovery process, which could only be classified by anyone except a lawyer as abusive. Not to mention the plaintiff's lawyer, who was in-your-face racial activist. Yet Lefkowitz acts as if this were abnormal.

This memoir reveals more than it may have been intended to. Thus, Lefkowitz parades progressive credentials, for example supporting the original intent of Michael Bellesiles's notorious *Arming America*. She still loves Mommie Dearest even in spite of the wire coat hangers.

**And as year follows year,
More old men disappear,
Someday no one will march there
at all.**

Report by Joseph T Major

We regret to report the death of **Francesco Domenico Chiarello on June 27, 2008** in his hometown of Cirò Marina in Calabria. Born **November 5, 1898**, he was called up into the *Regio Esercito Italiano* in 1918 and served in the Trentino, Albania, and Montenegro. He also served briefly in the Second World War.

Henry Allingham had his Hundred-weight Feast (*The Fellowship of the Ring*, Chapter Two) on **June 6, 2008** with a party at RAF Cranwell including a fly-past by the Battle of Britain flight and a greeting card from the Chief of Air Staff delivered by the Falcons Parachute Display Team (and not the Page 3 Team from *The Sun*?).

Remaining are:

Australia

Claude Stanley Choules (107) Royal Navy
Sydney Maurice "Syd" Lucas (107)
Sherwood Foresters

John Campbell Ross (109) Australian
Imperial Force

Canada

Gladys Powers (109) Womens' Royal Air
Force

Finland

Aarne Armas "Araska" Arvonen* (111) Red
Guards

France

Fernand Goux (108), 85e régiment
d'infanterie et 82e régiment d'infanterie
Pierre Picaut (109), Armée d'Terre

Italy

Delfino Borroni (109) 6° Reggimento
Bersaglieri a Bologna

Poland

Józef Kowalski* (108) Polish Army

United Kingdom

Henry William Allingham (112) Royal
Naval Air Service/Royal Air Force
Henry John "Harry" Patch (110) Duke of
Cornwall's Light Infantry
William "Bill" Stone (107) Royal Navy
Robert "Bob" Taggart* (108) Royal Navy

United States

John Henry Foster Babcock (108) 146th
Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force
Frank Woodruff Buckles (107) United
States Army
Robley Henry Rex* (107) United States
Army

* "WWI-era" veteran, enlisted between the
Armistice and the Treaty of Versailles

M. Goux served less than 90 days and so
was not recognized by the Government, and the
matter of M. Picaut is still being elucidated; but
at least there are still *poilus*.

*Aux armes, citoyens !
Formez vos bataillons !
Marchons, marchons !
Qu'un sang impur
Abreuve nos sillons !*

National totals: U.K. 6+1; France, 2; U.S.
1+1; Australia, Canada, Italy 1 each; Finland,
Poland, 1 WWI-era each. British Empire 8+1.
11+4 men, 1 woman.

KEVIN TAYLOR 1968-2008

by Lisa Major

Two days ago Joe came to me and told me that there had been a shooting in my hometown of Henderson, Kentucky. I stared at him blankly, for this was as unthinkable as one happening in Graves County, Kentucky.

There had been a quarrel between a supervisor and an employee. The supervisor had escorted the employee from the building. The employee had returned with a gun.

I looked this up on the internet and learned the supervisor's name. Kevin Taylor. The name was familiar. I searched my memory and came up with the boy who had owned Digger. I relaxed somewhat when I saw his reported age of thirty, at least ten years too young to have been the boy I had known twenty years ago. But a later report revised his age up ten years to forty.

I went tense again, as if whether it was the boy I had known or not, someone's world had not just been brutally, horribly shattered. The obituary the next morning confirmed that it was indeed the Kevin Taylor I had known. I swallowed back nausea at the thought of the happy, cheerful boy I had known dying in such a horrible way.

TIM TAMS

Candy review by Lisa

At the Australia 2010 party I tried some of the Australian chocolates. They are not what we think of as candy bars here in the States, being

rather chocolate wafer biscuits with chocolate cream fillings. The wafer parts are very nicely crunchy and the cream filling is quite properly creamy, making them very tasty. I have to wonder, though, why they named them after the 1958 Kentucky Derby winner and not the great Australian horse Phar Lap. The explanation given was that its makers didn't want people's first thoughts to be of a horse. In my case, they definitely did not succeed.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH — Part 1 DenVention 3, the 66th World Science Fiction Convention

Trip Report by Joe and Lisa



We began preparing with examinations. For example, on the preceeding Saturday, while the car was in the shop being checked (also getting an oil change and a tire rotation), we went to the optician's and had eye exams. Lisa bought two new pair of glasses, and I found out I might be developing glaucoma. I'm sure many will be cheered at the thought.

I took off Friday the first through Friday the fifteenth, and then found out that Lisa had done so as well. But she has a lot of vacation time too. I also washed the last of our clothes and then we packed. The idea was to have a day bag, so it would only be necessary to take one suitcase out of the car until we got to Denver. Oddly enough, this plan worked.

Friday, August 1, 2008 **Louisville, KY — Madisonville, KY —** **Hopkinsville, KY — Cadiz, KY —** **Hopkinsville** **Thomas-Bridges Family Reunion**

We got out early for breakfast, and then my doctor's appointment. I was over with that soon enough, in spite of having to have a B-12 injection and blood tests, and we got home, loaded up the car, and were off. Our drive down to Madisonville was uneventful. We were going to meet my niece in a restaurant. After waiting well past the time she said (she is often busy and so late), we called and it turned out her son had been being fretful at day care, so she had to take him to the office — where he slept, well, like a baby. Sarah introduced us to her intern, we talked about how her family was doing, and then we had to be off to the reunion.

Lisa's cousin who used to do the Thomas-

Bridges family newsletter is named Edison Thomas. He used to live in Louisville and we only ever saw him in Cadiz. As tonight, at the Weiner Roast, which took some effort to find. I told him some stories about my recent adventures in family research and he understood.

And so to bed.

There was a total eclipse of the Sun on August 1, visible along a track running from Nunavut, Canada through Greenland, Novaya Zemlya, Russia (including Novosibirsk), Mongolia, Kazakhstan, and China, ending in Henan [Ho-nan]. The maximum duration of totality was two minutes, twenty-seven seconds, in Northern Russia. The eclipse was part of Saros 126, which began on March 10, 1179 and will end on May 3, 2459. The next eclipse in this saros will be a total eclipse on August 12, 2026 with a path running through Greenland and Spain.

Miles driven: 272.1

Books read: Charles Stross, *Saturn's Children*

Saturday, August 2, 2008 **Hopkinsville — Cadiz — Hopkinsville** **Thomas-Bridges Family Reunion**

It would be a long and busy day, so rather than rush over to the seminar on finding cemeteries in Trigg County, Lisa and I had breakfast at the Ryan's Steakhouse breakfast buffet, conveniently across the street from the motel, and got out to Cadiz later in the morning. (I'll add that for most of these days we didn't have lunch per se. When it's hot, I lose appetite and so it was easier to get by on two meals a day.)

The main street of Cadiz has antique shops. Some of the booths there have books, and sometimes some surprising old books will have drifted there. For example, one of the stores had a couple of old *Boy Allies* books (an American and a British teenager who are first cousins just happen to get into all the major events of the Great War). It was very hot that day and I felt a bit embarrassed, but it got decent once the sun went down.

The Thomas-Bridges Family Association Annual Meeting was that evening. Edison Thomas looked worse than he did the night before, and Lisa wondered if that would be his last reunion. He was at the very first one, some seventy or eighty years before.

I was pretty beat by the time we had met with my relatives there (Ellen, whose husband is the biggest cattleman in Trigg County, has a daughter who is dating her fifth cousin once removed — but then, Ellen's older sister had been my first date!). Among other things, they run the café at the marina, which was down the road from the meeting hall, so we went there. Lisa had already taken some lovely pictures of reflections and waves, and now she got a picture of me and my relatives. We got back to the hotel moderately late.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 90.3

Books read: *Pacific Nightmare* by Simon Winchester
Operation Albion by Michael B. Barrett

Sunday, August 3, 2008 **Hopkinsville — Union City, TN — Hickman, KY — Mayfield, KY** **Forrester Family Reunion**

We got up in the morning, indulged in the hotel breakfast, checked out, and were off to Union City. Lisa's grandmother's people are a multitude. Her Aunt Mildred had lost her husband earlier this year, as you will remember from the obit, and we hoped that getting out would help her. What was more surprising was that Aunt Delta, who will have to have knee replacement surgery, came all the way from Pembroke with her daughter. They all looked happy.

Union City is a very small town, and yet it seems that every time I go there I get lost. Now, having GPA meant that I had a track of my aimless wanderings. It would have helped if I had remembered that the community center where the reunion was held was on **Depot Street**. There is no Union Street in Union City. We only go there every other year, understand.

After the reunion, Mildred took Lisa to Pinis Wilson's grave (Mildred's uncle, Lisa's great-uncle) in Union City while I went to see my cousin Mike in Hickman. Mike's step-uncle is Robley Rex, the ancient veteran in Louisville, so I have a direct reason for seeing him.

That evening at Mildred's, Lisa checked on her father, who had had back surgery the week before. He is recovering well, evidently.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 172.1

Monday, August 4, 2008 **Mayfield — Topeka, KS**

Mildred was glad to have had us and sorry we were leaving. We parted with some regret, but knowing we had to drive many miles ere we could rest.

Missouri rest stops are not very good. There are restrooms, but we are used to having available a room with an information booth, brochures, and more important air conditioning. Also, it did somewhat astound me that the vending machines are all behind locked gates.

By the time we got to the Kansas Parkway, it was hot and we were burned up and out, but we managed to make the rest of the way to the capitol. After we got to the hotel in Topeka and unloaded our overnight stuff, we went out to eat at an Outback Steakhouse, to shop the local Hastings', and pick up some things at Walgreens.

I checked my email, for the first time since Sunday morning, and had one from the doctor, saying that my bloodwork was fine and I didn't need to come back for six months.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 542.5

Tuesday, August 5, 2008

Topeka — Denver, CO

The Best Western in Topeka was very well placed; near to the interstate and with a gas station between. Thus we could top up and be off very early.

Kansas is flat. Kansas is very flat. Kansas is extremely flat. And the people there are desperate for anything. Seeing signs saying "World's Largest Prairie Dog, 60 Miles Ahead", for example. There was also an Oz museum, which I wondered about seeing as I had heard that L. Frank Baum was not the most popular of people in Kansas. And then there were the signs showing the way to "Dorothy's House". I thought that was in the Munchkin Country now.

Kansas rest stops are as minimum-service as Missouri ones. Well, the one stop was in a pretty part of country and had a little park, but still no indoors except for the restrooms.

There was some relief, though. After we passed Abilene, we began to see a long stretch of windmills — the modern kind, the propeller on a tall white post. Only one or two of these were turning, though.

Then there was the car with the licence plate something like "731 FEN". They were going in the right direction, but I can't do that packed room thing any more. Really.

When we crossed the state line, things began to pick up. Not just figuratively, as there was one long stretch of steep grade. But once we got over it . . . the views were spectacular. If it wasn't a vista that stretched on forever, it was a magnificent view of some splendid formation.

Our last stop was at a place that combined gas station, Wendy's, and gift shop. The gift shop had Breyer's horses. Lisa had to go by them a few times.

The clouds had been massing all afternoon; great dark-blue stretches of the sky. As we drove the last few miles into Denver, we could see great high lightning flashes. A very majestic view but also a very portentous one. Then the rains began. This was a torrential outburst greater than that nerve-wracking time we were stuck in a storm on the way to Arkansas, in 2003, or the time we were going through a storm in Virginia that we finally managed to outrun long enough to stop at a rest stop. This particular cloudburst was heavy, vigorous . . . and soon burned itself out. We got to the hotel in clearing air.

There were other problems once we got to the Comfort Inn. No refrigerator. (They said I should have requested a refrigerator in the comment space on the registration form; the AAA page didn't have a comment space.) I put all the freezer packs in the cooler with the insulins and hoped for the best, and we went out to Chili's and had a big meal.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 550.8

—Joe

We rose early on the first morning of vacation, did our errands and headed out of Louisville for our first night's stay in Topeka, Kansas.

From Topeka we headed for our second

night's stay. The third day of driving brought us into Colorado. I stared in fascination at the country we were driving through. Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, etc were fun places to visit but they didn't have the soul this stark, spare land had. One glance told me this sandy, light soil would never support Kentucky's lush greenery and that this was the first place I had seen outside Kentucky that I felt truly at home in. It was a strange feeling to feel this way about a place so different from the land I was born and bred in.

Up here the sky is incredible on a sunny day. For most of the drive up here each curve revealed incredible new vistas. It feels like you are on a level with the clouds, like this is the roof of the world. I see now why Louis L'Amour loved this land. I cannot remember seeing such a blue sky or the way the land seems to stretch into the clouds. It is not the lush, green land of my home. It does not look to be good growing land but it has a stark spare beauty.

We stopped at a small gift shop and within a few minutes the altitude hit me and for a while my body rebelled against the height but it had passed by the time we reached the first of the two hotels we were to stay at in Denver.

We were almost to Denver when the first rainstorm hit. It was very different from a storm here in Kentucky. Here, you hear the storm well before you see it. At home we would have heard the storm well before we saw it. Here the sky began to change color, going first to a deep rich blue which then shaded first to gray and then black with whitish overtones. Only after the sky was pretty thoroughly gray and black did we see lightning and hear thunder. There was not much of either. It did give me some interesting photographs, though. This storm was mostly a nearly blinding downpour. Fortunately it cleared away before we reached Denver. It moved much more quickly than a storm at home would have. There was very little border zone between storm and clear weather. The scariest part about this one was that it looked as though some of the clouds were considering rotation and the February scare is still fresh in my memory.

— Lisa

. . . To Be Continued

Heinlein Centennial 1907-2007

Report by Taras Wolansky

The Heinlein Centennial convention was held July 6-8, 2007, at the Westin Crown Center and the Hyatt Regency Crown Center in Kansas City, Missouri. It was as much a space development conference as a science fiction convention; I think Robert A. Heinlein would have approved. Major guests on the space development side included: NASA administrator Michael Griffin, Spaceship One astronaut Brian Binnie, and X-Prize founder Peter Diamandis. On the science fiction side: TV writer/producer Mike Cassutt, and legendary SF writers/editors Frederik Pohl and Ben Bova.

The two hotels were several blocks apart, but had been welded into a single physical unit

in a way an engineer like Heinlein would have found interesting. A glass sky bridge with a right-angle cross-section snaked its way for several blocks, along the sides of the office buildings that separated the two hotels, without blocking the windows — though people with window offices had to suffer people looking over their shoulders, as it were. And as one of the hotels was directly attached to a multi-story shopping mall, I found I never had to go outside into the muggy weather (though the air conditioning in the sky bridge struggled with the sun at times). Why, it was almost like visiting a lunar colony — a thought that might have occurred to Heinlein as well.

{ The Man Who Must Sell the Moon }

Early Friday afternoon, the master of ceremonies proudly announced the "first appearance of a NASA administrator at a science fiction convention of any stripe" and noted that for the first time the role of NASA is to settle the Moon. NASA Administrator Michael D. Griffin agreed that real steps are finally being taken in that direction.

In some ways, "Heinlein was an extremely influential person" in Griffin's life. "I got interested in Heinlein because I was interested in space" (since the age of five), and not the other way around. He also read the great science popularizer Willy Ley, and admired the pioneering space art of Chesley Bonestell.

In the Fifties and Sixties, space captured the attention of people who would once have been mountain men, or gone to sea. "The growth of science fiction helped to create the cultural matrix" that led to aerospace and space exploration. "Heinlein was the guy who put you there," better than Asimov, Clarke, etc. "He had it the most real," and was able to publish stories in mainstream publications like the *Saturday Evening Post*. He helped create the climate in which you could talk about going to the planets without having your sanity questioned. "It became a reasonable thing for a President to say" we would go to the Moon. Stories like "The Man Who Sold the Moon" (NHOL G.079; 1950) and "The Green Hills of Earth" (NHOL G.056; *Saturday Evening Post*, February 8, 1947) made space development seem logical, even humdrum; that is, real.

Heinlein is sometimes accused of being "given to preaching in some of his less-elegant works," Griffin admitted. Sometimes, "Heinlein bounced a landing!" Among the values Griffin found in Heinlein's novels were: charity to the weak; achievement; education; respect for seniors; minding your own business; politeness; the goal of seeking wisdom.

He felt hard science fiction was a minor part of Heinlein's career. More important was Heinlein's ability to "portray alternate ways of living" and make them seem natural. "Heinlein could see — and make you see — the other side of any question." His characters ranged from rogues and scallwags to family men. "He could even paint a government bureaucrat as a hero!"

Griffin then answered a number of questions from the floor.

What about the problem of radiation in deep space, which some people feel will make human exploration impossible? A: We have little experience with the effects of heavy ion radiation on human (or animal) tissue. Also, the radiation environment of every moon and planet is different. Griffin compared it to the problem of scurvy in the sailing era.

“Space flight . . . is the hardest thing people do.” It’s a naturally inspiring quest for the frontier; but bad decisions by politicians since the 1970s caused us to retreat from the frontier, to low Earth orbit. Now NASA has good goals, courtesy of the President and the previous Congress, but we may retreat again. NASA is working on orbital fuel depots, reusable spacecraft, and using lunar oxygen as a fuel, even if there is no usable water on the Moon. If you have a liquid oxygen/liquid hydrogen fuel system, Griffin pointed out, the LOX is seven-eighths of the propellant by weight.

An audience member said he was from “Slipstick Libby” country (referencing a Heinlein character from the Ozarks), where most of the guys think the Moon landing was fake — but wrestling is real! (Laughter.) Griffin said he was not sure how to convince them.

Has advanced research been cut back by NASA? A: NASA is tasked with more things than it has the money to do, so it must concentrate on the most urgent matters. In general, said Griffin, the Federal government isn’t doing much cutting-edge research.

Does NASA suffer from a “not invented here” culture? NASA doesn’t have such a culture, Griffin stated emphatically. People are miffed when their idea isn’t chosen, while somebody else’s is.

What outside ideas have been chosen, a woman in the audience challenged him. A: Using Mars resources for a Mars mission, and asteroid resources for other missions; using the Moon as training for Mars; looking for volatiles at the Lunar poles; segmented mirrors.

{ The Grande Tour }

Also Friday afternoon, Heinlein biographer Bill Patterson discussed Heinlein’s travel narrative, *Tramp Royale* (NHOL G.125), written in 1954 but published after Heinlein’s death.

Heinlein had intended to call his book, about his and wife Ginny’s 1953-54 world tour, *Tramp Royal*, after Rudyard Kipling’s “Sestina of the Tramp-Royal”, but his publisher decided to make it *Tramp Royale*. Unfortunately, in the early 1950s, there was no market for such travel books. After Heinlein’s death in 1988, however, his widow realized that there was now such a market (see, for example, the travel books of Paul Theroux) and the book finally appeared in 1992.

Heinlein’s 1954 novel, *The Star Beast* (NHOL G.124), gives us that most formidable U.N. bureaucrat, Mr. Kiku of Kenya, Permanent Undersecretary of Spatial Affairs, who runs the department as figurehead Secretaries come and go. Had Heinlein met the original of Mr. Kiku

as he traveled across Africa, I asked. Answer: Perhaps the character is based on someone Heinlein met during his days as a politician.

Patterson said that on the tour Heinlein began to give up his “one world” convictions. In Latin America, for example, he found that people assumed the McCarthy hearings meant shootings in the street. And on a later trip to Yugoslavia, he saw American tanks that had been given to Marshal Tito. He began to feel, “I’m not just in the wrong pew, I’m in the wrong church!”

For me, the most moving thing about reading *Tramp Royale* was when I recognized that at the time of the writing Bob and Ginny were still hoping for children. But Bob turned out to be sterile, I learned, perhaps due to a childhood illness. None of his brothers had children, either, though his sister had many. Around 1955, Bob and Ginny considered adoption, but Bob was already a little too old for the adoption agencies.

{ Answering the Academic Ankle-Biters }

Later Friday afternoon, Heinlein scholar Robert James, who has a Ph.D. from UCLA, and African American short story writer Lee Martindale, discussed the frequent attacks on Heinlein as “racist, sexist, fascist”. Don’t forget “homophobic”, added Martindale wryly. Some of Heinlein’s critics take an idea and grind it into the ground, said James. Sometimes Heinlein is merely trying to “piss people off”.

The accusation of racism is based mostly on two novels, the 1941 serial *Sixth Column* (NHOL G.022a) [also published as *The Day After Tomorrow* (NHOL G.022b)], and *Farnham’s Freehold* (NHOL G.154; 1964).

Sixth Column concerns a resistance movement against a vicious tyranny resulting from a successful Asian invasion of the United States. It is based on what James described as a very racist and unpublishable story by John W. Campbell (editor of *Astounding Science Fiction* and thus Heinlein’s major market at the time). Heinlein toned down the story’s excesses and added a sympathetic Japanese-American character. (It occurs to me that the negative portrayal of the “Pan-Asian” invaders was probably informed by Japanese atrocities in China, like the Rape of Nanking.)

By contrast, *Farnham’s Freehold* concerns a post-nuclear holocaust America which has been colonized by technologically advanced Africans who have enslaved the remnant white population, which they consider inferior. James said he has written a paper about the novel.

On the issue of sexism, James noted that Heinlein said, if thinking men and women are different makes you a sexist, I’m a sexist. Heinlein’s women have a tendency to give up their careers to have babies. (In Heinlein’s “Darwinian” view, I suggest, producing the next generation is this generation’s most important job.) Martindale is sometimes asked, “how can you read him”, and “called a traitor to my sex”. Which she finds ironic because Heinlein’s work was “where I first learned a woman could be the hero.” “The problem is not Heinlein’s writing,”

she continued. “The problem is what feminism has become.”

The confused discussion of a rape scene in *Friday* (NHOL G.197; 1982) that followed seemed to illustrate Martindale’s point. Judging from various comments from women, or perhaps womyn, in the audience, it is now politically incorrect to depict rape as having anything to do with sexual desire. In this view, it seems, rape is to be considered a kind of altruistic act performed by the rapist on behalf of all men, to keep women down — as if Willie Sutton robbed banks to weaken the banking system.

The accusation of fascism, said James, is based on 1) a lack of knowledge about fascism, and 2) an inability to actually read Heinlein’s novel, *Starship Troopers* (NHOL G.140; 1959). I commented from the floor that my discussion of that book with erstwhile *Science Fiction Chronicle* book reviewer Don D’Ammassa had precisely illustrated both points. Misreading the book, D’Ammassa thought few women would earn the right to vote; and that qualified the society as “fascist” in his mind. I pointed out to him that, because they lacked woman suffrage altogether, both the United States prior to 1920 and Switzerland up to the mid-1970s were even more thoroughly “fascist”, by his definition. And he agreed.

{ The Rabble Rejects Cabell }

Early Friday evening, legendary SF writer and editor Frederik Pohl was joined (a few minutes late) by Heinlein biographer Bill Patterson to discuss the influence of James Branch Cabell on Heinlein’s work. At fifteen, said Pohl, he thought Cabell was the hottest thing — and, best of all, sexy! While Patterson has won the Cabell Prize for an essay arguing Heinlein is Cabell’s literary heir. Pohl was especially pleased that Patterson had read Cabell’s rare 1933 nonfiction collection, *Special Delivery: A Packet of Replies*. Patterson was the first person Pohl had ever met who had, aside from Pohl himself.

The audience was small, so I got to ask several questions.

Getting down to basics, Pohl asked: do we have evidence Heinlein read Cabell? Yes, said Patterson, in Heinlein’s early correspondence. There is also much evidence in the texts of his work. The two writers had a sort of mystical streak in common; though Pohl reminded us that Heinlein was describing what other people think, not necessarily what he thinks.

In his day, Cabell was notorious for being “banned in Boston” (actually New York). Thinking of Cabell’s decline from popularity (as well as the ridicule heaped on the sex scenes in later Heinlein works), I suggested that Cabell was left behind because what one generation thinks is sexy, the next thinks comical. Pohl agreed that attitudes about sex have changed drastically. In one of Heinlein’s earliest stories, “Let There Be Light” (NHOL G.007; *Super Science Stories*, May 1940), a character mentions “ancient Chinese advice” to a woman about to be raped: “relax”. Then, the magazine got angry letters from straightlaced readers for

publishing smut; now, feminists (like his wife, Elizabeth Anne Hull) are outraged! More commonly, material once considered “daring” is now looked upon merely as trivial observations on life.

Can the panelists point out specific examples of Cabell’s influence, I asked. Patterson cited *Glory Road* (NHOL G.148; 1963), a very Cabellian comedy of a hero who doesn’t know what to do after he wins his quest and marries the princess. Also a number of later Heinlein works: *Stranger in a Strange Land* (NHOL G.127; 1961, 1990), *Job: A Comedy of Justice* (NHOL G.199; 1984) [named after Cabell’s *Jurgen: A Comedy of Justice*, but with a lot of Mark Twain in there], *The Cat Who Walks Through Walls* (NHOL G.200; 1985).

Which Cabell work should a Heinlein fan read? Whatever you can find, said Pohl. *Jurgen*, said Patterson.

Why is Heinlein surviving better than Cabell? “He [Cabell] never had anything to say,” said Pohl. Patterson thought that Cabell was concerned with the transition from the Victorian to the modern world, a theme of limited interest today.

Pohl summed up the panel with a confession: “I never really connected Heinlein and Cabell until today.”

{ Space Jockey }

Friday evening, Naval aviator turned private astronaut (and X-Prize winner) Brian Binnie gave a talk, entitled “2004 — A Space Oddity”.

Binnie had been reading up Heinlein in preparation. In “The Man Who Sold the Moon”, for example, Heinlein foresaw that private spacecraft would need insurance. Binnie had the pleasure to present Heinlein’s prophetic words to a Milan conference — on space insurance!

Binnie reminisced about his days, carrier flying in the Persian Gulf: sometimes landing his plane on the carrier was more challenging than flying over Iraq. For one thing, his Hornet was always low on fuel. (Laughter from the aerospace-savvy audience.)

As one might have guessed from the title of his talk, Binnie admitted that Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* was an early influence. He also read Arthur C. Clarke.

Binnie showed us a picture of the tiny team — tiny by NASA standards, at least — that built and flew Spaceship One across the border of space. He praised its design. Unlike some other systems, if the engine fails, you just glide home.

{ The Hidden Years }

Sunday afternoon, “RAH-LA-LA” gave us the story of Heinlein’s years in Los Angeles, 1932-1942. The panelists were scholars Bill Patterson and Robert James, and current Hollywood denizen Michael Cassutt.

It may be that the Navy introduced Heinlein to the area. From 1929 to 1932, he served aboard the USS *Lexington*, based at San Diego, just 90 miles south of Los Angeles, Patterson said. Heinlein’s wife at the time, Leslyn, had

been head of the music department at Columbia Pictures until she retired to get married.

By 1936, said Cassutt, the Hollywood Hills had already evolved into the eccentric neighborhood described in Heinlein’s 1941 story, “—And He Built a Crooked House —” (NHOL G.023; *Astounding*, February 1941). The house is largely unchanged, Cassutt later added.

Errol Flynn was a neighbor. Willy Ley introduced Heinlein to director Fritz Lang, said Patterson. The panelists noted famous names like Dorothy Parker and Frank Lloyd Wright on lists of contributors to Heinlein’s unsuccessful run for political office. (As I write this, it occurs to me that a successful run would have drastically changed the history of science fiction.) Failing to win office, Heinlein, as a small-d democrat, turned his energies to reducing Communist influence in the Democratic Party and the left-wing EPIC movement, said Patterson. He also investigated political corruption in Los Angeles, said James, but unlike some others managed to avoid being “blown up”.

Heinlein began to move in SF circles. He met Forrest J Ackerman at that central institution of early fandom, a used magazine store. 4SJ sold him the serial version of E.E. “Doc” Smith’s *The Skylark of Space*. And James reported a rumor that a very young Ray Bradbury had a crush on Leslyn Heinlein.

“Heinlein hated confrontations, [they] made him physically ill,” said Patterson. As a result, he stopped going to Los Angeles Science Fiction Society meetings — but remained a member. When he realized it was impossible to get Reds out of the Democratic Party at that time, Patterson explained, Heinlein began to phase out of politics. Gradually his circle became writers rather than politicians.

Which brings us to the famous “Mañana Literary Society”, founded by Heinlein. Older writers like Edmond Hamilton and Jack Williamson and especially Henry Kuttner suddenly improved, said James, when Heinlein started interacting with them. Even *Astounding* editor John W. Campbell, for whom Heinlein was a sort of West Coast recruiter (Anthony Boucher, Cleve Cartmill), was influenced. Also, L. Ron Hubbard, then a successful pulp writer, asked to rewrite Heinlein’s early manuscript of *For Us, The Living* (NHOL G.004; 1938, 2003) to make it publishable, but it never happened.

After the war, Heinlein’s marriage with Leslyn fell apart. Wife-to-be “Ginny made sure she was there to pick up the pieces,” said Patterson, but she did not cause the break-up. While the legalities were being taken care of, Bob and Ginny had to live apart. Otherwise, under California law at the time, they could have been arrested for “cohabitation”.

{ Miscellanea }

At a midday Saturday panel, J. Neil Schulman described the genesis of the feud between Heinlein and science fiction critic Alexei Panshin. Panshin had threatened to sue the University of California at Santa Cruz, to get

into the Heinlein archive housed there. Heinlein had to agree to give Panshin access to save the university from a lawsuit. When Heinlein happened to run into Panshin, some time later, he expressed his displeasure: “You read my mail!”

At the same panel, David Gerrold explained how he became known as “the man who killed Heinlein’s cat”. He was taking care of Pixel, a polite but ferocious feline he described as a “bobcat cub”. He darkly suspects someone of letting the cat out on purpose.

Saturday afternoon, Fred Pohl and Ben Bova were on a panel about science fiction editing. I asked Bova about a story Donald Kingsbury once told me. Way back in the Seventies, Kingsbury had submitted a novella to Bova at *Analog* magazine about a far-future culture in which men stripping for female audiences plays a role in mate selection. This was long before Chippendales entered the national consciousness, and Bova expressed doubts about the very idea that women would watch men stripping. (For years afterward, Kingsbury made a point of regaling Bova with newspaper clippings about male strippers.) Bova deadpanned, “I still refuse to believe it!” Someone in the audience asked slyly, the ability to disregard facts, is that what an editor needs?

Later Saturday afternoon, I had the privilege of listening to “The Discovery of the Future”: Heinlein’s Guest of Honor Speech from the third Worldcon, Denvention, recorded on vinyl disks in 1941. It struck me that the speech, though delivered within only a few years of Heinlein’s first publication, reflected the concerns of his entire career.

From the standpoint of 1941, Heinlein praised science fiction fans as young and precocious, well-prepared for what Alvin Toffler would later call “future shock”. But, he continued, fandom had been influenced by a certain political movement that used the word “fact” to refer to predictions. Complicated terminology and use of the “argot of science” doesn’t make you scientific, he noted.

Entries from the New Heinlein Opus List

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Schulman seems to be conflating things. The “You read my mail!” accusation refers to Panshin’s reading the letters from Heinlein to Arthur Smith, the dedicatee of *Starship Troopers*. Panshin also denies threatening a lawsuit to get access to the Santa Cruz archives.

— JTM

THE ULTIMATE CANDY BAR Take Two

by Johnny Carruthers

<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/>

Over a year ago, I posted an essay describing my idea of the ultimate candy bar. The idea behind that entry was simple: Given

the opportunity to design a candy bar of my own, what would I put in it? (If you want the full details, the posting date was December 14, 2006. It's probably easier to go back and read it than for me to repeat all the details here.)

I think I may have to rethink that design of that candy bar.

At the time, I said that some of the details were subject to change, depending on my whims of the moment. What I'm talking about here is a complete overhaul of my ultimate candy bar's design.

Why the sudden change of heart? To put it bluntly, it was the Rocking Nut Road Snickers bar. When I bit into one for the first time, there was this wave of bliss that swept over me. Before I finished that first bar, I had this realization that M&M/Mars had quite possibly come as close as they could to designing my idea of the ultimate candy bar without having any input from me.

The key factor to this realization was the marshmallow nougat. I have enjoyed many different nougats in many different candy bars over the years. This was the first time, though, that I can ever remember tasting a marshmallow nougat. It has the sublimely sweet taste of a marshmallow, but it has a texture unlike any marshmallow I have ever eaten. It doesn't have the spongy feel of a marshmallow, nor the denser feel of the marshmallow in the Hershey S'mores bar, nor even the sticky feel of a marshmallow creme. It's different from all three of those, yet it is still quite definitely marshmallow.

Okay, so I'm going to do a complete redesign of my idea of the ultimate candy bar. What is going to be in this version?

This time, the core is going to be caramel and marshmallow nougat. Now, there is a local candy maker here in the Louisville area (I think they're actually across the river in southern Indiana) that makes a candy called a Modjeska. It's a caramel-covered marshmallow, and my first thought was to have the marshmallow nougat wrapped in caramel, much like a Modjeska. But as I noted in my review of the Rocking Nut Road Snickers, the marshmallow nougat is quite a bit softer than the nougats in any of Mars's other candy bars. Assuming that I would be using a marshmallow nougat of similar consistency, I don't think I could get the wraparound effect I have in mind.

So, the center of the bar will be layered, with the caramel on the bottom, and the nougat on top of the caramel. I would want the caramel to be a little firmer than what you find in a Milky Way or Snickers bar, to compensate for the softer nougat.

Previously, I had pieces of macadamias, crunchy toffee bits, and toasted coconut in the caramel, to give the candy bar a crunchy counterpoint to the caramel. With the addition of the marshmallow nougat, though, having all three might be a little too much. If I'm going to have only two, I would probably go with the macadamia pieces and the toffee bits. Then again, I might have to try the various combinations of all three, just to see which combination would give the right crunch.

I would still like to see a candy bar that was covered in both dark chocolate and milk chocolate. But after my little makeover, I think this candy bar might have just a little too much to accommodate both chocolates. I think I will stick to just dark chocolate for the outer shell. I keep thinking about something I heard from at least two cashiers at Walgreens when I was purchasing Rocking Nut Road Snickers bars. They both said, "I don't normally like dark chocolate, but I love this bar!" Based on what they said, I think that just the dark chocolate would be more than sufficient.

Well, there is my second version of my ultimate candy bar. Sooner or later, I suspect that will go back and give the idea yet more thought.

THE PURPOSE OF THE PAST: Reflections on the Uses of History

by Gordon S. Wood

(The Penguin Press, 2008, 323 pp./indexed,
\$25.95, ISBN # 13 9781594201547)

Reviewed by Jim Sullivan

“. . . To understand the past in all its complexity is to acquire historical wisdom and humility and indeed a tragic sense of life. A tragic sense does not mean a sad or pessimistic sense of life; it means a sense of the limitations of life,” writes the author.

Collected herein are 21 of the author's history book reviews and criticism that were published primarily in *The New York Review of Books* or *The New Republic* over the past 25 years or so. An updated 'afterword' follows each piece. With all of the reviews, save for two or three, he is rather harsh, some might say brutal, with his commentary. He even mentions that in a few cases authors got irate with Wood's reviews. That shouldn't have surprised him. Yet in many cases these authors deserved the criticism.

Wood's main complaint against most of these younger-than-the-author historians is that they have left out historical facts that are important to a reader's understanding. Wood suggests or implies that these histories are 'shaped' to meet with modem-day agendas, political, social, or cultural. He also rails, somewhat, because he's not totally opposed to all of it, against the predominant writing of social history: black's, women's, and Native American's, as opposed to the wide sweeping, top-(white man)-leaders-down history that he and those he admires write.

For a lot of these changes, the author blames "deconstruction," 'textuality,' and 'essentialism,' which have been to make academic history writing almost as esoteric and inward directed as the writing of literary scholars."

He is also not for relating history to current events. And that's because things were different back then. So what is the point, then, in reading and learning history? To know it and because it can be very interesting.

This reviewer can agree with the previous sentence, but questions whether the author's position runs counter to the present-day mindset

that much can be learned from history in how to act today to the vicissitudes of life.

Wood writes in his Introduction, "Perhaps the two kinds [academic and popular] history have never coincided, but in the 1950s academic historians such as Richard Hofstadter, Allan Nevins, Eric Goldman, Daniel Boorstin, and C. V. Ann Woodward certainly wrote history that appealed to both academic and general readers. That is much less true today. Consequently, popular historians who have no academic appointment, such as David McCollough, Walter Isaacson, Ron Chernow, Thomas Fleming, and Stacy Schiff, have successfully moved in to fill the void left by the academic historians preoccupied by issues of race, gender, and multiculturalism."

Gordon S. Wood is a history professor at Brown University. He's written several prize-winning history books; among them, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992.

Recommended.

RESCUING DA VINCI

by Robert M. Edsel

(Laurel Publishing; 2006;

ISBN 0-97743349-4-X;\$55.00)

Reviewed by Rodford Edmiston Smith

Not long before I learned of this book I heard a news item about an elderly German woman who related how men from the government had come into her home and taken away a family heirloom. She had protested that her stepfather had purchased the painting legally, even showed them the receipt, but they ignored her protests and took it anyway. She just didn't understand how anyone — especially the government — could treat someone that way, taking their property without permission or recompense.

The painting was a work by an Old Master which had been purchased at an auction for mid-level Nazi members. The legal owners had recently learned where their painting had wound up after the Nazis stole it. After a bit of legal paperwork — providing proof of ownership, provenance and so forth — they had obtained a court order for their painting to be returned. I found the irony of the old woman's protests darkly humorous.

I also found the incident thought provoking. So when I saw this book during the recent LexFA economic suicide mission to Poor Richard's Books in downtown Frankfort I eagerly bought it.

I knew the Nazis had stolen art from occupied countries, much of it very famous. If nothing else, I'd seen the Burt Lancaster movie *The Train*. This news segment surprised me, in that I hadn't thought there would still be significant pieces held by the looters or their heirs. Yes, some works were known to be destroyed, and others thought to be, and some no-one knew about. But surely, most of the surviving important pieces of painting or sculpture taken by the Nazis would have been recovered long ago.

I vastly underestimated the avarice of the

Nazis.

This book is over 300 pages — three hundred large pages — and the author admits it only covers part of the colossal amount of material taken not only from other countries, but confiscated from “undesirables” in Germany, itself. Despite the title, it covers far more than works by Leonardo Da Vinci, though several of his projects receive considerable attention.

Indeed, there is far more than art covered, because the Nazis took far more than art. While the book focuses on artwork, it also provides information on other items taken by the Nazis.

The book is very well supplied with photographs, understandable considering the topic. Among these are contrasting sets of period and modern photos which give a good feeling for what the Nazis did and how well the repairs have gone.

One of the more bizarre photos in the book is a dock covered with confiscated church bells, roughly five thousand of them. Many of the bells are obviously damaged. Why they were taken, why they were moved here, why it was important to collect them but not preserve them, are not mentioned in the book.

One large print shows a room full of Torah scrolls. The caption states that they were piled three meters deep.

Particular affecting are the personal, non-historic belongings taken by the Nazis, in a program they named “M-Aktion.” Entire households were packed up and given to administrators in occupied countries, to aid them in establishing themselves for long-term habitation. Later the program was expanded to resupplying bombed-out German families. The items included furniture, pianos and even children’s toys. Trainloads of streetcars from occupied cities were moved from where the Nazis didn’t need them to where they did.

One of the most frightening images in the book is Hermann Göring in civilian clothes shopping for jewelry in Holland.

The book provides information not only on what the Nazis took, but also the Allied efforts to recover stolen properties and return them to where they belonged. General Eisenhower and Brigadier General Davis not only repeatedly emphasized that looting of artworks by Allied troops would not be tolerated (General Omar Bradley stated “We are a conquering army . . . not a pillaging army.”) but established the MFAA (Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives) program, whose members were known as “Venus Fixers” and “Monuments Men.” In large part this book is a tribute to them and their work, and makes a point of listing the names of all members known, as well as mentioning many of the local people who aided them.

The book not only covers portable art, but large statues and structures. In most cases the buildings where the artwork was kept — either originally or by the Nazis — but also buildings, statues and other large objects which were damaged by the war. Chapter Nine: Casualties of War shows some of what was done — and how — to restore damaged structures. Particularly impressive are period photos of important buildings damaged during the War

matched with other photos showing their current state. Not all the damage was the fault of the Nazis, either. Monte Cassino is covered, for example, and the author makes a point of the fact that its destruction was not only unnecessary but actually hurt the war effort. The Germans were not, as suspected, using the Abbey as a base beforehand. However, after it was bombed they were able to use the rubble and remains of the structure for cover and protection.

Another section shows efforts made to preserve and protect works of art from the ravages of war. Axis and Allies alike all knew there was likely to be large-scale bombing and artillery attacks. What could be moved was, and what couldn’t was bunkered. A common tactic to protect large statues was to build a sturdy crib around them and fill that with dry sand. Some pieces were swathed in plaster-soaked cloth. Michelangelo’s Moses was entombed in place inside a massive brick bunker. The French were so confident that even the barbaric Germans wouldn’t knowingly bomb works moved from the Louvre for storage away from Paris that they spelled out “Musée du Louvre” in large letters outside the facility. (I note that some of the photos of very large paintings being rolled for storage would probably give modern conservators conniptions.)

If you have any interest in history, art or crime and justice, buy this book.

THE DA VINCI CODE

by Dan Brown (2003)

Review by Richard Dengrove

I liked the *DaVinci Code* but not as great literature. I liked it as a blockbuster thriller for when you crave brainless entertainment.

Characterization is its weakest point. One character is totally clunky, Inspector Bezu Fache. He is always angry. Also, based on a lie told him, he is always hounding Robert Langdon, the Harvard professor of Symbology, and Sophie Neveu, cryptographer for the French National Police.

Fortunately, Dan’s other characters don’t stick out like sore thumbs. Their problem is just that they are one dimensional. Sophie Neveu only wants to get to the bottom of her grandfather’s murder. Sir Leigh Teabing is only a spoiled aristocrat used to getting his way and capable of anything. Silas is only a violent man trying to do what is right but going very wrong.

Robert Langdon, the hero, has so little character that a lot of people claim he has no character at all. All we know is that he is a clever and erudite guy, who is trying to save his ass. Later, he falls in love with Sophie and wants to save her ass too. In the movie, Tom Hanks, good actor that he is, succeeded in giving him the style of a Harvard professor, but not a personality with any more depth.

Thus, these characters are not great even for a blockbuster. Still, except for Bezu, the characters are serviceable and unobtrusive. As I said, we are talking about a blockbuster thriller here, not Shakespeare. The characters don’t really have to be deep. Characters at the kids’

section of the pool are not the same as they would be in Hemingway.

The plot, on the other hand, really isn’t too bad for a blockbuster thriller. Dan succeeds in tying all the loose ends together if you don’t look too closely. Of course, in a blockbuster, you’re not supposed to look too closely. Also, he gives the novel a brisk fast pace

About his style, I have heard a criticism that it was unpoetic. However, it is fine for a thriller; all a thriller demands is the prose be crystal clear. It gets the reader from A to B. No, metaphors or hyperboles are demanded. An audience intent on going 60 miles per hour wouldn’t appreciate poetry anyhow.

In this, the novel differs greatly from the movie. I scratched my head at what was happening there. After I read the novel, however, everything was clear. I suspect the trap the Tom Hanks movie fell into was following the novel to the letter. Movies and novels are two different media.

Another plus for the novel is its setting. Brown describes Paris so well that there are tours based on this novel. Also, he brought Rose Chapel in Scotland to the forefront of people’s imagination as a place for proto-Masonry.

However, the novel’s biggest plus has been its idea. A lot of other things make this novel a good solid blockbuster, but its idea makes it a megaseller. Dan even succeeded in outselling Harry Potter.

The idea is Christ married Mary Magdalen and had children. As a consequence of this, many of his descendants have wound up dead because the last thing the Catholic Church has wanted has been a claimant to Christ’s throne. However, a group called the Priory of Sion has protected them through the centuries, secretly.

It is easy to see why this idea has been so powerful. A Christ who married Mary Magdalen and made her his equal sounds feminist, a very powerful current in the modern world.

The DaVinci Code plays to another current as well: namely, all the grievances diverse people have against the Catholic Church. That makes a Christ whom the Church denies sound progressive even though Christ’s message of peace and love, which the Church teaches, has to be far more progressive than his lineage.

It is true, in the end, the Catholic Church doesn’t seem so vicious. If taken literally, Dan covers his tracks. It turns out not only did the Church have nothing to do with the immediate murders in the novel; the Conservative Catholic organization, Opus Dei, whom a lot of people are suspicious of, didn’t either. The culprit was a renegade member of the Priory of Sion.

This didn’t register. Maybe it wasn’t meant to. *The DaVinci Code* is seen as anti-Catholic. Catholics I have known interpret it as anti-Church. My wife tells me that, periodically, the priests on the Catholic Channel fulminate against Brown’s novel.

What gives the novel extra power is that it is based on a book with some fame in its own right, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* (1982) by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln. That gives Brown’s novel an air of truth. *Holy Blood’s* authors were also very big

on Christ having married Mary Magdalen and spawning descendants. Similarly, they were big on the secret being protected by the Priory of Sion, an organization that arose during the Crusades. And, yes, at some point, Leonardo DaVinci was its Grand Master.

If it wasn't enough to borrow their idea, Dan Brown leaves little references to *Holy Blood* in the DaVinci Code. The name Leigh Teabing betrays Dan's debt. Leigh is one of Holy Blood's authors and Teabing scrambles the name of another, Baigent. The name Bezu Fache betrays it. Mount Bezu plays a small part in *Holy Blood*. The name of Sophie's father, Jacques Saunière, betrays it. Bérengar Saunière plays a big part in *Holy Blood*.

The air of truth from borrowing from a more serious book has made *The DaVinci Code* far more popular than other novels that have plowed the same terrain. Robert Ludlum's *Gemini Contenders* was a big seller but not half as big. The idea was that someone else died on the cross for Christ. While some writers took this libel dead seriously in ancient times, it has had no highly publicized, modern defenders.

It is true Dan Brown has chosen to omit a lot that is in *Holy Blood*. It is a much more sophisticated, although equally flawed, book. Unlike *The DaVinci Code*, it had a rather detailed history of how Christ's descendants spread out. I don't remember anything about the Merovingian kings in the *DaVinci Code*. However, for Baigent, Leigh, etc., they were a big conduit of Christ's lineage. Similarly, there is not one word about Jean Cocteau, the Passover Plot, or the kingdom of Septimus. All that remains is Leonardo DaVinci.

In turn, *Holy Blood*, *Holy Grail* was based to a great extent on the Priory of Sion forgeries. There was a minuscule organization called the Priory of Sion, which, as far as anyone can tell, only existed between the 1950s and 1980s. Its members wrote forgeries, which they placed in various French national archives. On such patently modern codswallop, Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln based their book.

To sum up, Dan's outrageous theory, riding on top of the scholarship of a sort in *Holy Blood* and on top of reader animosities, carried his blockbuster to interstellar bestsellerdom.

HOLLYWOOD SCIENCE Movies, Science & the End of the World

by Sidney Perkowitz
(Columbia University Press; 2007; ISBN
978-0-231-14280-9)

Reviewed by Rodford Edmiston Smith

This book explores the interaction between science, fiction and popular culture. The fiction is all media; print, radio and film. The science is all over the map, from physics to biology. A wide range of stories is explored, and observations made about the quality of both the science and the fiction. However, as the title implies, Perkowitz focuses on the products of Hollywood.

Naturally, many of the observations involve opinion instead of fact. It's one thing to point

out that *The Core* is nearly chemically free of actual science. It's another to repeatedly state that *Destination Moon* is dull and has little story. I am also baffled by the complete omission of *Forbidden Planet* when the nearly contemporaneous but inferior *This Island Earth* is covered.

Still, those are judgement calls, matters of taste. Given the limits of space the author had to make choices, and most of them are good ones to use in illustrating his points. Perkowitz does a good job of exploring his topic and overall reaches reasonable conclusions. Some of those conclusions are obvious to any experienced member of fandom; some aren't.

He also talks a bit about how the science content in the products of Hollywood can be improved. He readily admits that most F/SF movies don't need to be graduate level science courses, and recognizes that many fun movies have scientifically absurd premises even though purporting to be SF.

Among other things, Perkowitz explores how the fictional image of the scientist has changed through the years. He tracks these changing views and the often conflicting portrayals of scientists as mad, wise or both. He notes how they are almost always seen as separate from the mundane world and gives reasons why. (One of the non-SF movies he examines is *A Beautiful Mind*.) He provides examples from various works — quotes as well as well-captioned images — to support his points.

One of the more interesting features of the book is the revelation of some of the little known facts in connection with various well-known works. He also gives concise reviews — often with spoilers — of many movies and some works in other media. The book includes a short section on popcorn, a list of works recommended for further reading and viewing on the topic and an extensive filmography.

The book is a bit dry, which may seem odd considering the subject. However, it is written as a serious exploration and not a popularist fluff piece so this is understandable. I certainly had no trouble reading it all the way through.

This book is recommended to those interested in the general topic of how the various SF media influence and are influenced by both real science and popular culture.

3 Musketeers Mint with Dark Chocolate

Candy Bar review by John Purcell

Alright. I finally ate a candy bar that merits brief commentary. Ever since Joe Major began running candy bar reviews in this fine fanzine, I have been wanting to actually write something about eating chocolate — one of my more favorite hobby interests that ranks just behind producing fanzines (and much less stressful, too!) — and have it pubbed in *Alexiad*. This may not be as in-depth or confectionary-insightful as the reviews by Johnny Carruthers, but what the heck; it's the thought that counts.

However, in terms of eating a candy bar, it is

the "taste" that counts. This is indeed what sets aside the 3 Musketeers Mint with Dark Chocolate from your average run-of-the-mill 3 Musketeers bar. All of my life I have thoroughly enjoyed 3 Musketeers bars; it is my favorite American-made candy bar of all time, and there are many chocolate bars that I will snarf down if given half a chance. Imported chocolate need not be mentioned here, but I do love dark chocolate.

When I saw this candy bar while waiting in a Kroger checkout lane a couple nights ago, I said to myself, "Self, that looks yummy!" With a lightning quick move, I snatched it from the rack and put it on the conveyor belt with my other purchases: a half-gallon of rice milk, bagels, a 5-pound bag of apples, and two boxes of Little Debbie Oatmeal Cream cookies (they were on sale for a dollar a box). Eating the 3 Musketeers Mint with Dark Chocolate bar on the way home, I immediately knew that I had finally found something to write about for *Alexiad*.

In short, it's not bad. The mint flavor is not super-strong, and it is muted nicely by an even coating of chocolate. Sweet and tangy makes a nice combination. It reminded me of eating a York Pepper mint patty, but instead of imagining myself shushing down Alpine slopes with a bevy of bathing beauties waiting for me in the Finnish sauna after I had completed my expertly executed giant slalom run, I had to concentrate on driving since Texas drivers don't know how to use their turn signals even when they're not gabbing away on their cell phones. So my 3 Musketeers Mint with Dark Chocolate candy bar inspired fantasy was of something equally improbable: Texas drivers learning how to drive correctly AND putting that damned cell phone down while driving. Alas, it was just another dream . . .

Yesterday afternoon I bought another one, stuck it in the freezer and enjoyed it while watching a re-run of *The Daily Show*. In fact, I think it's better frozen. The good news is that I didn't chip a tooth in the process. Thus, the 3 Musketeers Mint with Dark Chocolate candy bar gets my whole-hearted endorsement.

Just don't eat it while driving in Texas.

Candy Bar review by Johnny Carruthers
<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/30504.html>

I was a little surprised when I first saw this new candy bar a few weeks ago. Surprised because I would have expected Mars to announce it with at least some advertising fanfare. But as of yet, I have not seen any print or TV advertising for the 3 Musketeers Mint bar.

As the name so readily implies, this is a variation on the 3 Musketeers bar. Inside, the nougat is a peppermint flavor. And surrounding that mint nougat is dark chocolate.

Now, anything with mint and dark chocolate is probably going to be compared to the York Peppermint Pattie. It might be unfair to the other product, but let's face it, it is something of a classic. You could even call it a standard for judging similar candies. Which is what I am

doing, come to think of it.

The mint nougat is as fluffy as the chocolate nougat of the original 3 Musketeers bar. And the peppermint is definitely the dominant flavor in this candy bar. It isn't as strong as the peppermint Altoids, but I would have to say that it is probably stronger than the peppermint fondant inside a York Peppermint Pattie. It leaves an aftertaste that lingers for several minutes after you have consumed the bar. It's not unpleasant, but it is definitely there.

Covering the bar in dark chocolate was definitely a good call. The flavor of milk chocolate would definitely have been overwhelmed by the mint. As it is, the dark chocolate is almost overwhelmed, but manages to hold its own on your tastebuds. And while the mint leaves an aftertaste on the palate, the aftertaste begins before the dark chocolate's flavor has left your mouth.

The only complaint I have about the 3 Musketeers Mint is the size. For some unknown reason, Mars decided to produce it about half the size of the original 3 Musketeers bar, and with two dainty little pieces instead of one big bar. I found that a little irritating, because personally, I would prefer one really good-sized chunk of chocolate and mint. In addition to the full-size bar (and I use the term advisedly), the 3 Musketeers Mint also comes in bags of Minis.

When I reviewed the special version of Snickers that was released in conjunction with Shrek The Third, I mentioned that tinting the nougat of the Milky Way Midnight bar green would be an interesting idea for St. Patrick's Day. I think tinting the nougat of the 3 Musketeers Mint bar green would be an equally interesting marketing idea for St. Patrick's Day.

FANZINES

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Journal of Mind Pollution #32 June 2008

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Rodney's Messy Zine-Like Thing

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Science Fiction/San Francisco #67 June 11,

2008, #68 June 25, 2008, #69 July 9, 2008
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Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin V. 9

#1 June 2008
<http://www.southernfandom.com>
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Steam Engine Time #8 May 2008

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Visions of Paradise #130

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WCSFAzine #11

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The Zine Dump #20

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WORLDCON NEWS

New Worldcon Bids
Chicago in 2012

Texas in 2013
Zagreb in 2013

To be honest, the Texas bid is an exploratory committee, mostly because they haven't decided on a site, with Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio all in the running.

NASFiC Bid
Raleigh, North Carolina in 2010

PROMETHEUS AWARD

The 2008 Prometheus Awards have a tie!
The winners are:

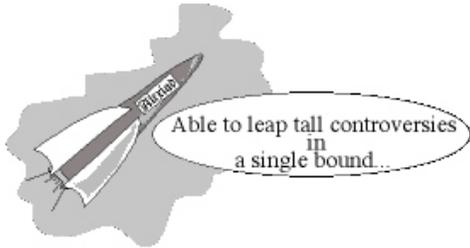
The Gladiator by Harry Turtledove
Ha'Penny by Jo Walton

Great, another award winner
based on Martin Allen's work.

Hall of Fame Award
A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess

The twenty-one chapter edition,
one hopes.

Letters, we get letters



From: **Nancy Martsch** June 12, 2008
 PO Box 55372, Sherman Oaks, CA
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beyondbree@yahoo.com

I seldom write letters of comment, but Milt Stevens seems to be confused with regard to the history of *The Lord of the Rings*. It won the International Fantasy Award at World Con in 1957. That same year Forrest J Ackerman, dean of American Science Fiction, visited Tolkien with a proposal to film *LOTR*: he brought with him art, photos of American locations, and a story treatment by Morton Grady Zimmerman. Tolkien liked the art but detested the story treatment: his correspondence can be read in *The Letters of JRR Tolkien* (1981). Incidentally, fan Gary Hunnewell located the story treatment. Now it's in the archives of Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI. Unfortunately the art seems to have been lost.

What happened was this: *The Lord of the Rings* is a single very long novel, not a series or a trilogy. English publisher George Allen & Unwin (A&U) divided the story into three books because these would be cheaper to print and easier to sell. *The Lord of the Rings* was supposed to be released in three installments about six months apart. Volume I, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, was published July 1954, Volume II, *The Two Towers*, in November 1954. But Tolkien took so long to complete the Appendices that Volume III, *The Return of the King*, wasn't published until October 1955.

At this time the United States had severe restrictions with regard to copyright for foreign books published in English. The book had to be set in type in the US within a certain length of time, and no more than 1,500 copies could be imported. Sometimes English publishers contracted with American publishers to release their books in the US. The book would be printed in England and shipped unbound to the United States, where it would then be bound and distributed under the American publisher's imprint. (Perhaps Stevens confused this with English publication.) So A&U offered *The Lord of the Rings* to the American publisher Houghton Mifflin (HM), who had previously distributed A&U's *The Hobbit*. HM ordered 1,500 copies (the legal maximum), and in due time these were shipped and distributed by HM: *Fellowship* in October 1954, *Two Towers* in

April 1955.

But then Sam lay outside the Orc Tower for nearly a year, and readers on both sides of the Atlantic were frantic. So when *Return of the King* came out, A&U shipped 5,000 copies, thus putting it out-of-compliance from the onset. *Return* was distributed in the US in January 1956. In the years that followed, A&U continued to ship, and HM to distribute, *The Lord of the Rings*. And *LOTR* was never typeset in the US.

In the meantime both American copyright law and publishing changed. Paperbacks became popular. Paperback publishers (Ace among them) asked HM for permission to publish *LOTR*, and were refused. In the spring of 1965 Ace Books published an unauthorized edition of *The Lord of the Rings*, 150,000 paperback copies. This caused a tremendous stir.

The Lord of the Rings had attracted the notice of the American Science Fiction community since the beginning. Short-lived fan clubs and magazines had appeared. In January 1965 Dick Plotz founded the Tolkien Society of America. (The English Tolkien Society was founded by Vera Chapman (Belladonna Took) in 1969.) When the Ace edition came out, both the Tolkien Society of America and the American Science Fiction community rallied to the support of Prof. Tolkien.

Tolkien revised his text so that *The Lord of the Rings* could be typeset in the US to secure American copyright. This authorized, second edition was published by Ballantine Books in paperback in October 1965. (Hardback editions by A&U and HM followed, in 1966 and 1967.) Under pressure, Ace withdrew its remaining copies and paid royalties to Tolkien (but not to Tolkien's publishers). It's unknown how many Ace copies were sold: probably around 100,000. You can still buy them on e-bay today.

Naturally neither Tolkien nor his publishers had anything good to say about Ace. However the Ace edition is nowhere near as bad as its detractors claim: I suspect that much of what people think are "mistakes" are actually the changes which Tolkien made to his text. Ace uses the first edition text.

The Ace affair, with all its attendant publicity and resultant availability of low-cost paperbacks, triggered the Tolkien boom in the US. Everyone benefitted in the end. By the way, you can now buy those first-edition-text 1955-1965 Houghton Mifflin hardbacks on e-bay. They cost around \$100-300 each.

Thank you for the explanation. Some small additional points: As I understand it, the cost of the one-volume edition would have been £3 10s, or at the existing rate of exchange, \$9.80. The three volumes were each one guinea (£1 1s), or \$2.94. The editor who broke the book into three volumes is one of the most significant people in the history of fantasy.

Ace Books had, sorry to say, very poor financial controls. There is a story that Harlan Ellison® checked the royalty statements

for two books of his that were published as an Ace Double and discovered that half the book had sold better than the other half. They were chronically short of money there and could always use a royalty-free work.

Donald A. Wollheim, Futurian, First Fan, and chief editor at Ace, had already pulled off one coup when he brought Edgar Rice Burroughs's books back into print. ERB, Inc. had let several of the books fall into the public domain and Ace had reprinted them, thus bringing about a management shakeup at ERB, Inc. and a general reissuance. (My grandfather had some of those; if I'd got them I'd be well off.) Now he saw another desired book in the public domain and...

Indeed, when the tale was told in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, DAW sent a letter of comment which seemed to some to take undue credit. As I said in the last issue, which this crossed in the mail, the first Tolkien book I ever saw was an Ace edition of *The Two Towers*. (Then there was the time I had to deal with the guy who claimed that JRRT had gone behind A&U's back and encouraged the publication of the Ace edition in order to force their hand. Uh, no.)

— JTM

From: **Christopher J. Garcia** June 13, 2008
 1401 N. Shoreline Boulevard, Mountain View, CA 94043-1311
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Best Fan Writer Hugo Nominee

Well, I realize I never got that article to you. I've even got most of it finished, but alas, it was BayCon season and things often get pushed aside. I will punish myself in the traditions of my people; by gnawing away at my innards with guilt. It is our way.

I'll try and make your panel at WorldCon. I think I'm a good example of someone who really couldn't have been doing fanzines in the old days. I needed that bar lowered and with eFanzines.com, it became possible.

There are new FanEds popping up now and again. There's Kristina Kopnisky, formerly of the BArea and now encamped in Portland, whose *Consonant Enigma* is just about to get rolling again. She's really good.

Jeann Martin, my co-editor for *SF/SF* is another who has come out pretty recently. Peter Sullivan's *Virtual Tucker Hotel* is one other. John Coxon and *Procrastinations* is one of my faves. They're out there, and most of those folks also blog. There's something fundamentally different between blogs and zines. I'm not sure how to explain it, but it's there.

And I'd encourage you to post to

eFanzines.com! It's the gathering place nowadays and is a good way to get works out to new sets of eyes. Though, I'll admit, if you won't get nearly as much contact from readers, but they'll see it. You'd be shocked at the number of people who have talked to me about issues I've done that I never had any idea were reading.

I'd have to redact the addresses. Unless the recipients really want to get 271 emails/hour on tiny pills that make their Rolexes bigger . . .

Considering I only get one or two LoCs on an average issue, it was very shocking when five people were talking about one of my columns at Eastercon!

The Babbage Engine could not have come to the museum at a better time. There's a Steampunk Renaissance around these parts (which was really obvious at CostumerCon this April) and it has been hugely popular. I'm giving a talk about the engine, how it fits into the history of computers (hardly at all), what effect it would have had if Babbage had built it (probably not that much) and where it places in fiction (very amusing). I've still not been trained in how to crank it, though! I'm getting impatient.

All the confirmed Eastern Powers soldiers have passed. The good thing is that folks have been doing oral histories with WWI vets since the 1960s and it's very well-documented it turns out. I wasn't fully aware of how much the Smithsonian had put into the oral histories until I talked with one of the junior curators who said that they were having filing problems with them! WWII is still going to be the greatest documented war in history (thousands of hours of footage from newsreels and filmmakers like John Ford and John Huston along with millions of photos and at least a hundred different oral history projects) with Vietnam not too far behind.

I really disliked *Rollback*, despite it being by Robert J. Sawyer, a writer I usually enjoy quite a bit. I wasn't supersold on *The Last Colony*, but the copy I have was sent to me by my buddy Matt Appleton and was signed by Scalzi "To Chris Garcia: my new best friend . . . or worst enemy?" since it was right after the two of us first appeared on the Hugo ballot together. I completely disagree with you on *The Yiddish Policeman's Union*. It's one of the best books of the last decade in my eyes. It's brilliantly constructed by a writer who admits freely to being a genre writer and it's just can't-put-it-down kind of good. The prose refuses to play straight, which is the reason that I love it so.

It's not a mainstream author taking parts of the genre world and making them OK for the mainstream. It's a genre author who writes mainstream books about half the time giving us a great story that combines all parts of his writing. And to me, that makes it far superior to anything else on the Hugo ballot. *Brasyl* comes close, and I thought the Stross book was pretty darn good, but Chabon just stands over all of

them in my eyes.

Actually, the first appearance of Reality TV is from 1948 and *Candid Camera*. Cops came out of the radio series *Nightwatch*. *You Asked For It* was another of the shows that led us to where we are today. There was even a show in 1953 (on the Dumont!) where contestant had to perform challenges together to win prizes almost exactly like the challenges we see on *Survivor* and the like. Sheckley's story does seem to be the most coherent fictional description of reality TV as the reality of reality television was far less compelling.

I got the exacta on the Derby. To me, it was obvious that's the direction things were going. Big Brown just looked so dominant out there. Eight Belles was a terrible loss, the kind of fall that they writer novels about. The great competitor running the race of their life and falling hard afterwards. It was a shame, and the breeding theories that are out there today are leading to more injuries. A few folks point out that Big Brown's collapse at Belmont was obviously a gambler's worst nightmare. I admit it, I had money on Big Brown to take the Triple Crown, but it was obvious that Desormeaux made a good call easing up. The quartercrack was a much bigger deal than they let on.

We get a lot of science mags here at the museum, and I pretty much only read *Science* and *Discover*. I should try and see if we can get *Science Illustrated*. I also wish I could get someone to start publishing *Omni* again! I miss that rag, the first thing to ever publish any of my writing (a letter in the mid-1980s!)



Interesting choices for the Hugo voting. I totally agree with you that we should be giving the Hugo to *Challenger*. I've been quite happy with it all year and for a long time. I think that Scalzi's going to win the Fan Writer, with Langford close behind, and I just wanna beat out No Award. Totally disagree with your novel picks, but what are you gonna do? I didn't realize that Jay Lake's *Mainspring* was up for the Sidewise. I liked it, had some problems with the last half, but overall thought it was a good novel. Of course, it's up against *The Yiddish Policeman's Union*, which should by all rights destroy everything in it's path.

The review in *Commentary* (by Ruth Wisse; July/August 2007; it's on the Web, so it exists) pretty did for that for me.

Then there was *Kavalier's* (*The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier &*

Clay) somehow winning the Distinguished Service Cross while in the Navy . . .

— JTM

Thanks for the ish!

From: **Robert A. Lichtman** June 20, 2008
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Your experience (described in the June *Alexiad*) with Windows XP Service Pack 3 echoes what I recall reading about it somewhere a month or so ago. Maybe that was a beta version, though — don't exactly recall. I don't have it on my computer (I have XP Pro) but according to Wikipedia it will be automatically downloaded to those who use "Automatic Update" rather than going after updates manually.

I liked your paragraph about writing in South Gate Again in 2010. It would certainly be a wonderful thing if it suddenly won and SCIFI Inc. was faced with the prospect of putting on a convention they hadn't planned for years in advance. I missed South Gate in '58 by being in fandom only a couple months at the time and being too shy to brave taking the 51 bus downtown to check it out.

The Australia in 2010 bid got started as a joke, so I suppose a counterjoke is not completely out of order.

— JTM

I have that Ace edition of *The Two Towers* you describe in "Memories Yet Brown," and your recollection of the cover is correct. This is not a copy I purchased in 1965, though, because at that time I owned the now extremely rare British SF Book Club hardcover edition — which I got through the kind offices of some British fan (possibly Archie Mercer) who bought one and sent it to me earlier in the '60s. That got away from me in 1971 when I sold off a lot of my possessions before going off to live on a commune in Tennessee. In recent years I decided it would be nice to have a copy of the Trilogy again, even though I'm doubtful I'll reread it. (I never read the UK SFBC edition, either, having done my read in books taken from the local library.) These thoughts were spurred by seeing the movies. So I bought used copies of the three Ace volumes, which is how I was able just now to confirm your memory of the cover of *The Two Towers*. Why did I get that particular edition? No good reason — Just Because.

From: **Brad W. Foster** June 21, 2008
P.O. Box 165246, Irving, TX 75016-5246 USA
bwfoster@juno.com
<http://www.jabberwockygraphix.com>
Best Fan Artist Hugo Nominee

Has been over a week since able to make the

trip to the post office to pick up mail (cutting back on trips to save a few bucks on gas, like just about everyone these days), and the new *Alexiad* was the only zine waiting, along with a pile of bills. So, opened that one first!

A quick thought, which I'm sure you have already had, regarding your question of "where are the new faneds?" is the diverse ways to get your thoughts out on the internet these days. Not simply the latest version which you mentioned, blogging, but also those now old stand bys of posting to endless forums, and spending time working the various chat rooms. In the past week I've been invited to each of those, the chat devoted more to small press comics publishing, the forum devoted more to sf illustration. In both cases, I checked out the sites to get a feel for it, and felt it would take up a huge amount of my time just to wade through the usual inane space-holding chatter to get to the meat of any discussions, and knew I wouldn't have the time for that. One of the "good" things about online publishing is you are not limited by a budget to any sort of page count. However, that limitation by print meant that the reader could be pretty sure that what they were about to commit their time to was at least edited down to what the editor felt was worth their time.

Wanted to note that I particularly liked the Escher-like design of the Gilliland 'toon on page 4. Very nice.

Re your comment to Martin Morse Wooster about the proposal that, with more writing being done on the computer with the resultant loss of physical first drafts, authors should print out those drafts for later academics: This, of course, is playing right into the ego of many writers who are QUITE certain that, though ignored by editors, readers, and/or reviewers in their own lifetime, the future will of COURSE want to know every detail of their process. In my own case, I used to toss out all the sketches and preliminary notes and such when I finally got the finished drawing or painting done. I now hold on to some of the more interesting sketches, though not for future reference. Rather, I've found there is a small market NOW of people who would still like to purchase some of those pieces. But interest in the future? Hell, just happy someone wants to look at what I do now!

It wasn't my idea; Dr. Schmidt was presenting it as an example of how impractical some scholars are.

— JTM

From: **John Thiel** June 17, 2008
30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, IN 47904-2950 USA

Your comments in the reviewer's notes sounds as if you think fandom hasn't much of a future.

It may be that it does not, but I think the reason there aren't a lot of new fan editors is that there is little to draw them into things. Science fiction has fulfilled its purpose. It has made the public conscious of science fiction, and there is no reason to believe that this new

consciousness will ever be lost. Science fiction is as much a part of the culture as anything else. As this was about the only cause that drew science fiction fans together, the lack of necessity for further work has resulted in the lack of a call for further work.

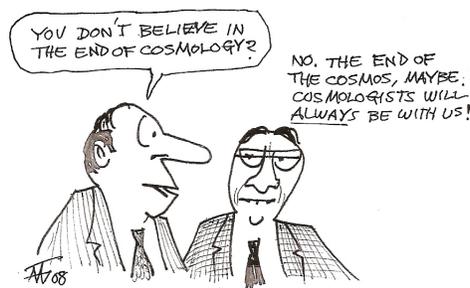
Probably science fiction fans and potential fans are now taking their places in the new culture they have helped to bring about.

If fans are making a place for themselves in the world of the Internet, it's all well and good.

It seems to me that they're bowling alone at Creation*Con.

— JTM

From: **Alexis A. Gilliland** June 24, 2008
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Thank you for *Alexiad* 7.3, the June issue, to which I am belatedly (but still in the month of June) responding. The rain in May was uncommonly heavy, so that the spring on the far side of the driveway flowed with great vigor, running down the sidewalk and four or five times seeping into the basement. After the second time, we left the rug rolled up and sitting on chairs, where it remains even as I type. For some time Lee has been complaining about that spring to the county-in winter the sidewalk is often covered by a mini-glacier, but this year our neighbor the diplomat complained, and the Arlington County guys were out with a contractor in tow. So we signed the contractor up for some extra work (French drains beside the driveway, and replacing some fractured and crumbling concrete in the driveway) and as long as we're doing that, the house needs painting. Sigh. The contractor for the driveway/sidewalk starts tomorrow, while the housepainters start Monday. Do these things come in threes? Maybe. First it was the engine warning light coming on in my car, so I took it in to the dealer, who replaced parts (Me: 5 years or 60,000 miles? But I only have 56,000 miles! Him: Your car is 8 years old, sir, so it's whichever comes first.) running up a shocking and unlooked for bill.

One fuse has blown in my car, or something, and the automatic door locker/unlocker won't work. Which makes things annoying since the car only has one keyhole, in the driver's door.

—JTM

Ah, the Great Depression. Jim Stumm wonders if FDR's experimenting might have created uncertainty, which inhibited investment, thereby prolonging the depression. Play differently, lose differently; Herbert Hoover didn't experiment, and that didn't help worth a damn. But maybe a second term for Hoover would have helped? The voters didn't think so at the time, the fools. George Price and I may be coming to an agreement on the subject, or at least moving in that direction. Citing the *History of Carpenters Local 308* Price says in part: "... preventing the wage from falling ... might have had something to do with that 80% unemployment rate." Did the anti-business collusion of union and government really prevent those wages from falling? From the evidence he presents it did not. In January 1932, with 80% unemployment, the union accepted a cut of 17.5 cents/hour to 87.5 cents/hour, and in 1934 their wages had fallen another 17.5 cents/hour, to bottom out at 70 cents/hour. By 1937, however, carpenter's wages had risen to 110 cent/hour. I couldn't find the unemployment rate for 1937, but in that year there were references to carpenters working longer than union hours at lower than union rates. The technical term for such sadly ineffective government intervention used to be "pushing on string." Another technical term, "comparing apples and oranges" may apply to Price's comparison of carpenter's wages to that of "the lowest unskilled workers," where he found a ratio of 30 to 1. He is comparing skilled white (there was a lot of stuff about Negroes not getting any apprenticeships in well-paying unions) union men with unskilled non-union women, white and black. Compare a minimum wage earner (in VA, \$6.55 an hour, for 2000 hours a year gives an annual income of \$13,100/year) with the basic millionaire. These days, lots of people net a cool \$1,000,000/year, so that the ratio is 76.3 to 1, and we are looking at doctors and lawyers and so forth. Middle class earners, not in the class with hedge fund managers, or internet moguls, who "earn" tens or hundreds of millions. Do any union workers currently earn 30 times minimum wage? You could look it up, but I don't think so. The guys on the Supreme Court earn \$208,100, for a ratio of 15.9 to 1, and are complaining about being underpaid.

Do I think the Great Depression has anything to tell us about today's economic mess? No. The state in 2008 is very different from what it was in 1930, and the economy is also very different. The Fed's rescue of Bear Stearns creditors, lest the economy go into shock, suggests that government and business are joined at the hip, and the fact that Boeing may still get the tanker contract from Northrop Grumman/EADS suggests that business is more often in charge than the government (and certainly business can hire pricier lawyers.) Thus, if business can keep all gains while transferring all loss (or major losses) to the taxpayer the economy has the opportunity to fail in a new and interesting way. So what *will* the Fed do about inflation? After all, it degrades our

debt held by foreign nations, so inflation is arguably in the National interest.

The web site is moving along with Lee taking another course, and as she says: "Realsoonnow!". In the meantime, I have indexed the first disc of cartoons from fanzines, the cartoons Lee cleaned up with Photoshop. Currently I am doing a cross index, using 3x5 file cards, one for each fanzine title, with all of the cartoons on disc listed by image number, so we can look at any particular fanzine and know how many cartoons and where they are. From this index I got 7 pages of cross index, fanzines with the images their cartoons are on, about a weeks work, altogether, and maybe a little better than half of the stuff in fanzines. I've spent more time scanning and indexing my cartoons than I did drawing them, or maybe it just seems that way. Other stuff? We have a disc with about 800 Rotsler collaborations, of which I have done maybe 20. The collections, ~750, and assorted unpublished stuff, at a guess 3-4,000. We should get the site up this summer, and will be adding to it for at least a year, maybe two.

July 1, 2008

Yesterday they tore up the sidewalk and about 10-12 paces of the driveway, while installing French drains along the driveway and the sidewalk, and in the afternoon laid down fresh concrete. In the meantime, the painters came up and did a nice, professional job on the house. Lots of clamor, lots of tumult, the driveway has traffic cones blocking it off until tomorrow, but the house looks nice and the sidewalk is dry for the first time this year. The old drains were six inches deep, which almost did the job; we only got incursions of water in the basement a couple of times a year. The new drains are not only more extensive but 18 inches deep, and include perforated plastic pipe, by way of serious overkill. All of which serves to redirect the little spring into Doctors Run, a tributary of Four Mile Run, which flows into the Potomac (four miles from the center of Washington, DC) and on into the Chesapeake Bay. So this morning I unrolled the run in the basement, on the theory that it should be staying dry.

From: **John Purcell** June 27, 2008
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Many thanks for sending the latest *Alexiad* to my humble sun-baked abode. It was muchly enjoyed, and I did get tweaked by a couple things to comment upon.

First off, Lisa's opening about the D-Day anniversary got me to thinking about my dad's service in the South Pacific (1942-1945; he eventually completed his military service in February, 1946.) What those men went through is nothing short of numbing, and the numbers make one stop and think. For example, Lisa noted that the one-day casualty total was 26,000; that's approximately the size of the student body of Iowa State University, my alma

mater. Now there's a sobering thought; imagine everyone on campus killed or wounded. It is almost inconceivable. Lisa is right in saying we need to remember and honor their sacrifices.

Then Joe wonders where the faneditors and fanwriters of the future will be coming from. The technology available today certainly has taken the pure love and devotion fans used to produce their zines in the past. Speaking for myself, I get the old fannish glow of "I did this!" when I complete an issue of my zine. Fanzine production may not be as physical a task as it used to be, but the joy of creation is still there.

So how do we indeed "grow a fanzine"? Lots of nurturing, coddling, blood, sweat, and tears (while listening to BS&T's first two albums), and showing prospective fans that this old-fashioned method of fannish contact is still vital and actually a rapidly growing and energetic field of fannish endeavour. More than anything, I think those of us who are producing zines on a relatively regular basis need to show why we love to make zines. Simply put, it's fun. I enjoy doing it; how about you?

It provides a way for my writings to be received by people outside of my immediate reach.

Back to the loccol, where Jeffrey Allan Bowman relates the impressions that Steven Brust left on Con*Cept last year. Yeah, he does smoke a lot, that's true; in fact, he's been trying to reduce this smoking-stick usage with poor results. At AggieCons he has attended, Steven has obeyed the rules and stepped outside to smoke. Then again, the con is held on campus at Texas A&M University, so he has no choice: it's the law. My experience with my old friend is that if he knows the rules and regs, he will abide by them. Now, I wasn't at Con*Cept, so I have no idea if that con's Powers That Be read him the no smoking riot act, or if he simply was never aware of them. It is so after the fact that it really doesn't matter anymore. But that's my two-cents worth on this.

Speaking of non-smoking, this coming October it will be exactly 20 years since I gave up smoking for good. It's really kinda funny, too, since now I even can't stand the smell of cigarette smoke, even in open spaces. Seriously, it's funny how this has turned out.

And that should basically do it for now, except I really expect Lisa to smack Joe for that terrible pun back on page 37. "Cee O'Toole emissions", indeed . . .

Grant warned me this would happen.

—JTM

Oh! I almost forgot. I didn't see that candy bar review I sent to you. Just in case it got lost in your computer crash and reboot, I'm sending it along again.

From: **Robert Sabella** June 30, 2008
24 Cedar Manor Court, Budd Lake, NJ
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Thanks for *Alexiad* April-June 2008. As usual, a lot of interesting reading.

It's sad that Janet Kagan died. I enjoyed her Mirable stories and thought the Hugo Award for "The Nutcracker Coup" was well-deserved. I never knew why she abruptly vanished from sf after that, but in retrospect it illustrates how fragile a writer's career actually is. Rest in peace.

George Price's comment that "maybe the Pope and Reagan should be given more or less equal credit" for the Fall of Communism ignores one of the most important players in that event: Mikhail Gorbachev. Rather than trying to hold the waters back by sticking his thumb into the dam, he actually encouraged the waters along. Likely communism would have collapsed without his efforts, but probably without those of Reagan and John Paul II as well, but slower and likely with more birthing pains otherwise.

You seem somewhat harsh on Michael Chabon. Nothing I have read by or about him, including his acceptance speech at the recent Nebula Awards, give any indication that he considers genre sf "something childish, done by people he is superior to." I really believe he wants to be one of us, but that his immersion in literary fiction affects his writing style. Some very fine sf has come out of "literary fiction", Mary Doria Russell's *The Sparrow* and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* being two examples. I hope you are not being snobbish, believing that so-called "literary" writers have no place in sf and should stick to navel-probing fiction. I really enjoyed both *Kavalier and Clay*, *Yiddish Policemen's Union*, and *Gentlemen of the Road* and await other Chabon forays into genre.

I wouldn't count *The Sparrow* as being a particularly good example. And I tried to read *Gentlemen of the Road*, hoping it was a Yiddish Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser. I found it dull.

—JTM

From: **Jim Stumm** June 26, 2008
Post Office Box 29, Buffalo NY 14223-0029 USA

JTM: I have read that a converter box will work with a VCR but you have to set it to the channel being recorded. I suppose this setting is not on a timer. So I could record only one channel while I'm away at work. Now I sometimes record programs from 2 or 3 channels in succession. And sometimes I record 2 channels at the same time on 2 VCRs. None of that will be possible with a converter box. And if I buy a new digital TV instead, I suppose VCRs won't work at all. But maybe I'll also buy a, what do you call it, digital recorder that records TV programs onto CDs. Yes, I know about TiVo, but I want to avoid paying another monthly bill. I'm willing to buy new equipment, but why should I pay someone every month to use my own machine? Then again, maybe I'll give up on broadcast TV and buy or rent DVDs, or read more books.

Richard Dengrove: Could you tell me more

about this crop failure that caused the fall of the Roman Empire? What is your source of information? Where can I find out more about it?

Sometimes a single crop fails, as in the Irish Potato Famine, caused by some fungus that only attacked potatoes. Other crops continued to grow well in Ireland, but the poor depended on the potato, and couldn't grow enough of anything else on their little patches of land.

But in the case of the fall of Rome, you must mean something that affected all crops. what was it that caused this crop failure all across Europe that you allege? Do you mean that crops did grow but yielded less per acre than formerly? Or do you mean that some land that was formerly arable later would produce nothing at all? Usually that happens only in small, localized areas, and new land can be put into production to make up for it. But you are referring to something that affected all of Europe. barbarian lands as well as the Roman Empire, you say. What do you think caused that? Some kind of climate change?

If, on the other hand, agricultural output declines because of demographic, economic, or political reasons, that shouldn't be called "crop failure," which implies something unique to agriculture. Also, crop failure can only occur when crops are still being planted. If crops have not been planted, it's impossible for them to fail. Similarly, we wouldn't say that a runner loses a race if he doesn't compete, even if the reason he doesn't run is because he fears he would lose. Likewise for "crop failure."

There is good evidence for a decline in population in the later Roman Empire, but I'm not aware of any evidence at all for population decline among barbarians at that time. Do you have proof of this, or are you just supposing it might be true?

The German Odoacer was indeed a Roman General, but never Roman Emperor. The last Western Roman Emperor was Romulus Augustulus, who Odoacer deposed. Odoacer was proclaimed King of Italy (Rex Italiae) by his troops. He declined to be named Emperor and instead nominally recognized the superiority of the Eastern or Byzantine Emperor Zeno. He sent the insignia of the Western Emperor back to Zeno who confirmed him as King of Italy and named him Patrician of the West. Later Odoacer fell out with Zeno who encouraged Theodoric the Ostrogoth to attack him. Odoacer was defeated and killed and Theodoric became King of Italy.

Robert S. Kennedy: It doesn't matter if a priest is heterosexual or homosexual as long as he observes his vow of celibacy. For a pious Catholic boy who realizes he is homosexual, the priesthood can be a good option that will please his parents and give him a respectable role in his Catholic milieu, at the cost of suppressing his sexuality. But some homosexuals may go into the priesthood so they can prey upon altar boys, just as some others become teachers or boy scout leaders for the same reason.

Joe: In your Random Jottings you note that the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, California has acquired a Babbage

Difference Engine. "The Cogwheel Brain," by Doron Swade is a biography of Charles Babbage, which incidentally has a chapter on Ada Lovelace that says her position as the first computer programmer is much exaggerated by feminists.

Anyway, the last third of the book relates the story of a British Science Museum that set out in 1985 to build a working Babbage Difference Engine which had never been done before. They spent 250,000 British pounds and it took them 6 years. In 1991 they unveiled a working Babbage Difference Engine #2. It stands 7 feet high, 11 feet long, it's operated with a crank, and it has the computing power of a basic handheld calculator.

I don't think anyone will ever build a second one. So if that California museum has acquired one, it must be this one, tho I find it strange that the Brits would be willing to part with it, since Babbage was their guy.

Someone did indeed build another Difference Engine, and now the California museum has it on temporary loan. Chris Garcia (that lucky spawn of a calot) is working on connecting it to the one in London and setting up a Victorian Inter-Net.

— JTM

From: **R-Laurraine Tutihasi** July 7, 2008
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It looks like we will make it to worldcon. I will try to attend your panel on fanzines. I think there was also some talk of organizing a dinner expedition or something similar, but I don't recall when that was and I didn't find anything flipping through the pages of the zine.

Mike used to have a cat that was leash-trained. I think you have to train one from kittenhood. I've used leashes on cats a few times when we were moving across the country. We definitely didn't want one running away from our car when we stopped from time to time.

Jeffrey Boman talks about stopping vaccinations for his indoor cats. While it's true that they face less risk, I think it's wise to keep them vaccinated just in case they ever get loose, in an earthquake for example. Also all the vets I've ever been to insist that the cats' rabies vaccinations be up-to-date. When we were in LA, we had to register our cats; and that also required a rabies vaccination.

PBS is running a short mini-series called *War of the World*, giving the history of the twentieth century an analysis from a slightly different point of view than most of us are used to. By their analysis, the whole twentieth century was a sort of revolving-door war.

It was observed that 1968 was the first and so far only year in the history of the British Army

that it was not engaged in combat operations. And that goes back to the seventeenth century!

— JTM

From: **Sandra Childress** July 9, 2008
sandra.childress@gmail.com
<http://www.smof-racing.com>
http://community.livejournal.com/cara_blanco

Am I really in the
Alexiad lettercol...?



I was told about your fanzine by John Hertz while at Westercon this past weekend. He then sent me a copy of a couple of pages from the June Issue.

Why? Because I'm the managing partner of SMOF Racing.

Seriously.

We have one horse right now, Cara Blanco, who just broke his maiden at Emerald Downs on July 4 in a Mcl5000 at 1-1/16 mile going wire-to-wire. The partnership includes 12 Smofs/Fans: Jim Briggs, Judy Bemis, Janice Gelb, Sharon Sbarsky, Sheila Perry, Rebecca Barber-Rowan, Bruce Rowan, Stacey Helton, Lisa Duetch Harrigan, Wombat, Bobbi Armbruester, and myself as well as a jeweler who is just starting to show at conventions and an Australian Greyhound trainer.

Our silks? A Beanie in purple, gold and green on black with white stars on the sleeves.

Cara Blanco has his own LiveJournal Community:

community.livejournal.com/cara_blanco

We're awaiting the win photo so that we can put up our website at: www.smof-racing.com

From: **Martin Morse Wooster** July 7, 2008
Post Office Box 8093, Silver Spring,
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mmwooster@yahoo.com

Many thanks for *Alexiad* 39. What did Martin Allen sneak into Britain's National Archives to be "discovered?" I know about Pierre Plantard sneaking in documents into the Bibliotheque Nationale to "prove" that the Merovingian kings descended from Jesus. I've never heard of James Addison Reavis.

Martin forged a number of documents describing connections between the British government and Himmler, capped with an order from Brendan Bracken to kill him. In the eighteen-seventies James Addison Reavis composed a number of forgeries making him heir of a Spanish land grant that

encompassed most of Arizona. The spy writer "E. H. Cookridge" [Edward Spiro] wrote a book about Reavis, The Baron of Arizona.

Joe's review of *Hunting the American Terrorist* reminds me of the limits of profiling. I remember in 2002 when we had the sniper terrorizing our area, and scores of profilers crowded the cable news networks claiming to "prove" who the sniper was. I remember "Jack Dunphy," a Los Angeles cop who writes under a pseudonym on National Review Online, opining that he thought some profiler would claim that the sniper was choosing his victims on the basis of reconstructing his favorite episodes of "Mannix." You're right that none of the profilers guessed that the killers were black, and none figured out that the shooter, John Muhammad, was a Gulf War veteran. All this reminds us that one of the worst ways to catch up on the news is to watch cable news shows (and yes, this includes the Fox News Channel.)

Like Johnny Carruthers, I saw the first two issues of *Science Illustrated*. I didn't like it. It seemed to me to be an empty picture magazine with limited information. The pictures were pretty, I'll admit, but I didn't learn anything from the magazine and decided not to subscribe. I wish the market would support a well-written, well-reported science magazine, along the lines of *Science 85*. But that type of magazine hasn't existed in the U.S. in over 20 years.

I liked Joe's review of *The Reavers*, even if it seems to me that Fraser writing in Silly Mode is when he was at his weakest. (I didn't like *The Pirates* very much.) I did recently read *Flashman on the March*, and was delighted to find that Fraser concluded his series with a good book. I also liked Fraser writing, in the early stages of the Iraq War, a critique of imperial intervention, since the British forces sent to rescue hostages of evil (and crazy) Ethiopian Emperor Theodore did their job, overthrew the emperor and then went home. Some of the Flashmans are better than others of course (I didn't like the one that began with a 75-page cricket match) but Fraser was a great entertainer.

I met the Chief Feline Officer of the Woodford Reserve distillery last month. The cat's name was Elijah, and he allowed limited petting before he got back to work in vermin control and absorbing solar radiation to prevent it from entering the whiskey. If I were a cat, having an entire country distillery to prowl around in would be, well, the cat's meow!

From: **Milt Stevens** July 11, 2008
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Before reading Lisa's comments in *Alexiad* V7#3, I hadn't thought about the D-Day invasion in a long time. I knew that in WWII they didn't advertise the number of our casualties, because it would have been bad for morale. I guess we don't need morale anymore, or the news media doesn't care whether we have

it or not. However, somewhere in the last sixty years, I got the idea we had lost 50,000 in the D-Day invasion. Lisa's figure of 26,000 is definitely bad, but not as bad as 50,000.

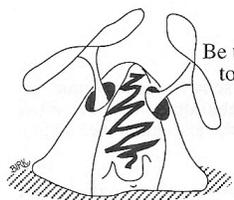
If I am recalling correctly, I'm on five programs at Denvention. (I haven't been informed officially yet.) Strangely enough, I'm not on any fan panels. Maybe people are beginning to believe me that I have an opinion on everything even if I don't know anything about the subject.

As Joseph says, it is much easier to produce fanzines now than it was years ago. Unfortunately for us, there are many other things now available that are even easier than fanzines. The competing activities are also essentially free. Sloth and veniality are both powerful forces. When you combine them you really have a powerful appeal.

I know of only one case where a fanzine was actually grown. It was in The Cult where weird and pervert things were the norm. Bruce Pelz had once described the membership of The Cult as the nastiest bastards in fandom. He knew what to expect. Cultists would naturally try to frustrate Bruce's efforts as a completist fanzine collector. You only needed 13 copies of something to make it officially a Cultzine. One member acquired 13 more-or-less identical cactus plants. He attached tags to the cactus plants naming them "Suppository #1" and giving them Cult fractional rotator numbers to make them official Cultzines. Bruce wasn't an easy man to foil.

So what's so hard about keeping
a cactus?

— JTM



When I first saw the title *The Yiddish Policeman's Union* I thought it sounded insufferably literaryish. I mentioned this feeling to some fans at LASFS, and one of them said he had read it, and it was insufferably literaryish. He also said it was probably the best novel on the ballot. I haven't worked up the energy to read it myself, and I probably won't before worldcon.

From: **Richard Dengrove** July 12, 2008
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Again I enjoyed an *Alexiad*, this time the June 2008 issue. As usual, I had plenty of comments. In fact, I often had to resist the urge to comment. I feared it would make my letter too long and confusing.

Joe, my computer crashed too, this time. However, address books were not one thing we lost. I have been exporting I and Heidi's address books to MyDocuments in the form of WAB files. I backed them up when I backed up MyDocuments. When I imported them, I got back their contents. The only problem is that they were somewhat jumbled: my wife got some of my addresses and I got some of hers. I don't why.

All the big Nazis were believers in occultism before they achieved power. Afterward, what beliefs they indulged in, they did privately. Even that has been exaggerated. While it has been much ballyhooed that Hitler had an astrologer, called Kraaft, who directed his every move, that is a fabrication.

Nonetheless, the Nazis probably still remained believers. Even Hitler, who ridiculed Himmler for being too occult. In a way, it colored their politics. However, the tabloids are reluctant to tell that story because it makes the Nazis look more like run-of-the-mill intolerant authoritarians and less like demon worshipers. In short, boring.

What the Nazis did was suppress occultism. At first, all the big occultists were forbidden to publish. That included occultists who believed in the Nordic gods and foretold the future with Runes.

See Heather Pringle's *The Master Plan: Himmler's Scholars and the Holocaust* (2006; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 5 #5).

Then, after Rudolph Hess went on his ill-conceived mission to Great Britain, the Nazis decided an astrologer had told him to do it. This led them to round up occultists and put them in concentration camps. That is where Hitler's so-called astrologer died.

If Khen Moore is the person I am thinking of, who used to put on conventions, it is no wonder he didn't come to ConGlomeration. When I met him at Outside Con, he looked like warmed over death. Very thin and very tired. Later, I was told he was diagnosed with a really bad liver problem..

To Jeffrey Allan Boman: Jews have apparently existed in India. While natives of India I have spoken to have never heard of them, I once read about them and how they had three castes. The same is true of the Chinese Jews: they exist. The Chinese I have spoken to have never heard of them either. It probably helps that they are non-practicing and do not wish to be associated with Israel. Also, that, I hear, they are known as Blue Hat Moslems.

There are five different Indian Jewish communities, from the Cochin Jews (most of whom now live in Israel) to the Bnei Menashe and Bene Ephraim, tribal groups with surprising ancestries. The Indian Army general J. F. R. Jacob, the Kadoorie family of Hong Kong, the Sassoon family of Britain, and Brian George, the guy who played

the Pakistani store owner on "Seinfeld", like the majority of Indian Jews are Baghdadi Jews. The ancestors of the Cochin Jews arrived in India 2500 years ago.

The Kaifeng Jews, descended from a population of Han Dynasty era immigrants, were known as lanmao hui, which means, as you said, "Blue Hat Muslims". Jews today are called youtai ren [yu t'ai jen] in putonghua [p'u t'ung hua].



About the Iraqi Jews, I heard that Baghdad was a Jewish city around 1920. Unfortunately, most Iraqi Jews fled after the 1948 War. Since then, other events have whittled their numbers down still further, including the Iraqi War. During its height, a Wikipedia article says that there were only seven or eight in Iraq proper ("History of the Jews in Iraq"). The rest having fled.

To George Price: I used the term "aggrandizing wage sector" because I thought I could explain my idea better, not because it sounded like Keynes. Actually, the theory I was using was Supply and Demand. Of course, presupposing monopolies rather than a free market.

That is the way people who believe wages have been too high have usually argued: i.e., that the unions are a monopoly and can set their wages. Those people have been considered Conservatives.

Of course, you now presuppose a free market, and, for that reason, you reject that high wages can affect prices. The problem is I thought your original position was that high wages caused deflation, and that is what caused the depression. Now it appears that high wages can have nothing to do with either inflation or deflation.

About myself: once again, I reversed things. I said the material can only be observed inside us and the spiritual only outside of us. No, it is just the opposite: the material is outside and the spiritual inside. Of course, some people might think it more appropriate to say that the material is apprehended with the senses and the spiritual with the mind. Saying the spiritual is inside of us insinuates that it doesn't exist.

I also have two comments about your comment, Joe. Again tsk, tsk for characterizing a whole people by one extreme example: a man killing his daughters in Texas.

What, then, about the man in Georgia who killed his daughter for refusing an arranged marriage, and who says he has done nothing wrong?

— JTM

Also, I think you got me wrong. I am sure it seems that I meant, on the one hand, Arab men and culture are sexist or worse; on the other, Arab men are insecure and Arab women are confident. It looked like I was trying to balance the stereotype with some other trait.

No, what I was trying to do was explain. What I meant was Arab men and culture are sexist or worse because Arab men are insecure and Arab women confident.

There's a difference.

From: **Lloyd Penney** July 18, 2008
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I hope I'll be in time, but here are some comments on whole issue 39 of *Alexiad*. I hope you've been following the Canadian Triple Crown; interesting results.

South Gate Again in 2010 . . . heard a few things along the way, but it's the alternate choice for 2010, seeing Australia's bound to win? I still support Myles' House in '89! There's nothing wrong with Canfandom, but awareness of fannish publications are at an all-time low. There haven't been many Canadian zines in some years, but *Opuntia* had my vote. The majority voted for No Award, and that I don't understand. I'd rather make the award work, rather than just shut it down, so Canadian fandom may have to find once again what fanpubbing is about, and which zines are out there. They might not know how to nominate for this, or what qualifies for it. I have some ideas for my own zine, working title *Arcade*, but I still have to have some time to figure out what I want to do with it. (Last year, the Aurora for Fan Achievement (Fanzine) went to a French-language website.)

Locally, when it comes to 2011 Worldcon bids, Murray Moore is working on the Reno bid, while Alex von Thorn and Marah Searle-Kovacevic are working on the Seattle bid. Once again, I have high hopes for Guy Lillian taking home a silver rocket for Challenger. His good nature and joie in the editorial stance within the fanzine makes the zine enjoyable read . . . he's paid his dues, and he'd like nothing better than a rocket. . . let's give it to him.

I got to see my favorite cat in the whole world. We went to visit with friends in far southwestern Ontario, and got to spend at least part of the weekend with Momcat. Whenever we were outside, she was underfoot, wanting to be picked up and cuddled, even when it was too hot to do anything like that. She isn't allowed in the house any more, so we'd spend some time outside nuzzling the horses and chasing the chickens, and Momcat would be right there with us. Made our fun weekend just that much more

special.

Jeff Boman is right, both Polaris 22 and the Paradise Comics Comicon were on the same weekend in Toronto. Jeff was in downtown Toronto while I was out near the airport. I hope that neither was affected by the other, but I would have to say that attendance was probably down, by the number of people who might have gone to both, and now had to choose between them.

There was our plan for going to both Corflu in Nashville and the Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium in Dayton when they were both on the same weekend. It would have saved on hotel expenses for sure, and only been a five-and-a-quarter hour drive each way.

— JTM

Thanks to Rich Dengrove for his remarks. I know that it is the extremists in any religion that are our true enemies, but for those Muslim extremists who have caused so much grief, the quickest way to conquer and defeat them is to understand them, and not simply stereotype them or dismiss them as crazy.

My loc . . . Rob Godwin, Yvonne's partner in the Clarke condolence book, took the book to more space conventions until a constellation or true space stars put their signatures in it. The Clarke family will be comforted, and truly stunned at the names within.

I've run out of comment, and dinner time is getting close, so I have to get something ready soon. Take care, many thanks, and enjoy the Denver Worldcon. I hope you'll be coming up to Montréal next year.

From: **John Hertz** July 18, 2008
236 S. Coronado Street No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057-1456 USA

Who is to replace them, indeed! Grab that torch!

You will by now have seen my note on 2010 in *File 770: 153*. O ye of little faith.

I see, it is South Gate.
Southgate Arts and Leisure
Precinct, Melbourne.

My latest review has been posted at:

www.collectingsf.com

Budrys was a giant. A masterly writer, principal reviewer of *Galaxy* then *F&SF* over two decades, by all reports a fine teacher; both acute and generous.

And he wrote a review of *Stranger in a Strange Land* that never got published. That's an interesting story.

— JTM

From: **Sheryl Birkhead** July 20, 2008

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Hmm, about growing a fanzine . . . I am totally biased in to the paperzine camp. I think (well . . .) there are three main reasons — 1) I love the feel of a zine in my hands and even if I could go for the ezines (see subsequent reasons) I cannot spend the time in front of the computer; 2) As far as I understand it, while the locking return on a paperzine is nowhere near 100%, the locking rate on ezines is far below that of paperzines; 3) I simply do not have access to ezines due to computer (and then printer) constraints. Ah, the pride of creation, the satisfaction of a zine in-hand and well done.

The way I loc is usually to keep the incoming zines in a stack or canvas bag — whenever I am headed somewhere (catsitting or just planting in front of the TV) I can cart some or all of the accumulation with me and read/reply. Now that I am not using a portable typer, I am one more rung up the technology ladder — but I still need to get a laptop that does not weigh a ton and has a reasonable battery — but, hey one uses what one can afford!

I am not sure if progress has gone beyond reclamation or not. By that I meant I am unsure if the ezine audience has ever even held a “real” (well-you know what I mean)zine — in the past, I could have added the questions — have they pubbed their ish and had the mimeo experience . . . the collating party . . . and so on. But, the comments need to be dragged into current technology.

episode was focused on what you mention — the “fodder” that was needed to allow *Normandy* to even occur. You are absolutely right in that we cannot imagine the scope of death and loss that was required before the invasion could even begin. Let us all hope that all the wars to end war (even though, as I understand it, that phrase was reserved for *WW I*) will not have been in vain and that mankind will neither blow itself off the earth nor destroy itself as it destroys the planet. WE, or perhaps the next generation may see. Whew — and we talk about the reign of the dinosaur, somehow I don’t think man will manage to hold a candle to it unless many things change . . . a lot.

Suggestion — re-test *Slim* in about three months from his original test.

If someone has never seen a cat refusing to walk in a harness — it comes as quite an interesting sight. Almost all I have seen simply did the flop down, glower, and refuse to move technique. If one simply stands there long enough, sometimes the cat will get up indignantly (and at this point, if not before, the tail is furiously slashing about — communicating for all it’s worth) — walk or crawl a few steps and then repeat the performance. At that point, most people simply pick the cat up and carry it — problem solved — at least from the eat’s point of view.

There is still no decision and a lot of continuing debate about the artificial track surface. I predict this will remain the situation for quite some time unless there is another nationally viewed catastrophe that tips the scale when the public furor demands action. There, to my knowledge, is also still no decision as to what caused *Big Brown’s* drastically altered performance in the Belmont.

Jack Speer — RIP.

Jack’s death prodded me to look into getting the *NESFA* publication of his writing and I got sidetracked into tearing up my storage area (to no avail) looking for my autographed copy of the *James White NESFA* publication. Nope, still can’t find it and I know it is here somewhere — I may just have to break down and buy another copy- but that, of course, cannot replace the autograph.

Hmm — *Slim* and his age — not only do *Siamese* tend to be long lived, once they are mature- it is very difficult to get anywhere close on age unless you already have inside information. I mention this is that if he is thought to be 3-6 — you better make that 3-10. I’d also suggest that, to play it safe, you start out making annual bloodwork/urinalysis a regular thing for him so you don’t get any nasty surprises. The *SPCA* took in a purebred *Siamese* queen that I estimated at 8 until I opened her mouth and added 10 years to that — she was brought in along with her (obviously a cross) *Siamese* looking kitten. When the mother was spayed, the surgeon said the uterus was so badly used that it simply tore apart in his hands.

Laurraine — please investigate the unadjuvanted rabies vaccine for cats — if you mean your cats are now still getting the multiyear rabies vaccine. The unadjuvanted vaccines are the safest according to all the

current information--and that does not have anything to do with the multi-year status, but what is in the vaccine So far (as I understand it) none of the unadjuvanted are three-year vaccines, so any three-year vaccination they get is adjuvanted — and the three year has more adjuvant in it than the adjuvanted one year. So, merely saying we’ll go with the three-year because they are inside has absolutely nothing to do with the actual safety of the vaccine. The last cat I saw dying from the vaccine induced sarcoma was from the three year rabies vaccine. So, once again — please ask and check. To my knowledge there are only two unadjuvanted feline rabies vaccines — both are annual — one is *Pure Vax*-feline only vaccine by *Merial* — this is the only one I will use. A lot of practices do not use it because it is only for cats, has a short “shelf-life”, and is very expensive. The only other one I know of that is unadjuvanted is made by *Intervet* — again, if I remember correctly, only for cats and annual — I have never used it so I do not know for sure. I repeat — the interval of duration is not what you need to look at but whether or not the vaccine is adjuvanted — period. Ask your vet and if they do not carry it and will not get it, then you need to decide. I can guarantee you that *Mars’* owners would have paid the difference. To make matters worse, the tumors may appear up to (I think this was the last assessment) 9 years after vaccination, so not having a problem immediately does not mean it will not happen. I had taken care of *Mars* for four years until his owners retired and moved about 30 miles away. The first year he was seen at another clinic was the year . . . they used *Merial’s PureVax* sister rabies vaccine — *Imrab* — adjuvanted, multi-species, long shelf life, and much less expensive than *PureVax* . Presumably this was the inciting vaccine for the sarcoma. Okay. I’ll get off my soapbox, but it is important (remember — vaccine, and not the interval — unless a safe one year is being given every three years — which, of course, will not meet state regulations!). If this doesn’t make sense let me know and we can “talk” about it directly.

Jeffrey Allan Boman About “My cats never got shots again in my home; indoor cats don’t really need them . . .” Hmm — yes and no. First, without knowing the facts for sure — kittens should get a series (possibly more than one series if they are at risk for certain diseases) — and it is recommended that then they, in general, get a booster for each series in a year. The same is true for adult cats, in general, except their series consist of two doses each--in kittens the number of doses may vary depending on age — and then a booster for each series in a year. After that things get a bit murky. Titering each year for distemper will give you the time when the titer falls below “protective” — or you can go with the suggested every three years — or go with your own ideas. In Maryland, the only vaccine required by law is rabies and there is a hefty fine (\$500 per cat) if you get caught with an unvaccinated cat by animal control. I agree that the less vaccinating done the better — as long as the animal is protected — that is where it gets dicey. If you choose not to vaccinate and



Ask Chris Garcia. But what one does, mostly, is to compose the document, produce a .pdf, and send it to efanzines.com for posting. However, the same few names keep on showing up in the lettercolumns; there’s no new lockhackers, much less zineds.

Lisa- PBS has been re-running a series on war (separate wars separately) and I caught two of the episodes about *WW II*. Almost all of one

(within a closed home) . . . say it is now 8 years later . . . and the cat gets sick — then when you take kitty in to a clinic — its immunity may or may not be appropriate — no way to know for sure for the upper respiratory diseases. Many clinics will not treat unless permission is given to vaccinate — and I am not certain how I feel about that since, to me, vaccinating a debilitated animal is not the wisest course of action.

My sister and her husband have been looking at solar for some time. Scott took early retirement earlier this year and they decided late last year to go ahead and get things done before December 31. I asked her how things were going — she replied they had just had their first \$25 electric bill and it felt great. I do not know the hows and whys of the system they installed but they are all for becoming self-sufficient and have gone far into making that happen. Due to my home's orientation the "right" solar side is the small axis and the company I contacted said there was no point in even considering any installation since there was not even a fraction of the surface area needed. I think I need to find someone more willing to come out and speak with me. The problem is to first locate someone and then to make sure they are reliable. When I had a solar attic fan installed the only company I could find only offered one brand and would only do things their way. I compromised by using a traditional (local) roofer who had installed such fans before — and then provided the fan I wanted installed. It is just about time to re-visit the solar panel issue and make another internet search.

Just a quick note — I have long been a lacto-ovo vegetarian and am now at least flirting with veganism. I figured that would not be too great a leap until I followed a vegan thread about vegan sugar and found out about most (in the eastern US at least) refined cane sugar being filtered through bone char — even though this is removed enough from the animal to allow a kosher label! Now **that** is making things tough — but it means no traditional candy and **that** hurts. Sigh.

I still wish *Lloyd Daub* would pub his ish!!

He sends out lots of emails. I suppose that counts. — JTM

Want to get this printed and into the mail — Thanks for thish — enjoy the Worldcon!

From: **Robert S. Kennedy** July 27, 2008
1779 Ciprian Avenue, Camarillo, CA
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robertk@cipcug.org

Thank you for Vol. 7, No. 3.

So, you were awakened by an earthquake at about 4:30 a.m. I have gone through a number of earthquakes. Back in the 70s in Pasadena my wife and I were awakened by an earthquake that went off at the same time as the alarm clock set to wake me up to go to work. Very confusing. Then, here in Camarillo in the 80s I was awakened early in the morning by an earthquake. After checking to make sure

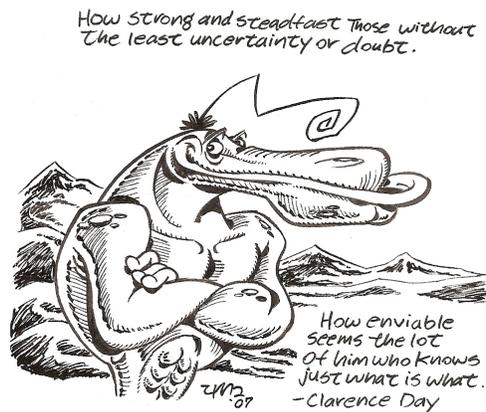
everything was ok I went back to sleep.

Speaking of earthquakes, on Tuesday, July 29, I was in the kitchen preparing lunch. At approximately 11:42 am the house started to shake. Yes, it was an earthquake. It seemed to go on for a minute or more, but was actually only 30 seconds. It was a 5.8 and centered about 90 miles east of here. No damage here, just a big shaking.

Thanks for "Handicapping The Hugos" and recommending a vote for South Gate in 2010. By the way, I have a copy of Hazlitt's *Time Will Run Back* around here somewhere. Maybe it's in one of the steamer trunks in the garage. One of these days I'll see if it can be found.

My friend Mike recommended that I rent and watch *Charlie Wilson's War*. It is an outstanding movie and I gave it a 5 on my rating scale of 1-5. After watching the movie I wanted to know more about the woman in Texas, so the book of the same name by George Crile (2003) was checked out of the local library. Chapter 4, "A Texas Bombshell", about Joanne Herring was read. Then Chapter 3 "A Rogue Elephant in the Agency Woods" about CIA Agent Gust Avrakotos was read. That's all I had planned to read. Silly me, I couldn't put the book down. The book reads like a Tom Clancy or Vince Flynn novel. But, it is all very real. I highly recommend both the movie and the book.

There is some good advice in *The Two-Space War* by Dave Grossman and Leo Frankowski (2004): "...never, under any circumstances, take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night." (p. 171) ☺



Sue Burke: I did not speculate "that eliminating primary election would mean expert choices of candidates" and if that impression was given it was completely inadvertent. I was mainly referring to the presidential primary races. I do think that if that were the case and party professionals determined presidential candidates we could see peace, quiet, less political crap, and not have the huge amounts of money being spent. Whether or not we would see "expert choices" by the parties I don't know. But, I do think that the Democrat and Republican candidates would not be that same as

currently. But, it isn't going to happen so I guess that does constitute speculation on my part. I am not pleased with the presumptive Presidential candidates of the Democrat and Republican parties and once again may be voting for a minor party candidate. Or, maybe I'll just leave it blank. Anyway, the Democrat candidate will carry California so my vote will have no effect on the election. The most interesting thing about the current primary is the collapse of Hillary Rodham Clinton. It was supposed to be a cakewalk for her to the nomination. There are some incredibly wealthy and powerful people in the Democrat Party who don't like the Clintons.

I don't know much about Silvio Berlusconi. If I remember correctly, he has been brought to trial a number of times and never convicted. Is that your problem with him or something else? Is it his politics?

George W. Price: See my comments above about Charlie Wilson. I would now add him to the credits for the Collapse of the Soviet Union even if the eventual result was the law of unintended consequences. Perhaps Margaret Thatcher should also be added.

And Sir Percy Blakeney sighed, a quaint sigh of regret.

"I only regret one thing, my dear M. Chambertin," he said after a while. "And that is, that you and I will never measure wits again after this. Your damnable revolution is dead . . . I am glad I was never tempted to kill you. I might have succumbed, and in very truth robbed the guillotine of an interesting prey. Without any doubt, they will guillotine the lot of you, my good M. Chambertin. Robespierre to-morrow; then his friends, his sycophants, his imitators — you amongst the rest . . . 'Tis a pity! You have so often amused me . . ."

— The Triumph of the Scarlet Pimpernel, orczy báró Orczy Emma Magdolna Rozália Josefa Borbála (Baroness Emma Orczy)

Dash it all, that Yank Charlie Wilson would have made quite the splash at milady's soiree at Blakeney Manor, what what? — JTM

From: **George W. Price** July 29, 2008
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June *Alexiad*:

Lisa mentions growing up in Henderson. Assuming that's Henderson, Kentucky, I was nearby in 1951, taking Army basic training at Camp Breckinridge. However, I never got into Henderson itself; on pass I went to Evansville, Indiana.

You would go through Henderson to get there. Camp Breckinridge is in the news again, over problems with the payments for the people whose land was taken to build the place.

The obituaries for Bob Asprin and Algis Budrys evoked many memories.

I met Asprin in 1971 at a Society for Creative Anachronism tourney in East Lansing. In his persona as the Mongol warrior Yang the Nauseating he presented himself for the first time to King Cariadoc (David Friedman, son of Milton Friedman) of the Middle Kingdom. One was required to disarm before approaching the king, and Yang made a real production of it. He extracted a half dozen or so of knives and daggers — and one meat tenderizer — from various unlikely places about his person.

Asprin became famous in the Middle Kingdom for singing folk songs and ballads, some of them clean. No feast was complete without Yang's version of "The Bastard King of England."

And he was always witty. At one SCA feast, David Friedman brought out a bottle of horrid green goop, announced that it was koumiss (fermented mare's milk, the Mongol national beverage), presented it to Yang, and said, "I thought it would remind you of your homeland." Yang took it gingerly, and said, "Why do you think I left my homeland?"

With Ayjay Budrys I go back much farther. I first saw him at the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society in 1953 — I was stationed at the Army Chemical Center near Baltimore, and would drive up for PSFS meetings. Several Budrys stories had already appeared in *Astounding* and other magazines, so I recognized his name when I met him. He was quite approachable, and never developed the swelled head that some writers get.

The first costume I ever wore to a WorldCon masquerade was a "Terran Space Navy" uniform based on some Budrys stories. That was at Cleveland in 1955; I don't remember if Ayjay was there to see it.

After he moved to Evanston (a suburb of Chicago), I saw him fairly often, though I can't say we were ever really close. In 1984 we were in a car with several others going to the wedding of Betty Hull and Fred Pohl. Budrys regaled us with what has become one of my favorite dirty stories, about Britain's Royal Marine Commandos, why it doesn't hurt, and who it belongs to. (Others tell me they've heard the same story about the U.S. Marines; apparently it's a classic told about most of the world's elite military forces.) I mentioned this when I spoke briefly at Budrys' funeral, and drew a laugh — we were celebrating Ayjay, not just mourning, so we did not limit ourselves to the usual pious solemnities. However, I did not actually tell the story; that would have been going too far. (But if anyone wants a copy, send me a letter or e-mail.)

Both Chicago papers gave Budrys long and

well-informed obituaries.

Minor correction on page 8, in Joe's review of Bloch's *Shooting Star* and *Spiderweb*: Ed Hamilton was Edmond, not Edmund.

Richard Dengrove disputes the romantic view that "Germany could have conquered Britain, and the world . . ." While I generally agree with him on that, he is mistaken in saying that "the German weapons were no match for advanced American weapons . . ." From all I've heard, most German weapons in World War II were as good as ours, and some were much better. In particular, the Panther and Tiger tanks were far superior to our Sherman in guns and armor, and also had lower profiles that made them more difficult targets. In a straight-up duel, the Sherman nearly always lost. We won by overwhelming them with numbers; Detroit built tanks faster than the Wehrmacht could destroy them. Our M-1 Garand infantry rifle was better than the Mauser Gewehr 98, because it was semiautomatic instead of bolt action. However, I understand the German light machine guns were superior to ours. Also, the Germans invented the jet fighter, though too late to do them any good. To be sure, we were way ahead of them in developing the A-bomb, but the war ended before that could make any difference.

The Pershing and Centurion tanks were the equal in combat of the Panther and Tiger, and more reliable mechanically. Similarly, the Gloster Meteor jet fighter was introduced on July 27, 1944, the day after the first aerial victory by a Me-262.

Jim Stumm informs us that "the District of Columbia is not a perfect test case" of the Federal government's powers concerning free speech, because Congressional powers over D.C., military bases, and Federal territories are authorized by Article I Section 8 and Article IV Section 3. "These clauses establish what might be called a Federal Zone . . . in which no state government has authority, and where the Federal Government exercises the same broad powers as states. When Congress is acting instead as a national legislature, as it always is over areas not part of this zone, it has only the limited powers granted to it by the Constitution."

Is he saying that in this "Federal Zone" Congress can restrict free speech the same way that states can? That is, the First Amendment doesn't apply in this zone, just as it doesn't apply to the states? Have I misunderstood? Why should we suppose that the First doesn't apply to those areas that are under direct Federal rule and not part of any state's jurisdiction? I should think that this is most precisely where it would apply.

As near as I can make out, Mr. Stumm is telling us that the country is divided into two types of jurisdiction: (1) The several states, to whose actions the First Amendment does not apply, because it limits only Congress, not the state legislatures (to which I agree); and (2) the "Federal Zone," in which the First Amendment also does not apply, because in that zone Congress has the powers of a state (to which I don't agree at all). Where, then, does the First Amendment apply?

Instead of getting tangled up in fine distinctions between the "Federal Zone" and other jurisdictions, I ask Mr. Stumm directly: Is there now, or has there ever been, any place in the U.S. or its possessions where the First Amendment rules directly? And in this area, has the First ever been interpreted to allow unrestricted publication of obscenity, libel, and so forth?

We seem to have drifted away from my original contention that "free speech" and "free press" are "terms of art" that take for granted that certain kinds of communications — obscenity, pornography, libel, slander, incitement to riot, etc. — are not protected by the First Amendment, in the same way that pogroms and human sacrifice are not protected as free exercises of religion.

I am still waiting to see some examples showing that the Founders did not accept such limits on the First. Cite me a case in which someone published obscenity or libel, etc., and got away with it by claiming that the First Amendment protection was absolute. I don't believe you'll find any such cases before about the 1950s, when the Supreme Court started handing down decisions gutting the traditional interpretation.

"No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

I know some people don't care for the Fourteenth Amendment, but it's the law.

— JTM

From: **Jason K. Burnett** July 30, 2008
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As usual, I enjoyed the latest *Alexiad*. For me, the high point of this issue was Johnny Carruthers' review of *Science Illustrated* magazine. Like Johnny, I have been searching for a replacement for *Omni*, but for me *Science Illustrated* wasn't it. It was an enjoyable read, with wonderful illustrations and photographs, but for me it just didn't evoke the same sensawunda that *Omni* did. For me, the current science magazine that most closely fills the void left by *Omni* is *Seed*. For me, one of the main attractions of *Omni* was that they didn't just

report on science — they discussed the social implications of scientific breakthroughs and the ideas of the people behind the science. *Seed* accomplishes many of these same things, by melding science with philosophy, design, sociology, and numerous other “fuzzier” fields, which still maintaining a strong core of science (and certainly without the pseudoscientific excesses that marred *Omni*’s later years).

Keep up the good work, and I hope to continue reading *Alexiad* for quite some time.

From: **Sue Burke** August 8, 2008
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South Gate again in 2010? I remember Southgate Mall, the first suburban-style shopping center in the Milwaukee area, which opened in 1951. My family shopped there a lot during my childhood. Then Southridge Mall opened nearby in 1970, and it couldn’t take the competition. Most of Southgate was demolished in 1999 and a huge Wal-Mart was put up in its place.

President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela came to visit King Juan Carlos I at his summer palace in Majorca on July 25 to say, “¿Por qué no nos vamos a la playa? [Why don’t we go to the beach?]” The two heads of state shook hands and made up. The King gave the President a tee-shirt that said, “¿Por qué no te callas?” Chávez asked the King for a cut of the royalties for “¿Por qué no te callas?” merchandise. The King said he had received the shirt as a gift from a friend. Though His Majesty didn’t say so, the friend was former President George H.W. Bush of the United States.

Chávez then offered Spain 10,000 barrels of oil per day at the bargain price of \$100, with the cash to be invested in a fund to develop Spanish technology and infrastructure in Venezuela, which desperately needs investment.

Next, Chávez returned to Venezuela and immediately announced that he would nationalize the Banco de Venezuela, which is owned by Spain’s Grupo Santander. This was news to Santander. Spain’s government says it’s sure Santander will get a fair price. Industry analysts agree, but add that the purchase may be bad news for Banco de Venezuela’s customers, since the government is less stable than the corporation.

In June, I bought a sports scarf for my husband that said “¿Por qué no te callas?” It was red and yellow, the colors of Spain’s flag, with a royal coat of arms at each end. He wore it proudly on June 29 when Spain won the European Soccer Cup and the nation exploded in a ecstatic all-night street-partying flag-waving fiesta. Up until that night, the Spanish flag had still been tainted with Fascist connotations, but Coach Luis Aragonés “the Wise” and his team conquered not just Germany but Francisco Franco’s ghost. Flags waved without political implications.

¡Viva España!

Speaking of politics, some politicians complained that Senator Obama didn’t visit Spain during his European tour and blamed their opponents for the country’s “weak” international prestige.

Finally, we have no cats due to my husband’s allergies, but I had them before we were married. I enjoy hearing about them and share the sorrow of losing one.

And in a few hours, I’m off to the Renaissance — to the beautiful Baroque university city Salamanca for a weekend getaway. *Hasta luego.*

Hasta la vista, babee! And you can say “I’ll be back.”

— JTM

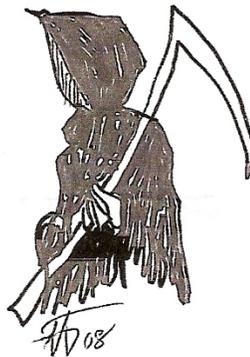
P.S. You can read my short story “Trafficking in Stolen Gods” in this month’s *Atomjack*:

<http://atomjackmagazine.com/11/traffickinginstolengods.html>

The vase mentioned in the story actually exists, by the way.

DYING IS EASY,
 COMEDY IS HARD!

AND WHEN I SAID:
 “BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLKS,
 THERE WAS THIS MAD
 DASH FOR THE EXITS!”



From: **AL du Pisani** August 10, 2008
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A short letter this time. I still love my job, but finds that it eats up my time. Had a bad week: Two mail server failures. Each of which took more than one

working day to resolve, even with working overtime. At this time I am just tired, and cannot remember the interesting things I wanted to say.

You may recall that I mentioned last time that I still plan to read two of the Hugo nominees for Best Novel. That was true at the time: I planned to read the books by Scalzi and Stross. Unfortunately I have since changed my mind on Stross. I have in the intervening two months read a couple of books by Stross, and a vague unhappiness have crystallised: I found that the story I was expecting, was not the story the author wanted to tell me. And that I was experiencing some sort of impedance mismatch with the author. To some extent, that means removing the author from my “to buy” list, and placing him much lower in my “to read” list.

Having just seen this year’s list of Hugo winners, two things struck me: That I am glad over one, and exactly one winner. And that the list of Hugo winning entries in the written form is starting to become a “avoid these authors list” to me. Have I merely become grumpy in my old (42) age, or is SF fandom splitting into mutually exclusive enclaves, with the stuff people read and the stuff that win prizes being the separator?

South African politics is still a mess, and not even one that can provide much fun in mocking. Still, some people manage to do than, which makes life more bearable.

After about a year of uncertainty, we have a new minister at my congregation, and we can now try out some of the big things we have planned. All the uncertainty was wearing us down. We are still blessed, I just hope we can remain a blessing towards others.

SFSA is still carrying on. New members keep on joining, other members keep on disappearing, and the core of about ten people just keeps going. We keep on hoping for more, but it looks as if fewer people are joining for the reasons of yesteryear.

Good luck to you all. And thank you for the new from a more settled place.

WAHF:
Lloyd Daub, with various items of interest.
Dainis Bisenieks, who wrote, and I meant to enter his letter on the way to WorldCon, and it disappeared. Sorry.
Timothy Marion



How to Cast Your Movie/TV Show

HE is a jobless former third-shift clerk at a convenience store who got fired because, like, he was chillin' with the dudes and just forgot.

SHE is a high-profile professional — lawyer, doctor, research scientist, business administrator — who is constantly sought for employment by other organizations.

HE was somewhat stumped by the eighth-grade exit exams.

SHE has earned several graduate degrees.

HE dresses in laceless sneakers, low-cut baggy jeans, a tail-out shirt, and a backwards baseball cap — high fashion in the local jail.

SHE dresses in expensive tailored suits, long flowing gowns by elite high-fashion designers, and high-tech sports gear.

HE has a vocabulary of about seventeen to twenty-five words, half of which are "DUUUUDE!"

SHE not only communicates at a post-graduate level, but also speaks several other languages besides English.

HE is the seventeenth-ranked player of World of Warcraft™ in the neighborhood.

SHE is the possessor of so many professional awards, national awards, awards for distinguished achievement, and international honors that she wouldn't have wall space to put them up, though she doesn't see the point of doing so.

HE drives a not very gently-used Toyota that is burning oil and has its dents covered over by bright stickers that issue insolent challenges to women.

SHE drives a current-model top-line Lexus™ with satellite wireless Internet access so she need not be out of touch for her many crucial responsibilities for even a moment.

HE is living in his mother's basement.

SHE is splitting her time between her high-rise condo and her Caribbean villa, with occasional jaunts to the exclusive resort in the Med.

HE is recognized by the local police.

SHE is personally acquainted with not only the President, but important international figures, all of whom rely implicitly on her advice.

HE scarfs up whatever's cheap and will make him burp the loudest at whatever fast-food place the dudes haven't been kicked out of most recently.

SHE dines at the latest fashionable restaurant.

HE came in a respectable fourth in the fart-lighting contest.

SHE came in a reasonable third, behind two professional runners, in the local marathon.

HE gets totally wasted just about every night on weed, meths, crack, whatever shit the dudes have been able to score, huffing paint even, topped off with a few cans of King Cobra, Thunderbird, Colt .45, Mad Dog, and whatever else they boosted at the grocery, after having been on Ritalin until he left school when he reached sixteen.

SHE might have an occasional drink with the girls, or even perhaps a toke when she wants to relax.

And that's how you get your two lead characters.

Co-Editors: Lisa & Joseph Major
Co-Publishers: Joseph & Lisa Major
Writers, Staff: Major, Joseph & Major, Lisa

Art: What we are mainly looking for is small fillos. Your fillo will probably be scanned in and may be reused, unless you object to its reuse.

Contributions: This is not a fictionzine. It is intended to be our fanzine, so be interesting.

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