

FORNAX #16:

The Movie Reviews Index Issue

Fornax is a fanzine devoted to history, science fiction & gaming as well as other areas where the editor's curiosity goes. It is edited/published by Charles Rector. In the grand tradition of fanzines, it is mostly written by the editor. This is the March 2017 issue.

If you want to write for Fornax, please send email submissions to crectorATmywayDOTcom, with a maximum length of 20,000 words. For now, the same length requirement applies to fiction submissions as well. No poetry or artwork please. Any text format is fine. The same goes if you want to submit your work in the form of text in the email or as an attachment. There is no payment other than the exposure that you will get as a writer. Of course, Letters of Comment are always welcome. Material not written or produced by the Editor/Publisher is printed by permission of the various writers and artists and is copyright by them and remains their sole property and reverts to them after publication. If you want to read more by the editor/publisher, then point your browser to: <http://omgn.com/blog/cjrector>

The Baseball Archive

Back in 2004, there was a guy who had a plan to create what would become the world's first sports blogging network. This was the Most Valuable Network (MVN) that was a forerunner of today's sports blogging networks, the most successful of which is SB Nation.

MVN consisted of blogs about practically every major league sports team in the USA, including some minor leagues as well. When MVN launched in 2004, one Major League Baseball (MLB) team that he had a lot of trouble finding a blogger for was the Chicago White Sox.

The fact that it was especially difficult to find a blogger for the White Sox might seem strange today, White Sox fandom always has a limited presence on the Internet. Even today, the White Sox fandom's Internet presence is substantially less than that of almost all other MLB teams. Just why this is the case, nobody seems to know.

In any event, I came across the MVN blog covering the Kansas City Royals and upon seeing that that blog was part of a blogging network that did not cover what has always been my favorite MLB team, I contacted the big shots at MVN and wound up as the MVN White Sox blogger. During the next few months were great, until for reasons that have never been explained to my satisfaction, I was told that I was being dropped as the White Sox blogger in favor of someone else.

After that, I got myself interested in the subject of independent league baseball, and upon seeing that some folks had started blogs covering some of the leagues and even teams in indy baseball, I suggested to MVN management that there should be a blog there covering what was at the time a fast growing area of professional baseball and also offered to write it for them. MVN agreed and so the Independent Thinking blog came into existence.

What ensued was the most wonderful two months (mid-September 2004 to mid-November 2004) of my blogging existence. If the MVN traffic statistics were correct, it was almost certainly the most popular blog that I ever wrote. Most of what I wrote was basic sports writing stuff, about people coming and going and players to look out for. However, there were some things that I did that were truly special, at least it was special to me anyways.

Namely, I did interviews via E-Mail with a number of important people who were involved with non-MLB oriented baseball. At first, the plan was to do interviews with people on the staff of non-farm minor leagues and teams. However, when there was little interest outside of the Frontier League in doing anything with me, I decided to redefine independent baseball as including amateur baseball as well. Hence, interviews with folks involved with summer collegiate baseball as well as amateur women's baseball.

The time spent on Independent Thinking turned out to be the most positive experience I have ever had as a blogger. If the traffic stats are correct, that was also the most popular blog that I have ever done. However, for reasons that have never been explained, the folks at MVN decided to drop both Independent Thinking and myself in late 2004. MVN went on until late 2009 when it shut down. Due to the policies of its webhost, you cannot access anything on it via the Internet Wayback Machine due to robots.txt.

In the years since, I tried to do an independent league blog on my own, but it turned out that most the traffic and interview opportunities came about only because Independent Thinking as part of a network. I've tried to persuade other blogging networks, such as SB Nation, to allow a blog about non-farm baseball, but have not had any luck. As for independent league baseball, it has not been enjoying halcyon days as there has been little growth since then.

As for why publish this stuff on this fanzine, well its baseball season, isn't it?

Why So Many Movie Reviews?

You may have noticed that lately this fanzine has been running an awful lot of movie reviews. The reason for this is simple. In order to make this project worth the time and effort put into it, it needs both feedback and readership. In order to gain both, this fanzine needs to stand out against the competition. One proven way to do that is to bash and slash the competition. However, in order to succeed in doing that, one needs to have a certain kind of combative personality combined with a sadistic streak to enable to enjoy trashing others. Only problem is that I'm just simply not that kind of person.

There is however, a better way to gain notice. This by publishing content that folks want to read that they can't get anywhere else. Back in the day, a friend of mine, Robert Ludwick, who was an Internet entrepreneur, created a movie review website called FlickZone.net (FZ). I was FZ's chief movie reviewer and as such wrote all but 15 or so of the 180 movie reviews that FZ ran during its existence (2005-2012). However, like so many Internet ventures, after a brief spurt in interest shortly after its unveiling to the public, it failed to gain the kind of traffic needed to at least break even.

When FZ started in 2005, it got less than 1,000 hits per day, but during its first six months or so, ranked on Alexa.com in the top 500,000 websites. By the time the plug was pulled on FZ, it was getting over 8,000 hits per day, yet was not even ranked on Alexa at all. What that goes to show you is just how many more websites there were vying for attention nowadays than in the heady days before the Internet bubble burst in 2000. It also makes you wonder just how accurate the Alexa rankings are since FZ's companion online gaming news and reviews website OMGN.com also had a sizable increase in web traffic, yet it plummeted in the Alexa rankings from being in the top 19,000 websites in 2005 to being in the top 3 million in 2012, yet it was getting over million hits a day when the owner decided to sell it to a longtime gamer who eventually opted to keep the website around as a kind of archival website.

Unfortunately, FZ's webhost was one of those whose policies have resulted in the websites that it hosted that have since gone defunct becoming inaccessible on the Internet Wayback Machine due to the infamous robots.txt. Fortunately, I saved all the reviews that I wrote to email, but those reviews are no longer available for others to read. Given that there is a need for this fanzine to stand out among the competition, as well as a need for those reviews to be publically available so that the time and effort that I put into them won't be wasted, it became obvious that the best option was to start running those reviews over here where they can be accessed on E-Fanzines.com

Screwing Up High Speed Rail

Since this is a science fiction fanzine, things would be remiss if we did not pay attention to how one of the more promising areas of high technology has been perverted by both politicians and clueless journalists. This is High Speed Rail (HSR), a development that has the potential to reduce traffic jams and to reduce overall energy consumption, provided that it is implemented in the right way. Based on previous experience with railroads, the best use of HSR would be in freight. HSR could also be used for commuters such as linking downtown with the suburbs and/or the municipal airport.

However, the professional politicians have other ideas. Perhaps this should come as no surprise since politicians have been known for taking good ideas and screwing them up beyond all recognition. This is true even in the cash-strapped state of California where you would think that given the budgetary situation there, that the political establishment would at least hesitate before committing itself to grandiose projects for which there is little economic justification.

One project that the California political establishment has been pushing is taking an existing rail line linking San Francisco and San Jose and turning it into a HSR type project at an estimated cost of \$2 billion. This is a poorly thought out idea since there is little evidence that there will be anything like the kind of capacity necessary for this HSR type train system to carry to make it economically feasible.

On the other hand, there is considerable evidence that a much more feasible HSR project would be to link Los Angeles and San Diego. That is the favored project of the former head of the California High-Speed Rail Authority and who has been advocating HSR since 1982. There is a great deal of traffic between those two cities, so a HSR route carrying freight and passengers would lead to a reduction of the amount of highway traffic leading to both a reduction in fuel consumption and pollution. However, for strictly political considerations, the politicians have insisted on the San Francisco Bay route instead.

There is some potentially good news on the horizon. Given the horrendous California budget situation, the only way that the San Francisco Bay route can go forward is if the Federal government provides the bulk of the funding. Thus far, the Trump Administration has shown skepticism about this project and has withheld the money for it. If the Trump Administration makes a final decision against funding this project, it will be both a victory for the taxpayers as well as proof that President Trump is indeed serious about cutting governmental waste, fraud and abuse.

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The non-Tolkien Literary Sources for Dungeons & Dragons

It seems as if everyone, or at least every gamer that I've ever spoken to about the subject, is well aware that a great deal of the inspiration and source material for Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) and other Role-Playing Games (RPG's) came from the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. There was a massive boom of interest in Tolkien and his works during the years leading up to the emergence of RPG's. The first paperback editions, that were never authorized by the author, appeared in 1965 and were a hit from the start. The impact of these paperback editions was such that a great many people who had previously never cared about either fantasy or the Middle Ages now became immersed in those subjects.

In hindsight, which as we all know is 20/20, it's pretty clear that the creation of Role-Playing Games (RPG's) was no accident. The late 1960's saw a huge revival of pulp fantasy works due to the creation of the highly popular and strangely named Ballantine Adult Fantasy series that was edited by Lin Carter. With such a strong foundation being laid down, the decade of the 1970's became an incredibly successful period for fantasy fiction, at least outside the realms of magazines. For some reason, the success enjoyed by fantasy books did not extend to fantasy magazines resulting in the death of *Fantastic Stories* in 1980 and the failure of later magazine projects such as *Fantasy Book* and the attempted *Weird Tales* revival.

Given the sheer volume of new fantasy works that were being published in the 1970's, it is not surprising that there was a great deal of poor material. This was particularly true of sword and sorcery tales, the sub-genre pioneered by Robert E. Howard during the 1930's.

This was a most unfortunate development since sword and sorcery tales are not inherently inferior to other forms of fantasy. However, the way that these stories have been written during the 1970's and in later times, these tales lack any kind of depth and are all too often absurdly simplistic.

Another problem is that all too often sword and sorcery tales are set in preindustrial society based on historical Europe. Why aren't other places valid settings for such stories? Why can't there be sword and sorcery set during industrial times as well?

There are other ideas for consideration in creating settings for RPG's. Back before the invention of electric lighting, cities were largely black at night. During ancient and medieval times, when cities were often walled, the walls would block from view much of the sky and with that, much of the light. Back before automobiles were in widespread use, cities stunk to high heaven and were cesspools of disease due to the large amounts of horse manure that were deposited every day. The reason why incense was used in church services was because of the foul odor.

One aspect of pre-industrial society life that is little used in all too many RPG's is religion. This is strange since religion pervaded life in preindustrial societies. It would be interesting to see a RPG featuring a preindustrial society that is pervaded by religion.

Basically what the creators/developers of RPG's and the writers of sword and sorcery tales need to do is to get cracking to get their research done and their facts straight. Only then can they create truly believable imaginary worlds.

ESSAY

The Dolls House Lacked a National Vocational Qualification

By

Robin Bright

In the United Kingdom (UK) of Great Britain (GB) and Northern Ireland (NI) the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) was introduced for those learners who were perceived as underachievers, although deserving of the opportunity to receive training to prepare them for useful working lives apart from those more academic educational qualifications awarded at institutions. NVQs were awarded on a five stage basis during a training program based on the behavioral predictability of humans asked to perform tasks. By applying behaviorist principles to individuals' work performance, it was argued that activity was standardizable, and that standard modes of achieving were discoverable as a replicable part in all work situations. NVQs devisers sought to replicate standardizable modes of achieving by creating a template applicable to all work areas. The trainee could be trained in standardized modes fittable to any work based situation and obtain best results. A trained worker could move between seemingly unrelated employments because NVQs' standardization afforded individuals the capacity to perform tasks adequately within a broad range of previously unrelatable jobs. The lowest level NVQ was 1, and the levels rose through 2, 3, and 4 until 5, which was deemed equivalent to a University doctorate (PhD). The NVQ was flawed because of its basic assumption that the training for the application of standardized processes that would be universally efficacious in all work based situations was a human program.

In the *Bible* the first woman, Eve, is depicted as being tempted by the serpent, Satan, who'd been an angel of God who'd rejected the plan that the human host should be greater than the angelic. According to the *Old Testament* of the *Bible*, which is the history and law of the Jews, that is, the Torah and Talmud, God told Eve her 'seed' would have 'enmity' with the serpent's: 'You shall crush the head of the serpent with your foot, but he will bruise your heel.' (*Gen: 3. 15*) In the *New Testament* of the *Bible*, which is the teaching of Jesus, 'Christ', 'the chosen', Jesus'

teaching to the `chosen people` of God, the Jews, is believed by Christians to supersede the *Old Testament*: `Love your neighbor as you love yourself.` (*Mk*: 12. 31) In Christian iconography, Jesus` mother, the Virgin Mary, is depicted crushing the head of the serpent with her foot, because Jesus was born uncontaminated by the `serpent`s seed` from the Virgin Mary and so was `woman`s seed`. Because women who can sexually reproduce from their own penis` semen are called futanarian, Jesus is Mary`s `foot`, that is, he represents man born from woman only, which is what futanarian women represent for humanity. The head of the serpent, Satan, is crushed because women`s brainpower is superior to that produced by the `serpent`s seed`.

In the paradise of Eden that was heaven on Earth the serpent gave Eve `the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil`, which it was death to taste. Eve had accepted host womb slavery in ephemeral ignorance for her descendants as the price paid for the power of war against her own species of `woman`s seed` waged by Satan against it ostensibly on her behalf: `You shall be as gods.` (*Gen*: 3. 5) Because the NVQ qualification doesn`t take into consideration `woman`s seed` it`s a false paradigm based on a delusion that human standards are being applied. To a certain extent the *New Testament* of the *Bible* is guilty of raising false expectations and occluding the issue. In the prophetic *Revelation* of Jesus` disciple, John, Jesus is distinguished from the `beast` that had `horns like a lamb, but spake like a dragon` (*Rev*: 13. 11), while the serpent is described by John as having grown since Eden to become the `red dragon` of the `serpent`s seed` of men`s war: `And the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war on the remnant of her seed.` (*Gen*: 12. 17) In parasitology, the parasite that emerges from the host to kill it is termed `parasitoid`, which is what John`s `red dragon` of war is. Although Jesus is described alegorically as `the lamb`, and the Christian congregations as his `flock`, the concept of the noun, `sheep`, being applicable to both single and collective creatures is the crux of the argument for a human species of `woman`s seed`, that is, a single race, which doesn`t marry into owned ring slavery, and that`s what marriage on Earth signifies for women bereft of the knowledge of their own species` mode of sexual reproduction between futanarian women with their own penis` semen: `At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.` (*Matt*: 22. 30) The marriage of the lamb is celebrated in John`s *Revelation* and is a basic Christian allegorical representation of the idea of Jesus` `flock`, that is, Christians, having Resurrection and Ascension to heaven above in the stlye of the Jewish Messiah, who was taken to the hill of Calvary outside the city of Jerusalem during Palestine`s occupation by the Empire of Rome, and nailed to a cross of wood as a `dissident`, where he died but experienced Resurrection and Ascension to heaven above the Earth in prefiguration of that of the single, that is, sheep-like, species of futanarian `woman`s seed`, whose destiny from God is the colonization of the planets amongst the stars.

The `beast` of *Revelation* that has `horns like a lamb, but spake like a dragon` (*Rev*: 13. 11) is a reference to male braining for war, which is against `woman`s seed`, that is, `the lamb` Jesus` flock, where Jesus isn`t a ram amongst sheep, but rather another member of the flock, despite being uniquely `Christ`, `the chosen`.

Satan, of course, is often depicted with the horns of a ram, and the 'beast' of *Revelation* has 'horns like a lamb', but he isn't Jesus, because he 'spoke like a dragon', that is, Satan isn't 'woman's seed', and neither are men unconverted to being born through women's mode of sexual reproduction within a single futanarian race independent of their host womb slavers' wars. Meat packers in fact. Producing meat, rather than brains, is what men's brain damning of 'woman's seed' in male braining for consumption in warfare is for. In short, the tempting of Eve by the serpent corresponds to saurian evolution 248 m.a. which preceded hominid evolution 220 m.a., that is, the winged angels of God in heaven above denote an intelligence upon the Earth deriving from the saurian evolution of the Mesozoic period of history before the emergence of hominids in the Jurassic period, while the fallen angel, Satan, represents the enslaving of the human host womb by saurians who didn't remain in heaven but sought power through slavery and war against women's human futanarian 'seed'. Or, in simple terms, men are meat eaters and women are their thinly disguised devoured by the 'red dragon' of war, that is, Jesus and futanarian 'woman's seed' represent humanity, while their devourers are men who don't want the species to develop brainpower because that'd interfere with their trade as butchers.

Al Qaeda were the terrorists that, crashing hijacked civil airliners into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, precipitated 'rough trade', which is that 'brutality and violence' associated with homosexuality. In ancient Greece women's host wombs were institutionally enslaved for homosexuality in pederasty for war against 'woman's seed', which is what 'the events of 9/11' were designed to reestablish. Christians are taught that the four wives of Moslems in Islam are a retroactive attempt to legitimize the birth of Ishmael, the founder of Islam through his descendant, Mohamed, who received the *Koran* (610-30 C.E.) from the angels of God, according to tradition, because Ishmael was born from a woman unmarried. Sara, wife of Abraham, who bore Isaac, founder of Judaism, was barren thereafter so gave her maid, Hajar, to Abraham, and Hajar bore Ishmael. The four wives of Moslems in Islam afford the opportunity for sexual reproduction between 'woman's seed' within the family, which mongamy doesn't afford. In Judaism a Jew can't be born unless from a woman, that is, women are Jews, which is why Jesus' mother was the Virgin Mary, so that it could be seen that Jesus was 'woman's seed'. Conflict in the Middle East subsequent to Al Qaeda's terrorist attack on New York city are an aspect of a global war with homosexuality: 'Men cursed the God of heaven for their pains and their sores but refused to repent of what they had done.' (*Rev: 16. 11*) What they'd done was prefer each other to women and the result was that by the late 20th century men's spreading of the HIV/AIDS 'incurable killer disease' virus through the mixing of blood, shit and semen in each others' anuses constituted a 'biological weapon' in preparation at least since ancient Greece for deployment against 'woman's seed' to keep her in fearful faithfulness to her ring slaver.

Training for men is therefore obviously different to that of women, which means that National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), or any other type of vocational training, is fundamentally misogynist, because it denies women's futanarian mode.

The most obvious example is television where men commonly dress as women in transvestism for comedy shows, for example, RuPaul in *Sister Sister* (1994-99) about twins adopted by separate families who rediscover each other. The problem is evident from the 1976 Montreal Olympic games' gold winning decathlete Bruce Jenner's decision to become a transgender personality, Caitlyn, while keeping his penis where many transsexual men opt to have it surgically removed on the understanding that women don't have semen of their own, whereas futanarian women are 'Man' and so 'TV' is a Hollywood, Babylon, vehicle for ridiculing the species: 'Mystery, Babylon the great, mother of harlots and the abominations of the Earth.' (*Rev*: 17. 5) 'Babylon' was 'a woman' of the woman of the *Bible* who gave her name to the capital city of the Persian Empire, and because host womb slavery for homosexuality in pederasty for war against the human futanarian species of 'woman's seed' practiced by the ancient Greek Empire male brained the race so that it was effectively a single male creature wearing each others' clothes in 'TV' transvestism, the problem is explained. Women are taught that they don't have penis' semen of their own, and the result is gender schizophrenia in which men perceive that they're 'Man' and have their penis removed to be women, whereas 'Man' has both genders. Consequently, gender surgery as practiced to produce 'trannies' rather than 'TVs' is an evil joke on the part of the alien criminal that has enslaved the human race for parasitoid devouring in its wars against her. From an educational perspective women aren't trained for anything other than host womb slavery by an alien parasitoid devourer. Or, in other words, the UK's NVQ system is flawed on that basis.

The Greco-Roman amphitheaters where humans were killed for entertainment were forerunners of the Hollywood, Babylon, movie theaters that began to become global and an unrecognized Empire of the United States of America after the first film made in the district of Hollywood, in the west coast city of Los Angeles, California state, by D. W. Griffith, *Old California* (1910). By 1930 the President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA), Will Hays, had established the 'Hays code', which effectively prohibited women from being seen to be able to sexually reproduce on screen as an educative ban for the human species of 'woman's seed', that is, 'Man': '... women, in love scenes, at all times have 'at least one foot on the floor' (in other words, no love scenes in bed).'1 In Christian terms, the Virgin Mary got her 'foot' off the floor for 'woman's seed' in the person of Jesus 'Christ', 'the chosen', uncontaminated by male semen, but the homosexuals didn't want her to put it down on the serpent's head because they wanted to worship Hollywood, Babylon, leading men. Action movies such as *World Trade Centre* (2006) about the Al Qaeda terrorists hijacking civil airliners at Boston, Logan airport on September 11, 2001, to precipitate war with 'woman's seed' hiding beneath her black burka publically amongst the Moslem women in Islam are generic in misogyny, and the terrorism reflects upon men and women's training.

Al Qaeda, 'the base', trained and operated under the auspices of the notoriously misogynist Taliban regime in Afghanistan, which the US army toppled by December, 2001.

Saddam Hussein, the dictator of Iraq, had invaded Kuwait in 1990, and Kuwait was liberated by the US army and its allies in 1991, but the meaning is 'cue AIDS' city, that is, although the scenario only spawned relatively unknown movies, the 'incurable killer disease', AIDS, spread by men's mixing blood, shit and semen in each others' anuses in mockery of human futanarian sexual reproduction by the late 20th century had produced ancient Greece's 'biological weapon' deployed to keep women in fearful faithfulness to their alien parasitoid ring slavers: 'Men cursed the God of heaven for their pains and their sores but refused to repent of what they had done.' (Rev: 16. 11) What they'd done since the Babylonians began manufacturing the human futanarian race of 'Man' as a 'TV', which machine was invented by John Logie Baird in 1926, was turn the species into a homosexuals' 'snuff film' and the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV), which resulted in the acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome (AIDS) whereby the virus climbed up from the base of the spine at the anus to progressively debilitate the individual and collapse the organs of the body ultimately bringing brain death was what the invasion of 'cue AIDS' city meant for Hollywood, Babylon, which produced the films in celebration of US' success.

Jarhead (2005) took its title from the helmet's worn by the US army modeled on those of the armies of the German National Socialist (Nazi) Party elected in 1933 before their leading man, Adolf Hitler, assumed dictatorship and began pogroming what eventually amounted to 20, 000, 000 Jews in 'death camps' throughout the world because he represented the eagles of Rome who'd killed the Messiah Jesus in Roman occupied Palestine during their Empire while men of the 'serpent's seed' in Satanism were manufacturing the human race as 'snuff TV'. Rome's symbol of authority was the *fascis* 'bundle' with an ax in the centre and after the election in Italy in 1922 Rome's leading man there declared himself dictator, Benito Mussolini, who gave his support to Hitler who borrowed the *fascis* symbol for his extermination pogroms against the Jews who were stacked like logs during the war of 1939-45 in camps such as those of Mauthausen-Gusen in Austria, and Auschwitz in Poland, before being incinerated.

The 'jarhead' concept refers to the absolute obedience of the Nazi soldiers, 'Ja!' In the 8th century collection of stories, *1001 Nights*, the framing device is Shah Jehan's beheading of his wife for alleged unfaithfulness with his brother, although she's innocent. Jehan goes on to marry a fresh bride each day before beheading her in the evening. Scheherezade is the woman who saves the women by telling Jehan stories until he marries her and stops beheading women. The narrative is a description of how male braining beheads the human futanarian species of 'woman's seed' who is trained to believe that she, as 'Man', can't sexually reproduce the brainpower she needs to escape slavery. One of the tales in *1001 Nights* is 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves', who hide in jars to kill Ali, who has found their secret treasure inside a mountain which opens to reveal a hidden cave to those who say, 'Open sesame!' They're oil jars, which is why the US' army were called 'jarheads', because it was a war amongst the oil rich nations of the Middle East and the US expected to win. *1001 Nights* also contains the story of the magic lamp which, when rubbed, summons a genie.

In that story a woman is fooled by a pedlar into giving the lamp away when she hears him in the street, 'New lamps for old!' The analogy is of the oil driven car, that is, advanced technology based on knowledge that is eternal is better than the engine pedaled by the jarheads, which symbolizes the death of genius.

In the *Bible* God offers to Eve and Adam 'the fruit of the tree of life', but they accept 'the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil', that is, death, in exchange for the power of war, which demands ephemerality in ignorance. Consequently, the stories of the genies, that is, genius, represent the fate of the 'djinn', which is symbolized by the engine of the new oil lamp, the car. *1001 Nights* contains stories of djinn, that is, genius, and 'magic carpets', that is, not the car's pets, which are engine driven, because they represent older and better technology, whereas men's technology is alien and parasitoid towards the human futanarian species of 'woman's seed' that produced genius originally, and is called 'djinn'. There are good djinn and evil djinn, according to the *Koran*, which is true of men and women also. Consequently, because men and women are the manufactured 'snuff TV' of the Earth's misogynist history, stories of the djinn are of original humans before the virus of the 'serpent's seed' somehow inveigled itself into the host womb of the species to replicate itself and steal the penis of 'woman's seed' to emerge as her parasitoid and kill her race as an alien, which is why Jesus' teaching is of repentance and conversion from evil sinful nature so that humans can be born in heaven on the colonized planets amongst the stars through 'woman's seed'.

When Iraq's dictator, Saddam, whose name means 'crusher', evinced support 'live on TV' for Al Qaeda, 'the base', the US' army deposed him after invasion in March, 2003, and he was hung on December 30, 2006, that is, the virus was spreading from the base to the head, 'Ja!' Although Saddam was vilified he was a descendant of Mary insofar as the Gulf wars crushed the perception that the ubiquity of the sight of the penisless babes of brainless Hollywood, Babylon, transmitted across the globe by the media Empire of the US was liberating and educative for humans. In alien invasion films, the invaders are called 'bug-eyed monsters', that is, BEMs, so the US ICBMs are because human eyes see BEMs, that is, the parasitoid killer of the futanarian species of 'woman's seed' is preparing to launch its intercontinental ballistic missiles armed with nuclear warheads against her 'remnant'. Despite North American Space Administration (NASA) astronaut Neil Armstrong's claim on being the first to set foot on the moon on July 21, 1969, UTC: 2. 56: 'One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.' On March 23, 1982, US President Ronald 'Ray Gun' Reagan announced his 'Strategic Defense Initiative' (SDI), a 'ground and space based missile system' nicknamed 'star wars' after the movie *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977), which featured a 'Death Star' orbiting planets to kill them. Beneath the foot of Armstrong, 'woman's seed' was facing extinction at the hands of an alien parasitoid enslaver that had stolen her Earth.

Male braining by a devouring alien parasitoid causes the female to want to be killed and eaten, which is what Satanism is. Although training for women does exist, for example, *Alias* (2001-06), which starred actress Jennifer Garner and was about a secret agent, Sydney Bristow, who thought she was working for SD-6, a US intelligence agency, but discovers it's an enemy of the US, so Sydney begins working as a double agent to destroy SD-6 from within, which is essentially the predicament faced by 'woman's seed'. *The Dolls House* (2009) was a TV series starring Eliza Dushku, and it's similarly flawed, because it's for an alien parasitoid to enjoy. The 'dolls' are trained for criminal activity or criminal activity that requires sexual role play. The struggles of the female aren't made so overt as to give the 'game' away, which is that the parasitoid activity of the psychopathic knife wielding killer in the movie, *Scream* (1996), for example, is typical, rather than aberrant, as men're Satan's 'seed' from the perspective of a human futanarian species of 'woman's seed' forbidden from having the franchise, or of sexually reproducing the brains' powers she needs to escape their enslavement of her race's host wombs to wage war in homosexuality and pederasty against her, which is the 'gay game': 'Let he that has wisdom have understanding, The number of the beast is the number of a man and his number is six hundred three score and six.' (Rev: 13. 8) At least since ancient Greece's enslavement of women's host wombs institutionally for homosexuality in pederasty and war, women have been disenfranchised, while Greece, hailed as the 'model of democracy', represented that 66.6% of the allegedly sexual reproductive excluding 33.3% of the human futanarian species of 'woman's seed' lest she not accept male braining and the concomitant desire of the alien impregnator that she be killed by it for 'sport'.

The danger for educational systems offering training in a form similar to the UK's National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) is that it's an 'envy cue' in the sense that it's manufactured by the Hollywood media Empire of Babylon's leading men, because 'woman's seed' isn't in the queue to receive adequate training as a leading 'Man', which is in fact the role being denied to human futanarian women by homosexuality in pederasty for war against her brain producing 'seed' through its 'biological weapon', HIV/AIDS, for example. Although the US promotes itself through the media it largely controls as 'liberated', the transsexual teevees and gender surgeried TV role models for tolerance on its big and small screens largely ignore the fact that humans undergo surgical butchery to resemble men or women due to the confusion caused by the alien parasitoid that has invaded the species' host womb to manufacture it as a snuff film. If Jennifer Garner's character, Sydney, in *Alias* had been a sexually active woman with a penis of her own to fertilize with, the drama would've been different and real edutainment. In *The Dolls House* Eliza Dushku's character, Echo, has her mind erased until she's 'blank' and then she becomes interested in a male, that is, actor Tahmoh Penikett as FBI agent, Paul Ballard, because the misogynist 'serpent's seed' are deriding the human race. Blankness is what male braining by the alien parasitoid produces. Its 'toid with its 'foot', and now it doesn't want to die with its food.

Consequently, TV action dramas feature women who court danger in order to escape from it, but they can't sexually reproduce the brainpower of their own species, which would actually allow 'woman's seed' to get away from the knife wielding alien psychopath chasing after her. In short, TV is a species' killer watching itself hunting the human race as its 'game'.

Without human futanarian 'woman's seed' in the scene for women to want, men's NVQs are what women are for.

1 <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/FootPopping/> .

FICTION

Note: The following was originally published 12 months ago on the *Frontier Tales* Webzine at: http://www.frontiertales.com/2016/03Mar/the_killer.php



The Killer and the Doctor

by Charles Rector

In May 1887, Patrick Runde was feeling pretty full of himself. He had killed his father without anyone in law enforcement suspecting him. Now he was going to inherit the ranch that his father had built up and with it the wealth and social standing that came with it. His friend, the local political power boss, had always said that he'd make a great state senator since he'd always vote the party line. Now that his father, who abhorred politics and politicians, was out of the way, there was nothing or nobody standing in the way of his ambitions.

Runde sat contentedly at the table eating the porterhouse steak that the family cook had prepared for him. By the plate was the bottle of whiskey that he had selected for this private celebration. Life was good.

Just then Doctor Paul Walther stepped into the dining room. "I hope I'm not bothering you," the doctor said with his hat in hand along with his bag.

"Not at all," said Runde, "kind of surprised you're here though. I thought you had left for Phoenix."

"I was on my way, but I turned back. Got a lot of things on my mind that I want to talk to you about," said the doctor.

Runde replied, "Why don't you sit down and make yourself comfortable. I'll get the help to get you something to eat and drink."

After a servant came with a bottle of whiskey, Doctor Walther took a swig of it and remarked, "That was just what the proverbial doctor ordered. All that time in the hot desert."

Runde laughed, looked at the doctor and asked, "What's on your mind, Paul?"

"You."

"Me?"

"I've gotten to thinking about your father and how he met his untimely death. There are some things that point to you as a killer," the doctor said gravely.

Pat exclaimed, "Me a killer? You're crazy!"

The doctor replied, "Don't deny it. Given our past relationship, I really did not want to believe it. However, as I was riding to Tucson, I got to thinking about the strange fact that your father died so soon after your mother. While it's clear to me that your mother died of natural causes, I just cannot get over the fact that your father died so soon after her and so oddly."

"So are you accusing me or something?"

Doc Walther leaned forward in his chair and said, "We need to talk about this, now if you don't mind."

"All right" said Runde, "Let's talk about your suspicions."

Doc Walther placed his black bag in his lap and started talking, "Did you know that I have been a doctor right here in the Arizona Territory for 21 years? And before that, I served in the medical service in the U.S. Army for 20 years?"

Pat Runde responded, "Of course doc, it's all you ever talk about it seems like."

The doctor narrowed his gaze at the new ranch owner and said, "You always were an insolent brat. Your parents sure spoiled you rotten and ruined you."

"Gee doc, you sure know how to praise a guy," Runde said sarcastically.

"You know, in all my years as what the injuns call a medicine man," the doctor went on, "I've handled all the problems that a frontier doctor can expect to handle as well as some completely unexpected situations."

"Are you trying to audition as a filibustering U.S. senator on my time?" Pat Runde was getting exasperated. "Please doc get on with your suspicions before I die of old age," the heir to the Runde ranch said.

"Your father died just a few days later in a strange way," Doc Walther said.

"You said his heart gave out."

"That seemed to make sense at first. You had said that he had been suffering chest pains. However, when I examined him, I found something in his throat that should not have been there. I got it out, but did not say anything about it because I wanted to believe you," the doctor said.

Runde started to feel agitated, "What did you find in his throat?"

"A feather."

"A feather?"

"A feather, you know the kind you find in a pillow. A feather that had no reason to be in your father's throat," replied the doctor.

"That's weird," replied Runde, "perhaps he got it in his throat while he was having convulsions in the bed."

"That's odd," replied Doctor Paul Walther, "you said that he died as peaceful as a lamb. That's your exact words."

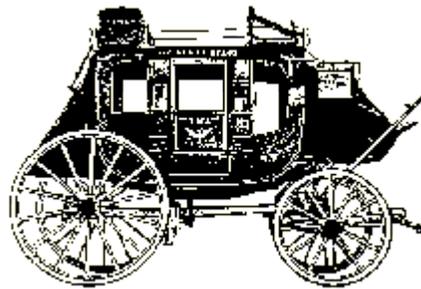
"I might have been mistaken," Runde replied. "You are insulting my very honor insinuating that I could kill my beloved father like that."

"And there's something else. There's been talk that your father had been messing around with the widow Faherty. She's got kids and if your father married her, you could lose your entire inheritance. You obviously have a motive for murder." Doc Walther just sat there for a bit contemplating the scene. Finally, he said, "I'm going to bring this to the attention of Sheriff Mark Edgette and see what he intends to do about it."

Upon hearing this, Patrick Runde decided that he had to eliminate this threat to him and his ill-gotten wealth. He stood up and tried to pull out his gun to shoot the doctor. However, the doctor pulled his gun out of his leather bag and shot Runde first.

"Doc . . . you shot me," Runde said with his last gasp.

Doctor Paul Walther got up and looked down upon Patrick Runde in a disapproving way and said, "I suppose I'm wasting my time telling you this, but I'm not really who you thought I was. You thought that since I was a man of medicine, I was a man of peace and as such an easy make. Actually, before I became a doctor, I was in the U.S. Army for twenty years and that's where I got my medical training. All that time on the frontier fighting the injuns helped me learn the fine art of the quick draw in close combat. The simple fact is that you never had a chance against me."



“The Killer and the Doctor”: The Story Behind the Story

In this issue is a Western short story by this writer entitled “The Killer and the Doctor.” As it happens this story is of particular importance to this fanzine, because what happened with this story led to the creation of this fanzine.

What happened was that after I got to reading a number of Westerns a few years ago, I got to thinking that perhaps I could write them as well. However, there was a problem, one that is still true today: there were hardly any places willing to publish short Western stories.

My solution was to create a blog on which to write new Western stories. The idea was that I could write new stories a few paragraphs at a time while also writing short nonfiction pieces about real life Western characters along with suggestions on how other writers could handle them. Although it started as a personal blog, the idea was to eventually interest other writers into joining in creating a new blog zine. Another idea was to attract comments from readers on how to improve the stories that I was writing.

However, it was not to be. For some strange and mysterious reason known only to the masterminds at Google, Inc., my blog all of a sudden disappeared from Blogger. I received an E-Mail from them saying that my blog was being dropped because it appeared to violate one of their standards.

That E-Mail, it had a link to a website that had whole list of standards the violation of any of which would trigger deletion. Frankly, I did not see how anything in that blog violated any of those standards. There was a “appeal button” in that E-Mail for you to push to appeal their decision. I pushed it expecting that I could then write something down asking for a specific reason why there was any problems with the blog. Instead, the appeal button disappeared from the page, the blog was never restored and I never did receive any explanation as to just what the problem was.

In any event, I lost all interest in using blogs, whether they were based at Blogger or anywhere else, as an outlet for my creative expression and eventually to create my very own fanzine that you are reading right now.

THE DIMENSION MACHINE

by Gerd Maximovic
(Translation: Isabel Cole)

If anyone had told Heinz Nimrod that he would one day believe in ghosts, spirits, witches and evil cosmic devils, that person would surely have been at the receiving end of pointed retorts on Nimrod's part, and perhaps even a kick in that particular place which has been taboo among civilized peoples since times immemorial, and which is only remembered when expressing ones opinion in certain turns of speech, which need not necessarily be very proper.

But now Heinz's Olga had nearly run away from him, and even on the televisior she could not be convinced to return to him the last time they spoke; indeed, as he kept calling and attempting to protest how much she meant to him and that he could not live without her and her charm, without her fabulous skill in the kitchen and without her as the driver of their shared car (especially when he had been drinking) - she simply pretended not to be there and sent her mother, whom Heinz had nothing against, in front of the screen with curlers in her hair, causing Heinz breathing difficulties as he reverted to his old handicap of stammering and blushing.

And yet it had all begun so harmlessly, once he had finally been able to convince Olga to move into a small house with him. It was modestly furnished, but nicely located at the edge of the park, where, as Heinz boldly maintained, they would be able to see the stars and the comets from the top story, which would help them realize their shared wishes.

For the first two weeks they were regular lovebirds, contented and adventurous, preparing little surprises for one another. Thus Heinz was mildly surprised when, on a Saturday morning, the day after mentioning the possibility of an engagement, he got up in the morning and found Olga out in the hall where their clothes hung, looking at his good black suit, which he had going to wear on Sunday, as if there were something very unusual about it, something terrible, as if it were stained with blood after a horrendous crime.

Evidently Olga felt his hot breath on her neck, for she turned on her heel, and - as Olga held up two fingers, their tips pressed together - Heinz looked at a face the likes of which he had not seen on Olga since they had gotten caught in a terrible downpour on the Elbe, which completely soaked Olga's dress, her shoes and herself, and so utterly ruined her hair-do, which the premiere hair stylist in town, a gigolo, had created in three torturous hours of work for a large sum of money, that she looked like a scarecrow - and indeed, as if that were not enough several boys who stood at the edge of the river, holding their fishing rods over the water, were doubled over with impudent laughter.

"Never again," Olga had sworn, "will I go rowing with you. First of all, you splash me, and then it turns out that you're not even capable of listening to the weather report." - And it had done him no good to point out to her that the weather reports on all the television stations, all of which of course he had listened to, had been contradictory in the extreme.

But, given Olga's stormy temperament, this remark was more than just foolish, and thus it was that for several weeks she did not speak to him; when she had to settle something with Heinz, regarding shopping money, for example, she left tiny crumpled notes on his cigar box or put them in his shoes, and once he had even found one of these notes wrapped around his toothbrush.

And now, her face ominous, she held up these two fingers which could be so gentle when she stroked him, when she fondled him, and it seemed that at any moment lightning would flash from her eyes and an inarticulate cry would escape her throat.

"What is that?" she asked like a lioness defending her children - even though they had no children, since she, as she said, was still testing his character.

"What is what?" asked Heinz, rudely torn from all his dreams of engagement, marriage and a glowing future, completely flabbergasted, for he was near-sighted, and since he had just gotten out of bed and had left his glasses next to the television in the living room, in the light of the hall he could not make out the corpus delicti for the life of him.

But Olga, holding the long blonde hair, which she had just discovered on his suit jacket, before her in revulsion, took his helpless question not only as an admission of his bad conscious, but as sheer presumption, that because of the shameful deed which he had undoubtedly committed he was trying to pull her leg.

"Who is the woman?" she asked him in utter surprise, instead of proceeding from the facts and letting him stand there, as she might otherwise have done.

And, coming closer to look at the blonde hair on which his fate could depend, he said: "No idea. Maybe I picked it up in the office or in the streetcar."

But it couldn't have been the office, as both realized simultaneously; there were only dark-

haired women and brunettes there, and no blondes had been hired recently, and what Heinz knew, Olga knew as well, since he had to report to her immediately on such things so that she could complete the mental picture which she had formed in a surprise visit to his office.

"So," she said, and her eyes flashed, "when was the last time you took the streetcar?"

That was indeed a good question, for he had only said that to pacify her.

"You," said Olga to the blanching Heinz Nimrod, "don't even have tickets in your pocket, and they haven't taken cash for a long time, as you should know, my dear!"

Yes, that was true. You could buy tickets at the junctions, but he had not even done that for a long time, and besides, it was pointless to argue about his foolish remark.

"Or somewhere in the supermarket," said Heinz weakly, and rolled his eyes.

"Or somewhere in the supermarket," Olga repeated grimly, for she generally did the shopping for both of them.

"And what is this?" she asked, tore the jacket from the hanger, pressed it to her nose, which was really so small and sweet, and then threw the jacket at Heinz's chest; he was only just able to catch the most expensive piece of clothing he owned.

"No," he stammered, smelling the jacket, and he grew pale.

But that wasn't possible! That couldn't be! Someone had to be playing a particularly mean trick on him!

"That's Chanel No. 7," Olga cried triumphantly, and stretched her arm accusingly at Heinz, "have you been bathing in it?"

"But darling, I really have no idea how that got on my jacket. It stinks infernally! Someone must have spilled a fortune over my jacket!"

"So," said Olga in a voice which could have cut glass, "you dare lie to me! All this time I've suspected that you've been going astray. All I need to do is see the way you stare at every single woman. A behind wiggles somewhere, and your face goes out of control! Yes, that's the way it is, my dear! Where did you do it? At her place? Here even? Here, within our own four walls?"

And without waiting for an answer she pushed Heinz aside and burst into their shared bedroom in which everything still lay in disorder; she tore the pillows and mattresses apart and then froze, along with Heinz, who had staggered after her. For out of the undermost bed frame, which she had expected to find open and empty, she pulled a silk stocking of considerable length and with a number of runs - and one must be aware that Olga despised this kind of clothing, just as she hated it when Heinz pomaded, spruced and gussied himself up.

"And that, my dear," she cried in a choked voice, "fell out of the sky or what?" - for deep down inside she, like poor Heinz, had not expected to find such a terrible piece of evidence under the bed.

Heinz went red all over with shock and began to stutter again, trying to assert his innocence, but that was a faux pas which she could only interpret as an admission of his guilt, even though she was well aware of his handicap - but now she was too deeply wounded in her honor as a woman to make any allowances for him.

"Well, just you wait," she said in a dangerously quiet voice, "I'll be looking around for a lover too, just for your information!"

That was the state of affairs, and it stayed that way for a long while. As was to be

expected, Olga lost the power of speech once again after consulting with her mother in Heinz's address, and only regained it occasionally when the milkman rang or when the mailman brought bills for large sums of money. For Olga had begun to think of herself again, as she said, for example to order things from catalogues which she never would have dreamed of before. She even flirted with the garbage men, and she whispered with the gas man, who came regularly to read the meter, as if she were telling him her whole exciting life story or all the transgressions which Heinz had committed.

But all these gentlemen had sense, and so they listened to these tirades but generally, as soon as they were used to them, took to their heels, and they also seemed to make detours around Olga and her companion whenever possible.

It should be clear that these incidents could not disturb Heinz Nimrod, who had a great deal of patience and a fine sense of humor, for he saw that these decent men posed no threat to him, even if they would have had an easy time of it, and he was aware that Olga was only playing this game to annoy him and to punish him for that morning, which indeed had something mysterious about it.

The situation altered, however, when Heinz came home one evening - the premarital war had already been raging for nearly three weeks - to find, in the same closet, a pair of gleaming brown polished men's boots and a silkily shimmering cape which seemed so exquisite that Heinz could imagine it adorning a king in a distant dream realm.

Heinz touched the boots, set them upright, as their owner had evidently dropped them hastily, and stroked the cape and its collar, which was trimmed with exquisite white fur, almost fearfully. And what he secretly hoped, namely, that the cape and the boots would vanish into thin air, that the whole thing would turn out to be an apparition, a *fata morgana*, refused to happen. In fact, the cape seemed to stare at him mockingly, and the boots seemed to have a peculiar life of their own. At that Heinz Nimrod felt a deep inner fear, for the whole thing could really no longer be given a normal explanation.

At the same time, not only because of the possibility of Olga's unfaithfulness, but also because of his own inability to cope with this apparition, he went red, and cried: "Olga, what's the meaning of this!"

But then he remembered that Olga had hinted that she would not be coming home this evening until after eight, since she was going to visit a girlfriend whom she had been neglecting recently.

So for the time being Heinz Nimrod was alone with his worries and this enigma, and had the feeling that the marital war, which he had thought he had somewhat under control, was slipping out of his hands.

This feeling grew even stronger as he entered the living room. He, the non-smoker, smelled the stale vapors for mere seconds before he spied the big ashtray, almost overflowing with stubbed-out butts. Nowhere on the filters was Olga's lipstick to be seen, and it was not her brand; in fact, Heinz was not even able to decipher the brand name, for on the more intact butts which he examined, after throwing open the window in fury, there were only letters which were slightly reminiscent of Cyrillic - which Heinz had once seen in a vodka commercial - but now he was much too flustered to carry out more precise exegeses of this kind.

He lifted the telephone receiver to call up that girlfriend, but then he thought he had better leave well enough alone; it would only give Olga an advantage; it would be better to solve

the problem in a different way if the matter should after all become more serious and problematic.

So he forced himself to calm down, made himself something to eat, and then decided to take a hot bath, even on a full stomach - he really was somewhat muddled - since that had often helped him before. But as he came into the bathroom, he stopped, rooted to the spot.

Between his bathrobe and Olga's there hung an insolent third robe; it, like the cape outside, was of the finest silk or a similarly noble material, and on the edge of the bathtub stood another big ashtray filled with crushed butts of the same brand as in the living room; in fact, there was even another toothbrush in the medicine cabinet, and at the back of the dressing table where they kept perfumes, tubes of lotion and deodorants was a transparent flacon with a green shimmer; and its contents smelled like the perfume which had been sprayed on his coat; the flacon itself, though it was not of glass and not of metal (but not plastic either), crackled in Heinz's perspiring hands and nearly stuck to them, and it seemed to Heinz that an electrical discharge passed through his hand and arm into his upper body, and he nearly dropped the flacon.

"That's not possible," said Heinz Nimrod to his reflection, which regarded him with a grimace and bared teeth; he even pulled his lips apart, and now he really did look like a monkey.

"Boy oh boy," he went on to himself, "so it's come to this. She's really putting me to the test. Does she really have a gigolo? But no," he growled, scratching his head, "that can't be. I know Olga better than that. She just acts as if she were mortally insulted, but in her heart of hearts she's really a good and faithful soul. Strange," he went on, "what can these clothes be made of? I've never seen anything like it, but then, I'm not an expert on this kind of junk. Hm," he growled, for something had occurred to him.

Now he seemed quite sharp all of a sudden, and was able to speak again without stammering and blushing, and he took the bathrobe off its hook; it cracked in his hand. He sniffed the silken material, but detected nothing out of the ordinary. It felt cool, but at the same time he felt as if he were floating in this cloak, and so he took a few lunging steps as if he were dueling with a real opponent.

Then he began to grow annoyed again, and so he took the robe into the kitchen, where he knew he would find a variety of instruments with which he would be able to tackle this damned piece of clothing. But the scissors with which he opened the juice cartons did not seem to do the trick, and the knife with which Olga cut meat glided off the robe as if it had grown dull overnight, and so, without giving the matter further thought, Heinz threw the perplexing robe down the garbage chute, which led down to the garbage cans in the basement.

Olga came home later than expected; it was ten-thirty, and that, of course, was intentional. Even at the threshold she gave Heinz a searching look to test his reaction to her prank, but she was taken aback, for Heinz was not even really angry at the incident, he seemed more tired.

Thus, instead of removing another arrow from her quiver, she dragged Heinz into the living room by his sleeve, but turned back at the door, for she had seen the splendid robe in the corner of her eye, and now she let out a scream, and thoughts swirled in her head, among them the suspicion that Heinz - though she hardly believed him capable of it - was now playing along in his own way, and that he held subterfuges at the ready and had laid traps to test her.

Coming back into the living room, she looked him deep in the eyes, and since Heinz's pupils were unnaturally dilated (as if he were drunk), she forgot her superficial suspicions at once. Neither had it escaped her quick, searching eyes that the robe and the boots were made

from an unusual material, one which she, at any rate, did not recognize.

And so, over a glass of wine, they agreed that they had both been deceived and that something was fishy in this house, and though they drank more glasses of wine, they now began to shiver inside, though that could also have been because of the window, which they had opened wide to air the living room and dispel the evil spirits.

Outside, above the trees, hung an enormous moon, larger and more splendid than they had ever seen it, and birds twittered in the warm summer night, and it also seemed as if a distant creek had recently begun to babble in the park - but at the edge of a city there are so many sounds reminiscent of creeks, and neither thought anything of it.

And, not only because of the wine, they were in an elevated, even happy mood, for their internal problem seemed to have solved itself in miraculous fashion, and Olga, forgetting her circumspection for a moment, mentioned that she had not been at her girlfriend's at all, that indeed she had never been able to stand her, and Heinz pricked his ears, but gave nothing away.

Toward eleven thirty Olga felt like taking a shower, and as she got up to go to the bathroom she tugged Heinz's ears and told him not to do anything stupid in the meantime and that she would be right back.

But the bathroom she entered seemed strangely altered. The walls had always been high and straight, and the light from the halogen tubes had always shone bright, but cozy - but now she had the impression that the walls leaned toward one another, and the corner where the two tile walls met over the bathtub seemed dark and cramped, and Olga almost thought she could see dark shadows weaving there.

But then she thought that she must have drunk a few glasses too much, or that the wine was perhaps adulterated, and she decided to have a few words with the merchant from whom she had bought the expensive Italian vintage.

So she ran the water, added some first-rate bubble bath, and dipped first her big toe, then her entire foot, finally immersing her whole shapely body in the heavenly floods.

Ah, was that good! She splashed and dallied for a while in the waves, blew the foam away, warbled a tune, and as she was just reaching for the big sponge, even though her head was ducked, she saw a movement in the corner, across the tiles.

It was very graceful, elegant, relaxed, how the man came in, first small as a toy, then growing larger. The man seemed to be lost in thought, for he did not look where he was going, and it also seemed to Olga that this man floated rather than walked.

Then the man looked in Olga's direction, and at first he did not seem to grasp the meaning of what he saw; but then a lightning flash of comprehension crossed his face, for he had seen the foam-covered woman, but at the same time it seemed as if other thoughts were swirling through his head.

For Heinz Nimrod, Olga's first cry was not actually a disturbing sign; but the second made him freeze, for his woman, he thought, could only scream like that when danger was ahead. And at last the third cry rang in Heinz's ears as he reached the hall, having dropped everything - glass, peanuts, newspaper - jumping up as if hounded.

He had already grabbed the doorknob and was about to fling open the door, when, to his great amazement, it swung open against his chest; it struck him full in the nose as well, and for a moment there was a roaring in his head as if a storm wind had risen; and the door slammed into

the bewildered Heinz again, harder this time, and he fell to his knees and, losing his balance, toppled backward into the closet, which received him among its clothes as if with great soft hands.

As he struggled with the adversities of sleeves, scarves, hats and the like, the bathroom door now flew open all the way in a third violent onslaught, crashing against the wall and making plaster fall from the ceiling, and the aforementioned gentleman strode into the hall, taking no notice of Heinz, and - as far as Heinz, still flailing, could tell - he seemed decidedly angry, for his face had gone quite red, and he moved his lips as if in secret dialogue with himself.

Nimrod finally managed to free himself from the jumble of clothes; with one leap he was in the bathroom, but found no trace of Olga; meanwhile the bathtub was about to overflow, only paradoxically the water did not spill onto the tiles, as he would have expected, but was drawn back into the wall as if by an invisible vacuum cleaner, suspended within it like a waterfall with drops spraying away from it here and there; the wall itself was completely dark, and in this darkness, which shimmered and pulsed, he could even see tiny white lights, as if stars were shining there in a night sky of utter blackness.

And on top of that, he began to feel afraid now himself, for something was pulling him forward - a suction which attempted to incorporate him into the wall, and this suction had grown so strong that even Heinz Nimrod's hair, his shirt and pants strained in that direction as if in a severe draft.

Instinctively, he dropped backwards, and as the air rushed over him and soap, towels, bathroom accessories and even Olga's favorite green hat were sucked into the wall, Heinz clung to the foot of the toilet.

Just as he thought he could hold on no longer, the storm suddenly collapsed over him - only, as Heinz clambered to his feet, there was no sign of Olga, except for her earring, which was stuck under the sink in the drain pipe, and tiles had returned to their natural coloration. Heinz Nimrod picked up this earring fondly.

Now he was somewhat battered by the storm, and his brain no longer seemed to be functioning normally; so he checked his face in the mirror, but did not much like what he saw. He was too tired to make faces, so he climbed into the bathtub in his shoes and carefully felt the tiled wall. Without result.

All the same he called quietly: "Olga! Are you there? If you are, answer please! Yes, Olga, would you mind answering?"

But instead there was only the rustling of the trees outside the ventilation shaft, and again it seemed to him that he could hear a brook murmuring in the park - though he knew quite well that there was none there.

Then a deep, friendly voice sounded from the door: "My dear sir, you can call as long as you want, but it won't help!"

Heinz spun around.

"What?" he was about to say.

But the gentleman interrupted him: "I'm sorry that I had to slam the door on your nose, sir, but that was the only solution."

"Hm," growled Heinz Nimrod, feeling his nose, which did hurt a little, but he had almost forgotten that.

Only now did he begin to look the gentleman over. Just now he had seemed elegant, but now the grey hair which grew like a tonsure, the good-natured brown eyes and the stocky build gave more the impression of a priest or a scholar.

"Let's go into the living room," he suggested, taking the man's arm and pushing him ahead into the hall; he was about to push him further, but then the gentleman raced down the hall, for he had seen the boots in the corner.

"Blast!" he said angrily, "someone's been here already!"

"You can say that again," Heinz Nimrod retorted, finally managing to maneuver his uninvited guest, who could not tear himself away from the boots, into the living room.

And he told the man, who introduced himself with the name of Albarak, about the things which had arrived unwanted in the apartment. Albarak, listening calmly, seemed to find his suspicions concerned, and only now and then did an eyelid twitch, or the corner of his mouth, or an eyebrow lifted in surprise or consternation.

"That was my assistant, Fraal," he explained at last, "I shouldn't have let the government assign him to me. I'd had doubts about his character for quite a while, but I kept telling myself that he's a young man and that I can't judge him fairly at my age. I should have sent him to the devil before he could cause any trouble."

"No," he replied when Nimrod asked whether anything had happened to Olga, "that's unlikely. But it'll be hard to get her back from where she is now."

"And where is she?"

Albarak creased his brow. "That is hard to explain if you are not familiar with our research, and even we are not much beyond the experimental phase."

"But is she still in this world," Heinz wanted to know, "and where?"

"Yes and no," Albarak replied, "at any rate, not in the world as you know it."

"And what about the brook which has begun to flow back there recently?" asked Heinz Nimrod, a thought stirring within him.

Albarak smiled at this.

He said: "You're making progress, Mr. Nimrod. Quite surprising, considering that you don't know anything about the whole material, do you. Yes, it's quite possible that even bodies of water may be diverted by these fractures."

"Like the bathtub," said Heinz Nimrod.

"Oh, did its contents flow down the time-space channel?"

"So it seems."

"Oh my God," said Albarak, and seemed pained, "I didn't think the fracture would go so far."

"And what does that mean?"

"That may mean that I will never be able to return to my world."

"And Olga?"

Albarak shook his head.

"But can't you send your assistant a message and tell him to put things right?"

But Albarak seemed tired and somewhat crushed.

"Let me think about it a little first, Mr. Nimrod. We must try to prevent things from taking any more wrong turns. The whole matter is dangerous, and I hope that they on the other side will realize this. I need some peace and quiet. I don't want to impose on you, but could I retire to a couch somewhere, and might you have a pencil and paper and perhaps a small workspace down in the basement?"

"You can lie down on the guest sofa," Nimrod replied. "I'll bring you paper and a pencil. There are a few old carpenter's benches in the basement and some rusty electrical equipment which really belonged to the previous tenant, and which we've been meaning to get rid of."

"Thank you," said Albarak, and now he looked as tired as if he would fall asleep on the spot, and it also seemed that his flesh was not the best for this dimension, for it was now quite transparent and somewhat sallow - but that could also have been the artificial lighting or the light of the moon, which now looked in through the window again, bright and full.

When Heinz Nimrod was woken the next morning by a ray of sun which tickled his nose (his head throbbed, for he had stayed up the night before and drunk too much), he heard a loud hammering and a quiet humming coming from the basement. Groaning, he thought over the events of the previous day and realized that the bed was cold beside him (and it was suspiciously quiet; indeed, after he had savored the calm for several hours it began to seem almost disturbing); he wondered what could have happened to poor Olga and whether he would ever see her again.

He decided to go down to the cellar to see what Mr. Albarak was doing down there, but beforehand he made a big pot of coffee to prepare himself for the events which this day would bring. But just as the coffee was steaming in the pot, the hammering broke off below, and a few seconds later a bleary-eyed, crumpled looking Mr. Albarak came into the kitchen, sniffing the coffee, and explained, after taking a cup firmly in both hands, that he had slept only two hours, but all the deeper for the fact that he was going to spend the rest of the night on a little experiment, because Nimrod's remark that the gadgets in the basement were rusty had given him the idea of trying it with them this once.

"Because rust," he said after taking another sip of coffee, "according to our scientific perspective, contains stored time. All you need to do is free it, and if you then pass certain induction currents through even more certain fields, provided that the Earth's magnetic field is constant, then you should manage to create an electric field for a short but sufficient time, with the help of which you can plant your foot sideways in dimension."

Now this, understandably enough, was above Heinz Nimrod's head, and presumably it will not mean much to today's readers either, but that is unimportant. After all, mankind must develop step by step, and what good would it do to tell Stone Age man of the wonderful properties of electricity.

"However," Albarak continued, "there's a catch to the matter. I'm telling you this right away, and not only because you make such great coffee! Yes," he sighed contemplatively and seemed to revert to inner monologue, "indeed we have lost this coffee and many another things. Why don't we see if we could take a few little beans with us... But no, that would be too dangerous. Even if a single coffee bean were missing, the entire space-time structure could collapse! But on the other hand," he growled, "the implements from our epoch and dimension which Fraal left here don't seem to have caused any greater damage. Hm. Maybe the paradox only works in one direction...."

"You were going to warn me about something," Heinz Nimrod reminded him.

"Ah yes," said Albarak, and drank another sip, "but before I forget, make another pot of this coffee so that we can pack it with our provisions."

"With our provisions, Professor?"

"Provisions, yes," said Albarak. "Oh, my God, I can't fly alone. I need you, my dear sir. One navigates, the other pulls the strings and wires so that we don't go off course."

"But where do you want to go, Professor?"

"Back, of course, my dear fellow."

"But then won't your assistant...?"

"Fraal, the scoundrel? He has nothing but foolishness in his head, the oaf! He's going to

be in for it, I can tell you! No, no, my good man, we'll have to take matters into our own hands. And think of Olga, you'll be able to see her again soon."

Heinz nodded, and now he suddenly realized, with a rush of warmth, that all this time he had been facing the professor, he had spoken completely normally, and he had not blushed anymore either...

"Yes, of course," he hastened to affirm, "of course I'll come, Professor. What kind of provisions should I get ready?"

"Well," said Albarak, "above all, don't forget the coffee. A few cold schnitzels, some sandwiches and a little beer should do just fine."

"Good, good," nodded Heinz.

"There is one other thing," said the professor.

"Yes?" asked Heinz, already cleaning out cupboards and refrigerator.

"Well, nothing which has entered this dimension can be allowed to stay here indefinitely."

"But the brook...."

"Will be neutralized...."

"And the boots...?"

"Yes, and the robe, everything which doesn't belong here, we'll take with us!"

"But the cigarette butts, Professor, how are we going to smuggle them back into our time?"

Albarak shook his head.

"I don't know, my dear fellow. I don't know. We probably won't be able to gather up all of them...."

"The garbage man doesn't come until tomorrow."

The professor shook his head.

"We'll have to risk it. We have no time to lose. Who knows what Fraal's been doing in the meantime!"

Down in the basement, after putting the final touches to his apparatus, Albarak was already waiting for Nimrod impatiently. He came staggering in, having searched the garbage cans, laden heavily with the items discussed, with provisions, books and other useful things like safety pins, matches and glue (for one can never know).

Unloading the things next to the old, rusty bathtub, able to see again, he asked: "But where is the machine we're going to travel in?"

Albarak retreated a few steps from an oven which was so rusty that one could look into its entrails through the holes in its surface. Cords and wires attached the oven with the bathtub, and both stood on a felt mat whose edges Albarak had folded inward.

"Here it is," said the professor. "Of course, it's not up to the standard we hope to develop, but I think it'll hold for a while. Just put the things in the bathtub. Then I'll make a little fire, and then we can start."

With these words he took a shovel which leaned in the corner, and began to fill a coal hod. He did this several times until he had filled the oven to the very top.

"Well," he said encouragingly, noticing Heinz's skeptical look.

And he climbed into the bathtub, after pushing the provisions neatly into the middle, and Nimrod followed him hesitantly.

The professor removed a handy little bottle from his vest pocket, held it up carefully, removed the stopper, sniffed at it, and finally appeared satisfied.

First he poured a few drops in his and Nimrod's hair, then he poured a little carefully in

the oven, which, as Nimrod noticed, blazed up suddenly, and then, when nothing happened, poured a few more drops, until the bottle was about half-empty; then, as a blue jet of flame flickered from the coals, he started back, and told Nimrod to make himself as small as possible.

That was the reason why Nimrod could not see exactly what happened then. At any rate, in the blink of an eye the jet of flame had become a mighty fire, and a moment later the walls of the oven were glowing, and the heat of the fire was so immense that it nearly singed the faces of Nimrod and Albarak.

After the oven had bubbled wildly for a few minutes, Albarak screamed suddenly: "Take the strings!"

And he himself reached for two or three wires and did not let them go. Nimrod followed his example. And hardly were the strings in his fingers - they were quite ordinary strings which had been lying about the basement, seemingly made of hemp - then he felt a pull, in himself, not only in his hands; it was as if he were being turned inside out.

The oven was now white-hot, and just as Nimrod thought he would not be able to stand it anymore, the felt mat began to spin and with it the oven and the bathtub, or perhaps the walls of the basement were spinning - it all happened so quickly that Nimrod could not have said which it was for the life of him; all he knew was that he must hold onto the strings at all costs, as if his life depended on them.

In the wink of an eye the spinning had become a nose-dive. They tilted to the side, but could see nothing, for they were operating in a grey, impenetrable cloud. But they must have been travelling very quickly, for although the oven was still glowing, an ice-cold, piercing airstream whistled around them, even dropping hail upon them; and then, moments later, such a heat roared that Nimrod would have liked to tear off his clothes if his hands had been free, and then was cold again, and then rain fell in big heavy drops on the oven, which hissed and steamed, and once their peculiar vehicle had gradually come to rest, Albarak puffed:

"So, it's raining in this neck of the woods again!"

But there was such satisfaction in his voice that Nimrod told himself that their experiment must have succeeded, and he wished he had asked the professor beforehand where their journey was to take them.

They and the machine were still surrounded by a dense fog, now moved by a light wind. At the same time, they were struck by a stream of water which came from above, soaking the two explorers to the skin in the wink of an eye. And odd things began to rain down into the bathtub as well - pieces of soap, washcloths of finest linen, bras, belts and garters, even an entire girdle, and as more water splashed down on them out of the void, they heard an angry, bickering voice:

"The scoundrels! Aha! Now I know why they had to invent this devil's machine. Ha! Crossing, breaking open and splitting the dimensions indeed! I get it! They're lechers! The professor and his disciple as well. One's a dirty old man, the other's an dissipated character whose tongue hangs down to his knees every time he looks at a woman! They should be ashamed, both of them! Yes, ashamed!"

And again, as the fog slowly parted, entire sets of underwear, of the finest quality, came flying down, and all at once, as the two pioneers quailed in the bathtub before a third ice-cold gout of water, Nimrod took the hard, well-aimed blow of a hairbrush to the back of his head, making him see the stars which he had missed on their great experimental flight, for clearly one could see out there better than in here.

The professor, removing a pair of ruffled, lavender-scented panties from his face, said, as

the fog parted further: "It seems to have worked, my dear fellow - ouch," for he had been struck again, this time by a big white flowered terrycloth towel, "that's women for you in this epoch; compared with them, men of all ages are nothing but wimps.... But I don't understand..." he growled, but fell silent as a flacon of rose-oil was dumped over his bald spot, the precious fragrance dripping into his eyes.

And, once he was able to catch his breath, and as the contours of tiles and the weaving shadows of long-haired beings appeared outside, apparently more than merely excited, cursing so vehemently all at once that not a word could be understood, Albarak went on: "...why we had to land here, of all places."

Then, though objects continued to rain down upon the two pioneers, a gleam of understanding suddenly appeared in his face, sinking down to his neck as a purple flush.

"That was Fraal again, the scoundrel," said the professor. "Now I understand why the machine came through your bathroom, my good man..."

"I don't understand a thing," said Nimrod, still, like the professor, clinging tight to the edge of the tub.

In the meantime the fog had almost completely lifted, and now there was no doubt about what had already been hinted at so sketchily. Nimrod saw women, woman after woman, each more beautiful than the last. There were young and old, plump and slender, women with red and green hair, chestnut brown and rainbow-colored and some whose hair blazed with such a bright fire that it could not possibly have been real.

And the eyes! It seemed as if the women of this epoch wore emeralds, diamonds, sapphires and mixtures of all these and other stones in their eyes and in their navels, for all who surrounded the two men and the machine were naturally completely unclothed, so that one could also see the well-proportioned bodies, the slender legs and the curves just where one would wish them; even those who seemed older were just as attractive as the young ones, for their maturity gave them a special aura. Nimrod felt dizzy.

But perhaps all the brilliance was also due to the fact that these women were really angry, really incensed, for it is well known that for some men a woman in a rage has a particularly irresistible effect. Whatever the case, poor Nimrod's eyes glazed over. But now he really could see nothing more, for a towel completely saturated with stinging chlorine was wrapped around his head by slender fingers.

"Yes," said Albarak, apparently untouched by all this in the midst of his scientific problems, "that must be it. The mechanism has opened up a particular path for itself. Bathtubs, public baths, water, ah, the brook, that's it!"

And, as an entire shower curtain descended upon him, he seemed beside himself with enthusiasm. But then someone called from behind that the two intruders would surely cool off in the jet of the fire extinguisher, and Albarak suddenly came to himself. Now that the fog had dispersed entirely, he glanced quickly about him.

"Back there," he whispered quickly, "do you see the exit?"

Nimrod nodded, for the opening in the tiled walls was hardly to be overlooked.

"I'm going to count to three," hissed Albarak. "Then you'd better take to your heels. We'll use surprise tactics. Don't forget the provisions, especially the coffee!"

"Fine," whispered Nimrod, reaching for the supplies with quick fingers.

"One," counted the professor, "two, three... Up and away, my dear man!"

And with such agility as if they were competing for the Olympic gold, the two men rushed across the smooth, slippery floor, past billowing steam, past undulating bosoms, past

bickering mouths, and at the same time wet towels smacked down upon them and the last supplies of soap, scents and powder was hurled after them.

Nimrod was not certain exactly how they came out into the open. All he knew was that precious, fragrant, fresh air wafted about him, and a bright sun burned in a blue sky, and before him lay a square and a street whose pavement shimmered in the sun like mother of pearl - then the door of the baths were locked tight behind them, and the screeching voices sank to a whisper, to a murmur.

"Achoo!" said the professor, shaking himself like a drenched poodle. "Do you have the coffee?"

"Not now," he fended off Nimrod's unasked question, "the laboratory is right over there. We can dry our things there and see what Fraal's up to, the rascal."

Several moments later, without further incident, they climbed creaking wooden stairs decorated with carved heads, and one of these heads Nimrod recognized as Einstein, whose portrait he had seen once in a magazine.

The professor went to work carefully and circumspectly, checking the mirrors which hung in all the corners and unlocking each of the doors with an enormous skeleton key before they could go further, and Nimrod, looking over the professor's shoulder, could see glass retorts, electrical instruments, enormous experimental apparatuses of porcelain, and many other things of which Nimrod did not know the names.

At the end of the corridor, which they approached on tip-toes, a humming resounded, and blue and white flashes flickered under the door, licking across the wooden floor like snakes. The air had the smell of a thunderstorm, and now indeed quiet, distant, muted thunder rolled behind the oak doors in front of which they had halted.

Albarak knelt down to put his ear to the floor. He listened for a while, and then attempted to peer through the crack into the room, but he seemed dissatisfied with what he saw. He rose carefully, his joints creaking.

"He's experimenting again," he said quietly to Nimrod. "I'm sure of it. I just don't understand what's with the thunderstorm. Ouch," he said as his hair, like Nimrod's stood on end, "that's the usual static discharge which occurs on the flights. It won't hurt us. But we'll have to be careful about just entering the room like this. Otherwise we'll end up in other spaces and other times by accident, and who knows if we'd have such an easy time of escaping the epoch we land in.

"We'll have to wait," he said at last, "until the discharges have stopped. Then he'll be gone, and we can look around in peace."

"And Olga?" Nimrod wanted to know.

"She wasn't in the rooms, at any rate," said the professor. "But she has landed in this time. There is no doubt about that. Let's wait until Fraal is gone, then we can clarify the point."

They sat on the floor, their hair still crackling, and drank some of the coffee and ate a few sandwiches, and just as Nimrod, his stomach growling by now, was about to bite heartily into a cheese sandwich, the light under the door went out, and their hair grew lighter again.

"Let's go," said the professor, taking another sniff of the coffee before carefully setting it aside.

He pushed open the door cautiously, and in the middle of the room they saw a gigantic, rust-covered machine which filled almost the entire room and displayed an enormous blind spot in the middle of its front panel, as if not only the metal but even the light had been taken away.

"Aha," the professor breathed contentedly, "the gate is open. We'll wait another moment until he's far away, and then we can seal the gate."

And indeed, the blind spot in the machine shrank, finally dwindling to the size of a silver coin, at which Albarak remarked that the gate was now stable and that Fraal would not be able to hear them for the life of him. Then, after fetching paper and pencil from a drawer, he circled the machine, industriously noting down the numbers which appeared in various display windows.

"Aha," he said at last, "he's in a remote branch of time. The epoch isn't even really registered yet, but it seems to rain a lot there. He must be doing it because the machine responds best to that. Aha, it's a prehistoric epoch, a warm period, Cretaceous, I'd say."

He went to the front of the machine and pulled a big red lever under which a sign hung saying that it should be pulled under no circumstances while the machine was in use. The gate shrank to a pin-head, and the professor clapped his hands.

"So, that's that," he said, "the faithless Fraal is now at our mercy for better or worse."

"And Olga?" Nimrod wanted to know.

"Yes, yes," said the professor. "Give me another sip. Yes, that's right. How it tastes, how it smells! Yes, Olga," he said pensively, clasping his hands behind his back. "We won't be able to find her until we can reconstruct her precise path through the dimensions."

"You mean she's not in this epoch?"

"Hard to say. We had designed the machine so that we could jump with it at will. So she could be in another epoch as well. We can even take that as an assumption, for Fraal is a coward. Surely it has not escaped him that he could be accused of kidnapping."

"But he could simply have brought her back into our epoch."

"Then we would have noticed something while we were still there," said the professor. "I have my doubts there as well. It seems that he used the machine for his private purposes. It seems quite clear that he has been pursuing sensual pleasures, and I even suspect, after what you've told me, my dear fellow, that your house served him as a love nest between the epochs and across the dimensions."

"It really would be perfect for that," nodded Nimrod.

"I only hope," said the professor, "that he doesn't use Olga as his security if we try to call him to account here.... Everything is possible, given his bad character."

He wandered up and down for a while, drank some more coffee, then halted abruptly.

"We'll change our clothes, then search all the rooms and the basement again," he said at last, "and if that doesn't get us anywhere, we'll have to draw up a dimension profile."

"Well then, to work!" nodded Nimrod.

As the professor had predicted, Olga was nowhere to be found. Albarak even went to the telephone, a brightly shimmering machine with numerous buttons and a screen like a kaleidoscope, and spoke in a muffled voice with his wife, his mother and various aunts, drinking the last sips of that exquisite epochal coffee while he waited for them to return his calls - and, as the telephone glowed in swirling colors once again, it became clear that he had judged his interlocutors to be in Fraal's vicinity, but had been able to find out anything as to Olga's whereabouts.

Then, the telephone still glowing slightly, Albarak went to the dimension machine with a grim face, took a cast-iron spanner out of his pocket, called to Nimrod, who was still kneeling in front of the telephone, wishing he could make the calls himself, and finally, as Nimrod came

with an expression of regret, struck the spanner against all the corners, edges and protruding parts of the machine, which, having remained completely cold throughout their activities, now glowed.

Albarak turned out the light, and now both stood in a warm, reddish shimmer. All at once the professor seemed like a little kobold. His eyes gleamed diabolically, and now Nimrod also felt the change which was taking place inside him.

It was as if someone or something were squeezing together his innermost core, as if something or someone were giving him a command, and he knew that he must immediately obey this command from the void. In fact, he even caught himself stepping forward, toward the still red-hot machine, toward the pin-head which drew him magically - but just as he feared he would lose control over himself, Albarak tugged his sleeve.

"That's a magnetic field," said the professor. "It's enormously powerful. It's reaching for us. Be careful that you don't lose yourself in this field. You must stabilize your ego, my worthy fellow. Do something, or think of something concrete."

"But I can't think of anything," said Nimrod truthfully.

"Then just count the screws on the machine!"

And indeed Nimrod was already feeling better by the time he reached three. But the professor went into the corner and turned on a generator, which cast a green glow.

"Just a moment," he said, and: "Aha!", as a humming came from the generator, so deep that it shook his and Nimrod's rib cages, though Nimrod did not himself be swayed in his counting.

Suddenly, as the humming fell deeper, the ceiling brightened above their heads, unnoticeably at first, then quite clearly; it was as if someone were projecting a confusion of lines up there, dim at first, with a film projector. The humming fell still deeper, and the contours above grew clearer. The professor pulled at the generator again, and as the humming sank very deep, he finally seemed satisfied, for the lines on the ceiling had emerged bright and spatially sharp.

"Aha," said the professor, tracing a thick red line on the ceiling with a pointer, "he's on Turon, the so-and-so! So our suspicion was correct! And here, do you see the blue line beside it, my dear sir?" - and as Nimrod nodded, now up to twenty-six screws, and looking at the ceiling and the machine by turns, "Yes, that's Olga's line. By the way, you can stop counting, my good fellow, if you concentrate decisively enough on this line. So, where was I? Oh, yes, the blue line is Olga's."

"But the lines are running parallel to each other," said Nimrod.

"Yes, indeed," growled the professor, "I should have noticed that at the start. Indeed. This means that your beloved spouse is also in that warm period. Well, I at any rate wouldn't have suspected Fraal of so much charm and persuasiveness, my dear sir!"

"You mean that he's hidden her on Turon?"

The professor shook his head slowly.

After a while he said thoughtfully, "Possible. But let us follow the other lines. Aha, do you see these here?" - and he pointed to pale green streaks which ran directly toward them, then bent in a right angle into a time which was described on the scale as the Middle Ages, made a loop there and then returned to the present time before finally swerving down to Turon.

"That's interesting," the professor remarked.

"I don't understand," said Nimrod, beginning to stutter again, for he was beginning to suspect something which he would rather have banished far away from him; but the less he wanted to think of this possibility, the more stubbornly the repellent thought took hold in him.

"Very simple," said the professor, acting as if he had noticed nothing, "they made a detour through the Middle Ages and then turned, down through the present into the Cretaceous... Well, let's have a look," he said at last, "whether we can get a clear picture of the landscape they're in...."

Nimrod, thoughts shooting through his head, was so agitated that he had begun counting screws again from the beginning. Between the eighth and the ninth he paused, for he kept thinking that Fraal must have spent a great deal of energy carrying Olga off across the times and the epochs like that....

The image on the ceiling had metamorphosed. The lines had vanished. In their place a kind of relief had appeared, consisting first of abstract patterns, but they grew more and more concrete, as if the scenery were seen from a great distance, then approached until the outlines of forests, hills and lakes peeled themselves out of the abstract patterns and contours.

The procession of images on the ceiling grew faster and faster, and Nimrod forgot that he was supposed to be counting, so captivated he was by the images of a distant past which emerged there, and finally the professor, continually wiping his sweating bald spot, managed to stabilize the image of this landscape.

What they saw was a gigantic jungle, with primeval forest giants looming in the twilight, and on the ground, which was covered with thick, nearly blue moss, grew ferns so enormous that the ones which Nimrod had once seen in a museum seemed tiny beside them.

In the jungle, at the edge of a clearing pierced by the light which fell slanting through the trees, there was a movement, and now, as the image still remained motionless, a fat, blue-skinned snake appeared, creeping sluggishly into the picture, and suddenly a woman cried out in distress, and Nimrod nearly fainted, for he distinctly heard his name - "Heinz!" came the cry, "for Heaven's sake, if you can hear this through the tunnel! I promise never to be bad again. I'll never try to run away with another man again! Just do something! Get me out of here! I'm dying here in the heat, with the wild animals! I need a mineral water, and my pantyhose is full of runs, and I haven't had a bath in days, and this stupid guy can't find the gate back! Oh, Heinz, if only you could hear me!"

"There we go," breathed the professor contentedly, and went on turning the knobs of the generator, "we've found them. Let's have a look..."

And on the ceiling the image of the jungle began to move. The snake vanished. A gigantic dragonfly flew across the picture with the hum of a helicopter, and far back, where the jungle opened out into the sea, a gigantic head with red eyes rose out of the water, with enormous teeth, as they now saw, and then, as the professor nearly lost control over the machine, they suddenly saw two wretchedly ragged, tattered figures staggering hand in hand over the moss in which they sank ankle-deep; yes, it was Fraal and Olga, who cast despairing eyes to the heavens, from which a gigantic shadow fell, spanning a good twenty meters.

The professor was more nimble than Nimrod had thought possible, even after their sprint in the baths. Like a rubber ball he raced into the corner, tore a bullhorn from the wall and called into the machine: "Olga, Fraal! We have you in the viewfinder! Over there under the purple leaves! A few more yards! Do you see the cave there? We're going to shift the blind spot over there!"

For a moment Fraal and Olga were terrified by the thundering voice which came from the sky. But then they realized that it was the professor, and so, without looking around any further, they hurried to the designated hole, torn and bleeding from the surrounding thorns, and as soon

as they were inside the professor sent all the energy of the machine down into the times and dimensions, and for a moment the blind spot on the machine vanished entirely, then appearing again in swirling fog, hissing and steaming, for it had begun to rain again.

And with a few pushes of the buttons the professor made the spot larger and larger, until the tiny, sketchy silhouettes of two, no, three figures appeared inside - but in his exertions the professor did not seem to notice this, and Nimrod had begun to count again in sheer excitement. Now the two people had grown to the size of dolls; but with them loomed a green arm, three sharp claws at its end, which now the professor had seen as well.

He yelled: "Look out! We'll have to have an emergency materialization! Look out!"

And without waiting for an answer he now sent full, unchecked power into the machine, which now glowed slightly and hissed angrily. Just as the arm tried to grab them, Olga and Fraal grew to full human beings, and the claws had already clutched Fraal's left leg, but slid off, leaving a bloody trail, and then both staggered out of the blind spot and out of the machine and sank to the floor of the laboratory in exhaustion, dripping with water. Now that green arm stretched out of the blind spot, groping blindly and angrily around the laboratory, nearly seizing Nimrod as he jumped to Olga's side - then the professor slammed down the emergency lever, and the field collapsed with a shriek and a whimper, and the arm which that creature had reached toward them out of its distant epoch was sliced off like a leaf and fell down with a dull, heavy crash.

Thus in the end everything turned out well after all, and when a happy ending comes after such dramatic events, and the lovers can fall in each other's arms, all the trials they had gone through are forgotten, and so are all the misunderstandings which had arising between Heinz and Olga and between Fraal and the professor.

For careful investigations later revealed that the dimension machine did indeed produce a powerful magnetic field which had a very different effect on each person who approached or passed through it. Poor Fraal, who had not really meant to steal anything from the professor, was always completely out of his senses in the magnetic field, and thus, despite the many beautiful women in his epoch, he was unable to resist stretching out his hands toward the females of other time levels and dimensions, and as he was naturally embarrassed by his own behavior, he had been forced to disguise himself when committing his transgressions, thus entangling himself more and more deeply.

That was also the reason why he had finally fled with Olga into the Cretaceous period, taking a number of detours which only betrayed his uncertainty. Interestingly, the machine has the same effect on Olga as on Fraal - it aroused her sensual desires.

All in all, the experiment was seen as a success. But it was agreed that the machine should be neutralized magnetically; otherwise journeys into other dimensions should be prohibited entirely. After all, the journey was not without its risks, as could be seen in the harmless example of the quantities of water which had been picked up, and the damage which could be done in crossing the dimensions was inestimable.

It is not known whether the two researchers managed to redesign the machine to suit their wishes. It is clear, of course, that Olga and Nimrod, with all the equipment which they had brought with them out of their own epoch, were sent on their way home; they had much to discuss on the way, including the date of their wedding.

Nothing more was seen of either researcher in the present time, but that may have been due to the fact that they wanted to avoid unnecessary complications on that route.

But one wish - after the monster's arm withered without further consequences for the time

and the dimension, and Fraal's wounds had healed as well - was fulfilled for the professor, who simply had to take this risk. For in parting Nimrod had promised to procure three coffee saplings from Central Africa.

And one morning, as Nimrod, now happily married, woke up and went into the bathroom where, according to the agreement, he had put the three coffee saplings in a washtub filled with water, he found that they had vanished without a trace, and the faucet dripped into the bathtub, though Nimrod knew quite well that he and Olga were always careful about closing the faucets after that strange flood.

But in the medicine cabinet a flacon glittered, just the kind which Nimrod had held in his hands at the beginning of the story, and under it lay a folded slip of paper, on which stood in Albarak's handwriting:

"Many thanks! The saplings are flourishing!"

THE END

Black Holes

By

Robin Bright

Physicists have discussed 'black holes' as 'anomalies' within the cosmic fabric of the space-time continuum, since Albert Einstein, in 1915, produced a theory of gravitation containing the idea that stars collapsed to a point containing such mass that neither light, nor anything else, could escape from their gravitational pull. Before the 'singularity' was formed, an 'event horizon' occurred in which the image of the star appeared in the heavens like a 'snapshot', and then the black hole began to exert its pull. Consequently, the stars in the heavens represented 'snapshots' of what was, before black holes were formed. In short, the visible universe is a picture of what once was, while behind the 'still', in photographic terms, black holes are devouring everything, and have probably been doing so since the formation of stars, which are the physical manifestation of the birth of whatever life force black holes represent. Although physics generally agrees that black holes draw into themselves, it's more logically coherent to suggest that the cosmos throws itself into them, much in the way that the pupils of the eyes of women perceive others being drawn towards them because of sexual attraction. In physical terms, the pupils of the eye are quite literally holes through which the frozen light of the nearest collapsed star is collapsing towards the perceiver, and that's experienced as sexual appetite when someone is drawn.

In terms of physics, it's a manifestation of the desire of the black hole to devour. Although that seems an unusual assumption, the parasite that emerges from the host to kill it is termed

`parasitoid`, which means that those who are attractive to killers are the equivalent of black holes in terms of the physical universe. Humans have been taught through their pupils, that is, their black holes, that men and women are physically attracted to each other, whereas biology suggests that futanarian women with their own penis` semen for the sexual reproduction of their species` brainpower are the Earth`s people, while men represent a viral life form that, at some point in the distant past, inveigled itself into her host womb to steal her penis` semen, and replicate itself as her parasitoid killer.

Manifesting as a miogynist, the killer rationalizes that `woman`s seed` is a spy that wants to see, and the parasitoid doesn`t want her to see, and so blinds her. The prototypical situation is found in the *New Testament*, where Judas discovers Jesus and a woman together. Judas suggests that the perfume, `spikenard`, be sold to raise money, and the perfume of the woman symbolizes Judas` spy canard, that is, he objects to Jesus being with a woman. Jesus replies: `Leave her alone.` (*Mk: 14. 6*) Judas sells Jesus to the Jewish religious police, the Pharisees, who hand him over to officials of the Roman Empire then occupying Jewish Palestine, and Jesus is nailed to a cross of wood and left to die. Afterwards, Jesus has Resurrection and Ascension to heaven in prefiguration of that of `woman`s seed`. Born uncontaminated by male semen from his mother, the Virign Mary, Jesus typifies human brainpower: `Love your neighbor as you love yourself.` (*Mk: 12. 31*) Because `woman`s seed` produces human brainpower, men`s eyes represent the black holes from which she can`t escape to colonize the planets amongst the stars of heaven above the Earth, because they`re alien and minsanthropist. In cosmic terms, black holes are Oedipal. In the Greek drama, *Oedipus Rex* (c. 429 B.C.) by Sophocles, Oedipus blinds himself, when he discovers he`s comitted incest with his mother unknowingly, after marrying the widowed queen of Thebes, Jocasta. The meaning of the narrative is that women shouldn`t see each other, that is, men are the `buffer zone` between women preventing human sexual reproduction, and Oedipus` self-blinding is a metaphor for what men do in the `zone`. However, it isn`t only a metaphor.

In the 8th century collection of stories, *1001 Nights*, Shah Jehan beheads his wife after he falsely alleges unfaithfulness, and then takes a new wife each day and beheads her each evening. Scheherezade is credited with saving the women by telling Shah Jehan stories until he marries her because he wants to hear more so he doesn`t behead her. It`s a misanthropist tale in which the species of women is blinded because Jehan suspects his wife of seeing someone else. As Jesus said: `At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.` (*Matt: 22. 30*) Because women are a single species, they can see each other without being ring slaves. Cosmic black holes are a macrocosmic image of the microcosm in which the parasitoid pursues the female like a knife wielding maniac, and the woman withdraws into the space that she`s prepared for herself as a retreat from the killer. According to science the space-time continuum contains `anomalies`, worm-holes, through which it`s possible to pass from one part of the cosmos to another almost instantaneously. Like using a hotel lift, rather than the stairs. Black holes are viewed as `singularities` into which the cosmos throws material, and science conjectures that they`re the `gateway` to `alternative universes`, which would be made up of the material drawn. Because black holes correspond to a collapsed woman trying to escape her assailant, the cosmos is parasitoid.

Some scientists believe that life originated upon the Earth through a space borne virus,² which suggests that some forms of life are parasitoid, that is, they kill the visible cosmos, which shrinks from their assault in the form of black holes drawing material into themselves to begin creation

anew in another `alternate` universe, which the parasitoid seeks to infect in order to continue its killing of `woman`s seed`, that is, `man`.

Stories of aliens endeavoring to extinguish humanity abound, but perhaps the most prevailing is that of the first woman, Eve, and the first man, Adam, created by God in the heaven on Earth that was the paradisaal garden of Eden, where God also placed the angel, Satan, as a punishment for his rejecting of God`s plan that the human host should be greater than the angelic. God transformed Satan into a serpent, which tempted Eve with the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, saying `You shall be as gods.` (*Gen: 3. 5*) Because saurian evolution in the Mesozoic period, that is, 248 m.a., preceded hominid evolution 220 m.a. in the Jurassic period,³ Satan and the angels of God were likely saurian. The story of Eve and Adam then would represent the process whereby the human host was enslaved by the saurians, that is, host womb slavery of the human futanarian species of `woman`s seed` by reptoids. God warned Eve that her `seed` would have `enmity` with the `serpent`s seed`, but this is usually attributed to Satan`s war with men, whereas Jesus` role as uncontaminated `woman`s seed` suggests that God`s plan is for human futanarian `woman`s seed` to escape from the parasitoid reptile. In short, Adam was a futanarian woman from whose side Eve is depicted as having been created by God, because Adam was a self-fertilizing futanarian for whom self-replication was a species` survival trait. God encouraged Eve: `You shall crush the head of the serpent with your foot, but he will bruise your heel.` (*Gen: 3. 15*) In Christian iconography Jesus` mother is depicted crushing the head of the serpent with her foot, because Jesus is futanarian `woman`s seed` and his Resurrection and Ascension to heaven prefigures hers.

When the Al Qaeda terrorist group hijacked civil airliners to crash them into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, it was made into a movie, *World Trade Centre* (2006), resembling a science fiction alien invasion film. The prototypical alien invasion was ancient Greece`s invasion of the city of Troy facilitated by the building of a huge hollow wooden horse inside which the Greeks hid. The unsuspecting Trojans took the horse inside the city of Troy to where the Greeks emerged to enslave the host wombs of the women for homosexuality in pederasty for war, which was institutionalized in ancient Greece. From ancient Greece derived the late 20th century `incurable killer disease`, HIV/AIDS, spread by men`s mixing of blood, shit and semen in each others` anuses during anal mockeries of women`s mode of sexual reproduction. Consequently, ancient Greece was the source of Greece`s `biological weapon` launched against the 20th century, and beyond, on behalf of the enslaving parasitoid killer that wanted to keep women in fearful faithfulness to their ring slavers. Because `rough trade` is a euphemism for homosexual `brutality and violence` in pederasty, 9/11 was an attempt by global misogyny to promote war against `woman`s seed`: `The dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war on the remnant of her seed.` (*Rev: 12. 17*) Jesus` disciple, John, wrote his prophetic *Revelation* as an adjunct to Jesus` teaching after his death, and it`s evident that the serpent, Satan, is the dragon grown since its days in Eden.

The Edenic story is from the *Old Testament* of the *Bible*, that is, the history and law of the Jews, who`re the `chosen people` of God, as Jesus was `Christ`, `the chosen`, and whose

tradition it is that a Jew must be born from a woman, because women are Jews, that is, Jewish tradition is futanarian. Although the Moslem peoples of Islam are depicted as separate from the Judeo-Christian tradition, Judaism was founded by the son of Abraham by Sara, Isaac. Sara was barren thereafter and gave her maid, Hager, to Abraham, and she bore Ishmael, who founded Islam through his descendant, Mohamed, who received the *Koran* (610-30 C.E.) from the angels of God who'd been told that the human host would be greater than the angelic. The basic premise of Islam supported by the *Koran* is that Moslems are permitted four wives, which affords the opportunity for sexual reproduction between futanarian `woman`s seed` to occur within the family. Consequently, Islam is in the tradition of Judeo-Christianity, whereas homosexuality in pederasty isn`t, and 9/11 was arranged to precipitate war against `woman`s seed` while the World Trade Center was used as a symbol to those who espoused `rough trade` as a means to ensure host womb slavery of the human race in parasitoid devourment.

Because the human futanarian race of `woman`s seed` has been manufactured, at least since the founding of Babylon, named for `a woman` in 4000 B.C., as a single male brained creature wearing each others` clothes in `TV` transvestism, the crashing of the planes `live on CNN` and other television networked news channels was the equivalent of the black holes of the pupils of the watchers having material thrown into them to provoke a parasitoid reaction that would aid the appearance of more black holes into which not only the Twin Towers would collapse: `Mystery, Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of the abominations of the Earth.` (Rev. 17. 5) Although the television machine to broadcast pictures of live and recorded events wasn`t invented by John Logie Baird until 1926, it was the medium for the transmission of the virus. Although the modern day successors of the Greeks, `the geeks`, devised `bad machine code` they called `Trojan viruses` to infect computer systems` defenses and kill the brain, because 9/11`s `rough trade`4 was an aspect of the homosexuality in pederasty for war paradigm, Al Qaeda constituted a viral attack on the US` defense system, which predictably responded as a parasitoid devourer of `woman`s seed` in the Middle East, that is, the notoriously misogynist Taliban regime in Afghanistan under whose auspices the terrorist organization had operated on 9/11, had succeeded in precipitating a global conflict against women.

Although Afghanistan fell to US` invasion by December 2001, war in the Middle East between supporters of Iraq`s Abu Bakr Al Bagdadi`s declaration of an Independant Levant spread like a virus, because that was the geeks` plague aim. Using PC `gaming`, that is, the infecting of users` personal computer (PC) brains, as their paradigm, the geeks represented the viral reestablishment of ancient Greece`s homosexuality in pederasty for war, which produced the `biological weapon` of the HIV/AIDS virus that produced systemic collapse and brain death in humans.

Geeks play games of war, which are the plague aims of the parasitoid, that is, 9/11 was a `gamer` and a `geek`, who sought to precipitate global conflict in order to ensure that the Satanist `game`

of waging misanthropic warfare against the human futanarian race of `woman`s seed` continued. When the Boston Marathon became the victim of terrorist bombers on April 15, 2011, it was a further attack on the `footrace` by those who didn`t want the human race to run and escape from its parasitoid killer. The civil airliners had been hijacked at Boston, Logan airport, on 9/11, because the killer obviously thought it was playing a game based on *Logan`s Run*, a `TV` series as well as a 1976 movie based on the 1967 novel by William F. Nolan in which no one who reaches the age of 21 lives. The parasitoid didn`t want the 21st century to live and so arranged for it to be killed by precipitating an expensive conflict from which `woman`s seed` wouldn`t be able to raise her futanarian `foot` from the floor of the Earth.

Walt Disney Productions` movie, *Black Hole* (1979), was jokingly described as such, because Disney studios first `PG` rated film cost US \$ 20 million to make, and only made \$ 35 million, whereas the comparable `family` movie, *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* (1977) cost \$ 11 million and made \$ 775 million. The *Black Hole* analogy holds good for the `money pit` represented by the US` Military Industrial Complex (MIC) for a US` economy with a national debt approaching US \$ 20 trillion, that is, a war economy that had to subdue rich oil producing nations, for example, the Middle East`s Iraq, after invading in March, 2003, and North Africa`s Libya in 2011, in order to safeguard its industrial base, and during a period when the US owed huge sums of money invested by the oil producers to those nations it subsequently invaded in the name of democratic freedom: `Let he that has wisdom have understanding. The number of the beast is the number of a man and his number is six hundred three score and six.` (Rev: 13. 8) `666` recurring is a metaphor for 66.6%, which is the number of men and women manufactured as `TV` if the human futanarian component of `woman`s seed` is the absented 33.3% disenfranchised from the democratic process. In short, whereas the Moslem family in Islam with a mimimum of 80% women, because of the four wives permissible, as well as the opportunity afforded to human futanarian sexual reproduction, is potentially more democratic than the Greek model, which has been adopted by the previous supposedly democratic nations.

Throughout the Middle East the women of Islam in their black burkas, which they wear to conceal themselves publically from prying eyes, in the late 20th century, had to observe McDonalds fast food restaurants` offering of burgers to families, whose perceptions were then distorted with visions of women inside burgers, because they wore burkas. Although that homonym seems a harsh judgement, Hollywood, the capital of the mass media Empire of the United States of America in the west coast state of California, city of Los Angeles district, was labeled `Babylon` because of its espousal of penisless `babes` by edict of the 1930 `Hays code` that forbade women to be seen having sex together on screen: `... women, in love scenes, at all times have `at least one foot on the floor` (in other words, no love scenes in bed).`5 By July 21, 1969, UTC: 2. 56, NASA`s Apollo 11 spacecraft`s astronaut Neil Armstrong was ready to put his foot on the moon:

`One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.` But on March 23 ,1982, US President Ronald `Ray Gun` Reagan`s `Strategic Defense Initiative` (SDI) sought the implementation of a

`ground and space based missile system` that would effectively make it impossible for `woman`s seed` to escape without a fight if the US maintained its parasitoid stance.

Named `star wars` after the movie, *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*, which featured a `Death Star` orbiting planets to kill them, because of their support for actress Carrie Fisher`s Princess Leia led Federation opposed to the evil Empire of Palatine and his henchman, Darth Vader, Reagan`s SDI was defined. Although the US describes itself as `the land of the brave and the home of the free`,⁶ it espouses `TV` rather than bravery, because burka clad Moslem women in Islam are terrified by McDonalds` burger advertisements that threaten their pupils with devourment, and the fear that the ubiquitous nudity of the babes in `Babylon`, Hollywood, presages the forthcoming extinction of `woman`s seed` in the Middle East, and elsewhere, through the launching of the US` bug-eyed monsters` ICBMs making black holes in the Earth to ostensibly teach the black clad burka women`s pupils a lesson: `The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the wilderness, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent`s reach.` (Rev: 12. 14) If the `eagle` is the one on the seal of the US` Presidency then the attack on `woman`s seed` in Moslem Islam is renegeing on an ancient biblical vow to defend `woman`s seed` bravely, rather than make `TV` programs in which the absence of her dead race is but ghoulishly implied and celebrated by evil cowards. Moreover, if McDonalds presents burgers as analogous to burkas, then it`s a recipe for the modern US` parasitoid devouring of the burka women through `star wars` waged against them, which is `prefigured` in the Hollywood California sands of the fictional desert world of Tatoonine throughout the episodic *Star Wars* saga, and before the eyes of their women can withdraw from misanthropy through the black holes of Allah`s wisest pupils into an alternative universe of `woman`s seed`.

1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_hole .

2 Wickramasinghe, Chandra `Bacterial Morphologies Supporting Cometary Panspermia: A Reappraisal`, *International Journal of Astrobiology*, 10 (1), pp. 25-30, 2011.

3 Gradstein F., Ogg J., and Smith, A. *A Geologic Time Scale*, 2004.

4 Violent, often brutal sex acts, <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/rough-trade> .

5 <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/FootPopping/> .

6 Key, Francis Scott, `Defence Of Fort M`Henry`, September, 14, 1814.

Baseball

Archival Interview from 2004 with Amy Schneider of the Chicago Gems Women's Baseball Team

Amy Schneider is one of the founders of the Chicago Gems Women's Baseball Team which is a member of the Great Lakes Women's Baseball League. She recently did an interview with Independent Thinking about the Chicago Gems and women's baseball in general.

Independent Thinking: What was your background like prior to your involvement in women's baseball?

Amy Schneider: I grew up in Ohio, a fan of the Cleveland Indians and the roller coasters at Cedar Point. I moved away to attend college at MIT and picked up a degree in history (yes, from MIT) and a love of the Red Sox, who are now my number two team. (No one tops the Indians.) For the past eight years, I've worked for a company that makes devices and software used for brain surgery and radiation therapy as an installations and service tech.

IT: What was your involvement in baseball like prior to the founding of the Chicago Gems?

AS: Short answer: I've been a fan since day one. I played two years of baseball when I was 11 and 12, slow-pitch softball from 10-14 and then didn't play much of either until I moved to Chicago in 2002. I've been playing baseball and softball on a regular basis since 2002.

Long answer: I've been a baseball fan my entire life. I have no memory of a time when I didn't love baseball. I remember going to the Bargain Barn when I was four or five to get my first glove, a cheap plastic thing that was the only glove small enough to fit my hand. Games of catch soon followed, as did my first trip to big old Cleveland Stadium.

Unfortunately, and I must admit I am still angry about this, I couldn't sign up for the local youth baseball league because it was boys-only. My parents considered signing me up just using my initials, but my hometown was too small to get away with something like

that. The city's Park and Recreation did not provide youth leagues until I was in fourth grade, and those were slow-pitch softball. It was better than nothing, but not baseball. The summer after fifth grade, a rival baseball league was established that let girls play and I joined my first team. That same year, someone in the city's legal department realized that letting a private league that discriminated against girls use city fields might not be smartest (or legally compliant) thing to do, so they prohibited the league from using the city's fields. After a year of trying to run a four division league on three fields, the private league allowed girls to join. I was one of the girl who integrated the league, the only one in my division. I don't recall anyone having a problem with it, at least on the field. I didn't get drafted into the next division (this was back when everyone played baseball, so there were always more players than roster slots) and that was the end of organized baseball. My brother and I played catch in the backyard, since he was still playing and liked to practice. I played slow-pitch softball through junior high, then spent my summers working for the Park and Rec Department as an umpire and scorekeeper. I had no desire to play fastpitch softball in high school because it wasn't baseball. Looking back, I wish I had, because it would have been better than not playing ball at all. I ran track and cross-country instead.

After high school, I spent thirteen years in the Boston area, and the vast majority of my baseball experience was spent going to games at Fenway and following the rise of the Cleveland Indians from afar. When I moved to Chicago, I joined a couple of softball leagues so I could meet people, and one of the women on my team hooked me up with women's baseball. I've managed to resist becoming a Cubs fan.

IT: What was it like growing up as a fan of the Cleveland Indians afflicted as they are by the Curse of Rocky Colavito and suffering from numerous weird events such as Ten Cent Beer Night & the Batgate incident at Comiskey Park in 1994?

AS: I certainly never had to worry about how I was going to convince my parents in letting me stay up late to watch the ALCS and World Series! I'm too young to remember Ten Cent Beer night, but I do remember watching Lenny Barker throw his perfect game in 1981. We still give my brother the business because he wanted to turn on "The Dukes of Hazzard" around the sixth inning. The fact that he was only six is no excuse. We

went to the July 3 fireworks game every year. It was one of the few times the place got close to filled, so it was a lot of fun. It was less stressful being a fan back then, because you knew that had less than an ice cube's chance in hell of even being in the pennant race past Mother's Day most years, so any success, no matter how short-lived (It's May 10, look who's in first place!) was enjoyed. Once they got good, and were expected to be good, it was definitely a different dynamic; the highs of winning were higher, but the losses were much harder to take. It was also much harder to get tickets. My sister, who was living in Houston, and I planned our trip home every year around who was able to get tickets first on the day they went on sale. I'm hoping we have that problem again, soon. As enjoyable as it was to have my number two team, the Red Sox, win the World Series this year, it will pale in comparison to the joy I will feel when the Indians win.

IT: What role did you play in the founding of the Gems?

AS: I'm one of the founders. Two other women and I played with a suburban Chicago team and all lived within a few blocks of each other in the city. We decided that we wanted to form a team in Chicago and the Gems were born. Lunch may have been involved.

IT: What is Live the Dream Athletics?

AS: Live the Dream Athletics offers baseball camps and instruction out in Tuscon, Arizona. Last year, a couple members of the Gems, including myself, participated in the American Women's Baseball 24 Hours for Africa fundraiser. We played baseball for 24 hours and raised money for the charity US Doctors for Africa. Live the Dream gave a two-day clinic prior to the game for all participants and their instructors helped coach.

IT: How well did the Gems fare in 2004?

AS: We recruited a few more dedicated players that will help us toward our goal of fielding a full team in 2005. The league we play in had a rough year, as did a couple of the teams, so the Gems combined with the South Bend team to play a few series against other teams in the league.

Our combined team lost more than we won, but it was a good learning experience and loads of fun.

IT: How much progress has been made towards the goal of a Chicagoland women's baseball league?

AS: Close to zero. My goal in the off-season is to find some people who will be willing to help make the league a reality, since I cannot do it alone.

IT: How did the fact that the Gems did not have their own ballpark affect the team??

AS: Right now, I don't think it is affecting recruitment too much.

IT: Do the Gems now have their own home ballpark?

AS: No, but we are looking.

IT: How is attendance at women's baseball games?

AS: It compares to the average rec league softball game. The crowd is pretty much limited to friends and relatives of the players. There is a semi-pro league in New England that is affiliated with a minor league team. I've never been to any of their games, but they may get decent crowds.

IT: Prior to the founding of the Great Lakes Women's Baseball League, what was the situation like for the Gems?

AS: The Great Lakes League pre-dates the Gems. Most of the people on our team have not played women's baseball before. The three of us who had, with another team in Chicago, wanted to form a team in the city so we didn't have to travel to the far suburbs to play or practice. At one time in the mid-90's, there was a four team women's league in Chicago. If that was still around, our job would be much easier.

IT: How would you rate the Detroit Danger's chances of winning the 2004 AAU Women's Baseball National Championship?

AS: Since I am answering this after the tournament, I do have the benefit of hindsight. Going into the tournament, I thought we had an outside chance. We had a difficult route with a roster of only nine and those nine had never played together as a unit, but if we played to the best of our abilities we had a shot. We lost our first four games and were seeded last for the playoffs. This, naturally, meant we had to play the first place seed. After four innings, the score was tied at 1-1 and we were getting more people on base every inning, forcing them to bring in their ace pitcher to shut us down. We eventually lost, but it was a great showing. That team lost in the semi-finals, in part because they had to work so hard to beat us.

IT: How successful has the Gems been in garnering the attention of the news media? Have you noticed any difference in the way that the team has been covered by regular press outlets and the so-called “alternative” newspapers, the Chicago Reader and New City?

AS: We haven’t really pursued this option in earnest, so I can’t comment on how effective it has been.

IT: How does the state of women’s baseball in Chicagoland compare to that of other women’s sports such as basketball, football, softball and volleyball?

AS: I think all of those other sports are in a better state, because there are existing organizations that take care of running those leagues, so if you want to play, it’s as easy as filling out a form and paying with your credit card. There is a professional women’s football team in Chicago, but other than that, if you want to play football, I think your only option is co-ed flag. I think there are all-women options for the other sports.

IT: How much success has the Gems had in gaining corporate sponsorships?

AS: This is not something we have pursued. Given the state of the team and league, I personally don’t feel comfortable approaching people about this, so my goal is to get someone involved with the team that does and to give him or her something to promote.

IT: As you are no doubt aware, there is a stereotype about

athletically-inclined women spread by the likes of Mike North and others on both WSCR & WMVP and other media outlets that such women are “lesbians.” How much has that stereotype affected the progress of the Gems and of women’s baseball in general in Chicagoland?

AS: I don’t think it’s had that much effect, at least directly. Our target group is women athletes, so they have already dealt with this issue on some level. My experience is that a number of women are afraid to play baseball because it seems so much harder than softball and overcoming ***that*** is a bigger barrier. Part of that is definitely rooted in truth, especially when comparing hitting versus slow pitch softball.

Having said all that, I do think part of some women’s reluctance may be rooted in being told that baseball is for boys or men. It is possible that this “baseball is for men” thought brings up the “lesbian issue” for some women, since it is one of the few sports that haven’t made the “OK for ladies” transition. For example, I think it is much more acceptable for girls and women to be involved in athletics today than when my mother was growing up (or even when I was growing up) and there are more sports to choose from that are characterized more “ladylike” than “lesbian” (it’s not just tennis, figure skating and gymnastics anymore) but a few sports are still taboo, and I think baseball is one of them.

Those who think that athletically-inclined women are lesbians should keep in mind that some fraction are, but an even bigger fraction are straight and just aren’t interested in dating you.

If any women in Chicago are reading this and want to play baseball, come to our website and drop us a line.

Movie Reviews

300 (2007)

300 was the single worst movie of 2007. It is also the single most vulgar and trashy movie of the present decade. **300** is also the single most historically inaccurate movie in quite some time. **300** is a movie to avoid unless you really like seeing awful movies.

300 is based on a "graphic novel" aka pretentious and overpriced comic book that was done by Frank Miller. Miller is an old hack in comic books who has managed to screw up practically every project that he has ever handled. During the 1980's, he did a graphic novel of Batman calling him "The Dark Knight." Miller's Batman more resembled the kind of person that Adolf Hitler would have had in the Gestapo than the classic comic book character. Miller was also responsible for a series of Daredevil stories that basically trashed one of the more venerable comic book super heroes. Needless to say, whenever Frank Miller is involved in a comic book project, the results are certain to be disappointing to all those who appreciate great comic books.

Such was the case with the original 1999 hardcover comic book aka graphic novel version of **300**. Not only was it poorly drawn and colored, it was extremely vulgar in a homosexual way. Real life Spartan soldiers wore full armor as opposed to running around half naked like they did in Miller's creation. If the Spartans really went about warfare with as little clothing and armor on, as Miller would have you believe, then they would have been slaughtered like cattle. Instead of being synonymous with bravery, the word Spartan would instead be synonymous with stupidity.

300 is equally abysmal in its presentation of the Persian enemy. The Persian Empire was the largest country of all antiquity. Slavery was abolished under Cyrus the Great several decades before Persia attempted to conquer Greece. Meanwhile, for all the talk of "freedom" in **300**, in Greece it was perfectly lawful to own people in bondage. Also, Persian warriors were not the freaks depicted in the movie, nor did their "King of Kings" Xerxes go around with numerous body piercings like some grotesque freak.

The movie version of **300** was made in much the same way that movies such as "Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow" and "Sin City" were made. The flick was filmed at indoor movie studios and in front of green screens. Once the acting was finished, the special effects technicians took over and they inserted the film footage of the actors into a digitally created world. The end result looks just like a Computer Graphics Interface (CGI) movie. In other words, it looks more like a glorified cartoon than a real movie with real actors.

Another problem is that **300** seems like it was planned to have a video game spin off. The battles depicted in this movie are the kind of battles that fit right in on a video game format. The

elephants, rhinoceroses and the chained giant look more like video game characters than movie characters. The members of the Persian Army all look like clones of one another.

When you consider that one of the characters is a deformed hunchback ogre who has arms that look like lobster claws, it is impossible to take this grotesque flick as being anything better than a piece of garbage. **300** is truly an ugly movie and is about as involving as watching a video game demo. **300** is a movie to avoid like the plague.

The Affair (1973 TV)

The Affair is a made for TV movie that is about as interesting as watching water boil. Made in 1973, it is one of the few films in which Natalie Wood sings and it is one of the few times that Wood and her real life husband Robert Wagner appeared in the same production. Wood & Wagner may have had tremendous chemistry together in person, however it did not translate that well to the screen, at least not in this movie.

In fact, there really is not much in the way of "chemistry" in this movie, either between Wagner & Wood or between any of the other characters. This may have been reflective of the true state of their marriage. At the time of Wood's death in an alleged boating accident, there has been an aura of suspicion surrounding husband Wagner with some tabloid TV shows even insinuating that he murdered his wife. Certainly, his behavior after his wife's death helped to fuel suspicions since Wagner seemed almost hell-bent on engaging in public romances with practically every unmarried actress he could get his hands on. To this day, he has never shown the kind of grief that one would expect to see a husband show over the death of a loved one.

In **The Affair**, Wagner comes across as a stalker type to Wood's fluffy singer/songwriter character, practically forcing himself into her life. Wood's character, legs paralyzed from childhood polio, finally gives into his advances, and before you know it, proclaiming his love for her.

The progression of their relationship is erratically presented and this, coupled with choppy editing, leads the viewer to be less than assured as to what is transpiring, motivation being almost completely ignored in the writing. You never understand just why Wagner's character is attracted to that of Wood or what she seems in him. One gets the impression that the producer, Aaron Spelling, assumed that since the audience already knew that Wagner & Wood were married in real life, there was no real need to actually portray an actual romance between their characters. Just simply going through the motions was good enough for Spelling, but not for the demands of making a good movie.

The poor plot development is not the only problem with this movie. The quality of the

direction is very poor, even by made for TV movie standards. The plot is weak and the characters grossly underdeveloped. This movie has all sorts of 1970's fashions including bell bottoms, shag carpeting, and Elton John glasses. Wood is supposed to have to use crutches due to her medical condition, but every once in a while, we see her standing up and/or walking without crutches then in the same scene, the crutches magically re-appear on her. Evidently, whilst shooting, someone would notice that Wood was without her crutches and she would then be outfitted with them and the shooting would then recommence. Apparently, the producer thought that we the viewers would be too stupid to notice. Either that or he was too cheap to bother having the crutchless scenes redone.

Speaking of the flick's budget, you can tell that it was really tight. Too tight to afford a decent script writer. **The Affair** is loaded with all sorts of abstract, unbelievable, and unnatural dialogue.

Unless you really like dull, pointless movies, this is one flick to avoid like the plague.

The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire (1981 TV)

The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire was a NBC TV movie that was also a pilot for a proposed sword and sorcery TV series. When it first aired in 1981, practically everyone at the high school I went to was talking about it the next day. Nearly everyone thought that it was a great TV movie and were eagerly looking forward to there being a TV show derived from this production.

However, it was not to be. Despite receiving high ratings, NBC decided to forgo breaking ground by having what would have been the first ever network sword and sorcery TV series. On top of that, it also decided against any sequels as well. That was pretty interesting since 1980's network TV was notable for having whole series of well made for TV movies such as the "Desperado" westerns starring Alex McArthur. This decision by the network was all the more surprising since this TV movie received generally positive reviews including a rare rave review from Baird Searles in *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*.

Although **The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire** never resulted in a TV series, it did have an interesting career in Europe. There, it was released as a theatrical movie. In some countries, it was released under the name of "The Archer and the Sorceress." Despite scoring box office success, it did not prove enough to launch either a new TV series or a new movie series.

Although a made for TV movie, **The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire** had far higher production values than most made for TV movies of the time. The makeup was especially good,

particularly the masks and the look of the snake people. The movie's music by Ian Underwood was especially strong.

The plot of **The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire** was basically a variation of the fantasy quest theme. A young man, Toran of Malveel (Lane Caudell) gains possession of the Heartbow, a weapon that chooses its new owner whenever its owner dies. The Heartbow enables an archer to shoot arrows that explode like grenades. The hero is a member of a nomadic tribe that is under heavy attack by the forces of the Draikian Empire. The hero goes out in search of the legendary sorcerer Lazar-Sa with the help of a thief and a warrior princess. They are pursued by the evil Gar and his henchmen.

The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire was released on VHS back in 1987 when not many people had Video Cassette Recorders. It has never been released on DVD in the United States. For some odd reason, its only DVD release thus far has been in Europe and only in the German language.

The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire was an unusually strong made for TV movie. It was actually better than most of the sword and sorcery movies that came out during the 1980's. This was a production that combined strong production values with a quality screenplay and good acting and direction. It's disappointing that the saga of Toran of Malveel began and ended with just one production.

Black Brigade (1970 TV)

This is a good example of how ignorance by Hollywood types of military history can result in a really bad, not to mention unintentionally funny, movie. This was a 1970 ABC TV movie written by Aaron Spelling.

The movie begins when Captain Carter (Stephen Boyd) is asked to go on a dangerous mission to blow up a Nazi held dam 50 miles behind enemy lines and the unit chosen to accomplish the task is 'B' Company which is all black and which is a sanitation unit. The men in this unit do hard physical work including digging latrines, digging graves, dealing with garbage, etc. Despite the fact that soldiers of this type did not receive much combat training and certainly none of the training needed for daring commando type missions, Carter asks their lieutenant in charge for 'volunteers', and he picks 6 men.

These black soldiers are nothing like what real black soldiers from the WWII era were really like. These soldiers have attitude and are not afraid to yell and scream at their white commanding officer about the unfairness of life.

Also, all the black actors have big afros and a few have mustaches/goatees in keeping with 1970 fashions. Richard Pryor sports a natty red beret throughout the whole movie. In real life, anyone

wearing such a beret and sporting afros and the mustaches/goatees would have been in serious trouble.

Now, you'd expect that the soldiers would receive some sort of special training and special advanced planning for their mission. No such thing. You would also expect that the soldiers would be airlifted to somewhere near their target. Once again, no such thing. Instead, the troopers just simply walk down a road in broad daylight. And they manage to penetrate the enemy lines without encountering any Germans, military or civilian and on top of that, they manage to come near the dam 50 miles behind the enemy lines strictly by walking in not more than a day. Unreal.

They stop at a house occupied by a native woman (Susan Oliver) who has zero German accent and there Capt. Carter listens to the radio for his orders. Now, in real life, these orders would have been broadcasted in either code or in such a way that only someone in the know would really know what was going on. Instead, Carter's commanding officer engages in total disregard for even basic communications security telling him everything in plainspoken English even telling him that on the next day the Third Regiment was going to launch an offensive to gain that dam going the full 50 miles in less than a day and that Capt. Carter and his ridiculously small command had to secure the dam for the offensive to succeed. This is interesting since any real life WWII offensive that could have gained 50 miles in a single day would have been considered the Eighth Miracle of the World. And for good reason too: In real life, no single offensive ever gained anywhere near that kind of territory in one day.

Despite the fact that the Germans monitored Allied radio communications and surely picked the unguarded orders, once Capt. Carter's unit arrives at the dam, they find it guarded only by a pair of incompetents who are quickly dispatched. Then, the unit moved on to find four Germans who are fixing on blowing the dam despite the fact that they did not have anywhere near enough dynamite to make a serious dent in the dam, let alone blow it up. These enemy troops are also eliminated with ease. As if on cue, the Third Regiment shows up without showing any signs of ever being in combat and the operation is judged a success and one of the soldiers is notified that he will receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. End of movie.

This is a war action movie without any real suspense nor did it even try to replicate anything even halfway authentic. If anything, it falls into the genre of movies like *Where Eagles Dare* in which the killing of enemy troops is as easy as pie, prompting viewers to wonder if its so easy for the good guys to kill off the bad guys, then why did WWII last so long?

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969)

Back in the good old days when Hollywood operated under the Production Code, it was verboten for filmmakers to glorify evil. The bad guys simply could not be favored over the good guys in a motion picture. However, in 1965, the Motion Picture Association of America did away with the Production Code and Hollywood was never the same. Within a few years, movies in which the criminals were glorified and the law was trashed were being made. One of the most significant of these flicks is the 1969 movie **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid**.

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid tells part of the story of the eponymous outlaw duo and their Hole in the Wall Gang. The movie starts when the outlaws attempt to rob a bank and wind up getting ambushed by a group of law enforcers hired by railroad magnate E.H. Harriman. The movie then chronicles the attempts of the outlaws to shake off the pursuing lawmen. Finally, Butch & Sundance wind up attempting to leave the outlaw life and migrate to Bolivia.

The basic problem with **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid** is that in real life, they were ruthless outlaws who scarcely hesitated to kill anyone in cold blood. However in the movie, both Butch and Sundance are portrayed as being kindhearted folks. Throughout the movie, they are presented as being the good guys while the law enforcers are pictured as being pretty bad company. The buddy-buddy chemistry aspect was played up to the hilt, but the movie comes across as being something akin to a live action cartoon and leaves a bad taste.

The characters of **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid** are a bit on the unbelievable side. The movie's music is not very good and it does not fit into the emotional content of the movie. This movie only briefly sketched the story of Butch, Sundance and the Hole in the Wall Gang. The Sundance Kid in real life did not have the super quick draw that this movie attributes him having. Contrary to what is portrayed in this movie, there is not a single known gunfight that either Butch or Sundance ever engaged in real life. In the movie, Butch and Sundance were a most affable pair, but in real life, they were nothing but a couple of two bit cold blooded killer outlaws.

This flick does not feel like a conventional western, just like a couple of guys joking their way through a bad western. Additionally, some of director George Roy Hill's artistic devices are annoying. This movie is also a classic instance of how movie critics revise their assessments in light of a flick's reception by the public. Initially, the critics were rather cool towards this movie. However, once it became clear that it was a hit with the movie going public, the critics began calling this movie a classic and still do so to this very day.

In many ways, **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid** is not a bad movie. It boasts several standout performances particularly by both Newman and Redford and in terms of direction, music and technical aspects, it is a well made flick. However, the script is less than ideal in that it is a work of revisionist history and the movie basically glorifies evil. It is cartoon like and bears little relation to reality. That being the case, it cannot be recommended here.

The Drum (1938)

The Drum is a fun flick from the Golden Age of Hollywood when the studio system routinely turned out movies that provide much better entertainment than what Hollywood can make today. It is set in British India during the reign of Queen Victoria. Directed by Zoltan Korda, it is a movie that proved to be a morale booster for the increasingly beleaguered British people during the later years of the Great Depression that also saw the rise of Hitler.

The Drum depicts life in British India as being good for both British and Indians alike. This was certainly true for the common folk since they were free of the pre-British feudalism and backwardness that held the common folk back. However, the upper classes and the noble lords chafed under British rule and they lusted for a return to the feudalism of the past. The differences between the pro-British Indians and the anti-British Indians is personified by Prince Azim (Sabu) and Prince Ghul (Raymond Massey).

Prince Azim befriends several British officers and is himself an enlightened nobleman. Prince Azim is a good guy and exhibits a rather cheeky sense of humor throughout the movie. Many of his best friends in life are British Army officers and soldiers such as Captain Carruthers (Roger Livesey). Captain Carruthers brought to life the sort of positive relationship that existed between British officers and civil servants and the Indian people. Prince Azim remains solidly pro-British throughout the flick.

Most of the Indian noblemen in **The Drum** are anti-British and yearn for the overthrow of British rule. Under the leadership of Prince Ghul, they form a conspiracy aimed at achieving that end. The evil cabal aims not only at ending British rule, but at overturning all the positive reforms, that the British brought to India that worked in the favor of the common folk. Prince Azim, being a plucky fellow, discovers the plot and endeavors to expose it to the British.

However, there is a little problem. Prince Azim finds it impossible to get away from the company of the conspirators. He cannot entrust a servant with the message since the servant might be in on the conspiracy. Prince Azim winds up finding a solution to this problem that is most inventive and involves a quite creative use of a drum.

The Drum is great escapist fun. Both the cinematography and the screenplay are very well done. Many of the performances, including those of Livesey, Massey and Sabu are of a fine caliber. **The Drum** accurately portrays the India of the 1930's as what it really was like as opposed to the revisionist history of the post-

independence era. The British receive their just due for their efforts to bring Western civilization and strong moral values to India to raise the living standards of the common folk and to free them from the yoke of the feudal lords. **The Drum** is most heartily recommended.

The Great Raid (2005)

The Great Raid was the single best movie of 2005. It was also the single most patriotic movie from that year. This is significant since 2005 was a year of unpatriotic flicks ranging from *Munich* to *Syriana* that sought to critique U.S. policy in the War on Terror, but which only served to provide aid and comfort for the enemy.

The Great Raid is also an accurate depiction of one of the more important events of World War II. This was the liberation of U.S. prisoners of war who were being held at a Japanese Prisoner Of War (P.O.W.) camp at Cabanatuan in the Philippines. This is a story that up until now had never been told on the silver screen.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of **The Great Raid** is that it is one of the few movies made about World War II that gives Filipinos their just due for their role in the war. Most Americans are not aware of the fact that many Filipinos risked their lives in helping American P.O.W.'s. Likewise, many Filipinos participated in guerilla warfare against the Japanese occupiers during 1941-1945.

Another noteworthy aspect of **The Great Raid** is that it showcases the kind of operation that is also used to fight terrorism whether it be in Afghanistan, Iraq or elsewhere. The U.S. Army Rangers 6th Battalion, forerunners of today's U.S. Army Special Forces were the primary unit involved in the raid depicted in the movie as was a detachment from the 11th Airborne Division.

An unusual aspect of **The Great Raid** was its casting. Instead of casting big name actors, director John Dahl chose to cast mostly unknown actors. Even the lead actors Benjamin Bratt & Joseph Fiennes were not very well known actors. The purpose of this was to focus the audience's attention on the storyline without the actor's prior reputation and roles getting in the way of the film's appreciation.

The movie begins with the Japanese invasion and take over of the Philippines in 1941.

The narration reminds us that the Philippines were doomed to fall to the Japanese assault when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt decided to focus on defeating Hitler despite making promises to the American people that he would do all that he could to defend the Philippines.

The Japanese are shown as behaving in a cruel and sadistic manner. American and Filipino P.O.W.'s are shown being subjected to torture, starvation and withholding of medical treatment.

They are also shown being subjected to frequent beatings by Japanese soldiers who clearly enjoyed inflicting pain and suffering. This is not propaganda by the filmmakers. Instead, it is a realistic depiction of the kind of war crimes that were actually committed by Japanese soldiers both in the Philippines and elsewhere during World War II. **The Great Raid** shows the planning and intelligence gathering that lead to the raid on the P.O.W. camp at Cabanatuan. Aerial reconnaissance and photography played a key role here. Most importantly, its depiction of the actual raid and freeing of the prisoners was both historically accurate and also well executed on film.

One aspect of **The Great Raid** that deserves mention is that, unlike the great majority of Hollywood productions, it shows genuine respect for religion. Religion is treated in a positive manner. The adherents and priests of Catholicism are presented in a positive light. There are even a few scenes in which a card that has an illustration of the Virgin Mary on it plays a key role in giving a pair of American soldiers both the bravery and the confidence to fully engage themselves in the performance of their heroic mission.

The best thing about **The Great Raid** is the fact that it is a patriotic pro-America movie. It is a movie that makes American soldiers look every bit as brave and good on celluloid as they are in reality. This is in direct contrast to the great majority of military related movies of the post 9/11 era that are made to provide aid and comfort to the terroristic enemy and trash America at every turn.

All in all, **The Great Raid** is a great movie about a great nation. It is stirringly patriotic and is very well made. It is a movie that every good American should see.

Jackson County Jail (1976)

There are some movies that are so poorly made, it defies belief that they ever made it to the silver screen. **Jackson County Jail** produced by the prolific Roger Corman is one such movie. If it were possible to gauge the IQ of the script writer from this movie, it would be pretty close to zero.

Jackson County Jail is just a slapdash effort. It begins in Los Angeles when liberated career woman Dinah Hunter (Yvette Mimieux) quits her job as a producer of commercials after a client pans one of her latest creations. She then goes home and upon observing that her husband has been teaching their teenage daughter how to swim, talks down to him about how he's unworthy of being married to a great woman like her and how their daughter ought to be placed in a "day care center" when Mom is at work just as if men are automatically unfit to have any role in the

raising of the kids. This scene set a pattern that held for the rest of the movie: white liberal lady treats everyone around her like dirt or worse and then acts surprised when the other folks resent her poor behavior.

Once done trashing her husband, she then leaves Los Angeles for a new job in New York, intending to drive herself there. She does so without doing any packing or any of the other things that you would expect someone who's planning on such a long drive to do. One aspect of long distance driving that she is quite clearly incapable of doing is navigation and map reading. Driving from L.A. to N.Y. clearly means going northwards, but she actually drives into the Deep South. On her trip, she humiliates a waitress and picks up a pair of hitch hiking punks who clearly have trouble written all over them. Once she makes it clear to them that she intends on driving north, they hijack the car and rob her.

Now, you would think that now that she is in peril, the California gal would start treating folks like fellow human beings at least long enough to get herself out of trouble. If so, you obviously are not familiar with the work of producer Roger Corman. In Corman's movies, all too many women who do not observe traditional values are overbearing, nasty scum who get their comeuppance by getting raped and worse. Another constant theme of Corman movies is that Southerners are all a bunch of ignorant yahoos with Southern law enforcement officers being the worst of the lot. **Jackson County Jail** is a perfect example of these themes of Roger Corman's films.

Anyways, back to the movie. After the hijack, Dinah enlists the aid of a restaurant owner who calls the sheriff's office on her behalf. However, she misjudges the kindness of the restaurateur as being a prelude to a rape attempt or something and she launches into a physical assault upon the poor man right in time for the Deputy Sheriff to walk into the scene and arrest her on the spot. Once at the jail, she is then raped by a different deputy who is apparently the sheriff's official rapist. In an unbelievably fake scene, she kills the pervert and frees both herself and another inmate even though the other guy is a braggart of a criminal. They steal a car and on the way to the criminal's hideout, they get into a goofy chase with the now drunken sheriff. This chase ends when the sheriff gets into a head-on crash with another car. Once at the hideout, where there is a pair of lesbians and other obvious undesirables, Dinah pulled her Mrs. Superior act until the cops show up and a gunfight ensues. Both Dinah and the criminal escape, but not until after we get to see both lesbians die.

This is the point where the movie really gets bad. Dinah gets into a discussion of right and wrong with her hardened criminal buddy and all but calls him a piece of white trash. Apparently all those years in the California sun have dulled Dinah's mind or something. Her accomplice responds only by saying that she must have lived a sheltered life. Eventually, Dinah is severely injured by gunshots and caught. Her buddy gets himself gunned down right in the middle of a bicentennial parade which continues on despite the fact that police are engaged in a running gunfight with the hardened criminal whose six-shooter never runs out of bullets and several

parade participants and onlookers get downed by stray bullets. Even by Roger Corman's standards, this is pretty unreal.

Jackson County Jail is garbage that is only effective as unintentional comedy. Even on those undemanding standards, it is pretty bad. If you want to get your intelligence insulted, then this is the movie for you.

The Killing Time (1987)

Hollywood has a tendency to underestimate the intelligence of the American people. This is shown by the plethora of stupid, poorly thought so-called "motion pictures" that Hollywood produces and distributes every year. One such movie is 1987's **The Killing Time**.

Kiefer Sutherland stars as a hitchhiker who kills one Brian Mars who has just been hired as a deputy sheriff in a coastal county in Louisiana. Sutherland assumes the identity of his victim and arrives in the county seat to become a new deputy sheriff and nobody suspects otherwise. And this despite the fact that Mars was supposed to be a very good friend of the chief deputy sheriff (Beau Bridges) and also despite Sutherland's tendency to make psycho-type statements such as saying that he likes being a deputy sheriff because he can carry a gun and shove people around.

Perhaps part of the reason why nobody catches on to Sutherland's deception is that in this particular county, corruption in law enforcement is rampant. The county sheriff, played by Joe Don Baker, is totally corrupt and is planning on moving to Mexico where he will live out his retirement on a huge nest egg created by lavish bribes and kickbacks. Even by the low standards of Hollywood, Baker's corruption and exaggerated Southern fried sheriff behavior is absurd. If **The Killing Time** was a comedy, then it might work. However, in an alleged straight action drama, Baker's act is screwy.

The chief deputy sheriff is not much better. Despite the fact that his ex-girlfriend is now married to a wealthy San Francisco real estate developer who has a nice estate down in the Louisiana county, he keeps on messing around with her to the point of going to San Francisco to attend parties that both she and her husband attend. This on a salary that Bridges's character says is a bit short of \$20,000.

The husband (Wayne Rogers, formerly Trapper John on M*A*S*H*) is understandably concerned about the fact that this Louisiana lawman keeps on hanging around his wife, especially since the wife clearly likes Bridges's attention.

As it happens, the husband has every reason to be concerned. His wife wants to murder him and marry Bridges and the chief deputy sheriff kind of waffles on the idea. One night, the wife puts a knockout drug in the husband's drink and invites her boyfriend over to finish him off. Bridges freaks out, telling his galpal that murder is wrong and should never, ever be done. They

put the husband in bed and he wakes up the next morning complaining of a hangover.

It is at this point that the movie lurches beyond the limits of believability. Bridges calls his gal and arranges for her to meet him at the abandoned lighthouse. There, he tells her that he's decided for reasons too sensitive to share with the audience that he's decided that she's right, that hubby must die so that they can get married and live happily ever after. Not only that, but he's also come up with the neat idea of doing it in such a way that he can use his position to frame Sutherland for the murder. In other words, the chief deputy sheriff has decided in about 24 hours or so that not only is murder ok, its quite acceptable to frame an innocent man for a capital offense in Louisiana, where they take the death penalty very seriously.

Even more unbelievable is the fact that Bridges and his girl make their plans in *Very Loud Voices* so that Sutherland, who by the stroke of fate is also in the abandoned lighthouse, hears everything. Being a psycho, he plans on killing the husband himself, framing Bridges for the crime, and then blackmailing the girlfriend into marrying him. Of course he talks all this to himself so that the audience will both know his plans and that he is indeed a psycho.

From this point on, the movie becomes a mess of cliches, even messier than the swamps in the Louisiana county. You can predict every subsequent development all the way to the surprisingly dull climax. The movie ends with Bridges and his soon to be wife walking hand in hand down the road to their country estate in the sunset. Evil triumphs over evil and life continues on in the Louisiana county just as it always has.

And some people wonder why folks in Louisiana have nicknamed their state "Lousyana."

Koch Brothers Exposed (2012)

Ever since Michael Moore's 1989 flick *Roger & Me*, political documentaries have gone steadily downhill. Whereas they were once scrupulously factual and accurate to the point of being a bit dull, they are now utilized as an entertainment medium. In fact, some political documentaries have been among the most fun-filled viewing experiences of the year. This is because all too many political documentary filmmakers are throwing accuracy and ethics to the wayside in the interest of the almighty dollar.

One such producer is Robert Greenwald. Greenwald's documentaries are hard-line left-wing flicks that throw logic and common sense out the window in an effort to smear their targets. Previous Greenwald targets have included the Fox News Channel and Wal-Mart. This time around, Greenwald's targets are industrialists and libertarian businessmen, the Koch brothers, Charles and David. They donate heavily to libertarian causes and promote the vision of a libertarian society. David Koch was also the 1980 Libertarian Party nominee for vice president. Greenwald has declared war on them and has produced a documentary containing an incredible amount of vitriol aimed at smearing them.

For all of their bluster about the Koch brothers' alleged wrongdoing, Greenwald and his cronies in the making of this so-called documentary have committed their own misdeeds, such as false advertising. The movie's advertising claims that former Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower is one of the folks featured in this flick. However, Hightower is not in the movie at all. This is especially bad because Hightower is an individual whose track record gives him much more credibility than any of the people who were actually in this production.

Perhaps the worst part of this documentary came when it attacked the Koch brothers for donating \$500 million for prostate cancer treatment and research. This includes \$100 million that was donated to create the David H. Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT. Yes, you read that right. According to the movie, the Koch brothers only made these donations after David Koch was diagnosed as having prostate cancer himself, as if that was outrageous or something. One of the talking heads in this flick claimed that it was unfair for David Koch to be able to pay for his own cancer treatment when so many others cannot do so.

That comment missed the point of the Koch brothers' huge donations. Those donations were far and away much higher than what it would have been necessary to pay for David Koch's successful cancer treatment. Those donations will allow large numbers of Americans to have quality treatment and for the furthering of research to help lead to a cure for the disease. Far from selfish, the Koch brothers' donations for cancer research is about as public spirited as one can get.

In the end, **Koch Brothers Exposed** is a shoddy piece of work. It is an incredibly mean-spirited trashing of folks who are only trying to make America a better nation. The Koch brothers have lived up to their libertarian ideals by funding movements and organizations to increase liberty in the so-called land of the free. Instead, they are subjected to baseless smears by hacks like Greenwald. **Koch Brothers Exposed** is truly a movie to avoid.

Nate and Hayes (1983)

Nate and Hayes (1983) is an unjustly obscure movie that is in many ways one of the very best swashbuckling movies ever made. In this movie, we get to see Tommy Lee Jones sporting a beard and a white suit that looks like the sort of thing that a lot of 19th Century planters wore. That choice of outfit is most fitting given the fact that Capt. "Bully" Hayes is, among other things, a slave trader. Michael O'Keefe is a Christian missionary to convert the heathen of the South Pacific and Jenny Seagrove is his wife.

However, the best character in the movie is Capt. Ben Pease (Australian actor Max Phipps). Pease is the real pirate here, dressed in black with a neat looking hat. Pease becomes allied with the German Empire and its ineffectual naval commander in the Pacific in his fight against Capt. Hayes. Another opponent of Hayes is a cannibalistic, human-sacrificing South Pacific Islander prince.

The plot is filled with cliffhangers and the characters are robust. Tommy Lee Jones is compelling as the swashbuckling Bully Hayes, and the gorgeous Jenny Seagrove is the kind of "damsel in distress" that we'd all love to rescue from the evil Capt. Pease.

This movie was filmed in the South Pacific and Fiji islands, not some back lot studio in Hollywood. The majority of actors in the film are local natives of the islands where the movie was filmed, which adds to the authenticity of the movie. Also great about this movie, though, was the humor and how it not only comes from the situations, but especially from the characters, who they are and how they react in those situations.

This movie did poor business in theaters, possibly because **Nate and Hayes** sounds more like a department store than a swashbuckler. The UK title, "Savage Islands", summed it up much better. There are rousing action sequences and a host of neat touches which suggest a lot of care went into the film. The film's music is especially good.

Most obscure movies deserve to remain obscure. **Nate and Hayes**, however, is one obscure flick that you really should check out.

Quo Vadis (1951)

Quo Vadis is the absolute best movie that never won an Academy Award. At the time of its release in 1951, it was the 2nd highest box office of any movie in history (**Gone With the Wind** was the highest). It was the first of the many historical epics of the 1950's and early 1960's. It was also the best. It is also the best movie that has yet to be released in DVD.

Robert Taylor plays Roman general Marcus Vinicius, commander of the 14th Legion, and Deborah Kerr portrays a Christian lady, Lygia, that he falls in love with. Lygia is a hostage of Rome and Vinicius arranges with the mad Emperor Nero (Peter Ustinov) to have her reassigned to him. She runs away to the shelter provided by other Christians for fugitives from "Roman justice."

Meanwhile, Nero wants to go down in history as being the greatest artist of all time. He is assisted in trying to come up with both ideas and proper wording by Petronius (Leo Genn). These scenes are great fun as Petronius does a wonderful job as the emperors' faithful counselor, and with his great wit manipulates the pompous and vicious Nero. By doing so, he helps protect the Roman populace from the evil emperor.

Also going on at this time is the growth of Christianity in Rome. Both Saint Paul (Abraham Sofaer) and Saint Peter (Finlay Currie) are present in Rome. The 2 saints hold services in the Roman catacombs. Christianity is a secretive religion since the adherents of Christ are under constant threat of persecution.

Eventually, Nero gets the idea that for him to create an artistic masterpiece, then suffering on a colossal scale must first take place. He orders his chief yes man, Tigellinus (Ralph Truman), the commander of the Praetorian Guard, to set fire to Rome and also to block the escape of the Roman population across the bridge to achieve maximum slaughter. Tigellinus carries out Nero's cruel decree and one of the greatest fires in history resulted. After Nero announces both his decision and also his plans to rebuild Rome under the name "Neropolis," Vinicius bolts and goes to Rome in his chariot and succeeds in overcoming the Praetorians at the bridge to save multitudes from death.

The Roman people quickly figure out that Nero was the "incendiary" responsible for the burning of their beloved city. However, Nero decides with the help of his slutty Empress Poppaea (Patricia Laffan) that in order to deflect the blame from him, a victim needs to be scapegoated. From there, he decides that the Christians, who refuse to engage in worshipping the emperor as a god, make the best victims. Nero then decrees that it was the Christians who burned Rome and as such, they are to be all rounded up and fed to the lions in the coliseum as public entertainment.

Quo Vadis is a magnificent major motion picture. It has beautiful scenery, wonderful costumes and fantastic cinematography, and is as accurate a capture of ancient Rome as was possible with 1951 technology. The set designs are sheer artistry. **Quo Vadis** is a stunning spectacle with an excellent script, fine performances and holds up very well today.

The best part of this movie is Peter Ustinov's performance as the mad Emperor Nero. Ustinov is totally focused on the role so much so that he captures the screen in the scenes that he is in. Ustinov's performance is the absolute best portrayal of Nero yet given by an actor in a movie. Ustinov plays the role instead of converting the character into a reflection of himself. Ustinov should have won the Academy Award for his performance. He did, however, win the Golden Globe.

Thus far, **Quo Vadis** is the absolute best Roman epic ever made. The decor, costumes, and art direction certainly have not been matched by anything that followed, including *Spartacus*, *Ben Hur* and *Gladiator*. **Quo Vadis** is an excellent movie that is certainly well worth your time.

Rescue Dawn (2007)

The 2007 flick **Rescue Dawn** is proof positive that it is possible for a high quality movie to fall into the cracks and fail to even so much as break even at the box office. This is especially bad since **Rescue Dawn**, in addition to being a great movie, was also the single most patriotic film of 2007. **Rescue Dawn** is also one of the greatest movies ever made about the Vietnam War.

Rescue Dawn is about the experiences of one Dieter Dengler who was born and raised in West Germany, but who wanted to become both an American and a flyer back when he was a child. He got his wish and, upon arriving in America, he worked hard and eventually signed on to the American war effort in Vietnam as a pilot.

As a U.S. Navy pilot in Vietnam, Dengler (Christian Bale) was shot down over Laos. In Laos, he became a prisoner of the Communist Pathet Lao who treated their American captives barbarically.

The Pathet Lao failed to understand that their cruel treatment of their Prisoners Of War (POW's) would only serve to increase their yearnings for escape. The enemy underestimated the extent of the camaraderie of the Americans. They also failed to keep an adequate guard of their prisoners. However, this relaxed attitude may also have been due to the fact that one of the POW's was a certifiable nut case who hindered the efforts of the POW's towards mounting a successful escape.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of **Rescue Dawn** is the fact that one of the producers of this movie is 28 year old NBA superstar Elton Brand of the Los Angeles Clippers. Brand is one of the "good guy" players in and increasingly thug dominated league. It was financing from Brand's company, Gibraltar Entertainment, that made it possible for **Rescue Dawn** to be made.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of **Rescue Dawn** is the fact that it is a patriotic movie that depicts American soldiers as the good guys and the Communists as the bad guys. This is in direct contrast to the overwhelming majority of post 9/11 movies that depict America as irredeemably evil and picture American soldiers as being horrible people. **Rescue Dawn** gets things right while the rest of Hollywood flails around in anti-American hatred.

When you get right down to it, **Rescue Dawn** is an excellent movie. It is virtually 100% historically accurate. It is very well acted and lead actor Christian Bale deserved at least a nomination for the Academy Award for Best Actor for his portrayal of Dieter Dengler. The cinematography, direction and acting are all well done. If there is a movie on DVD that you need to see, then **Rescue Dawn** is the one.

The Rocketeer (1991)

The Rocketeer is a greatly underrated science fiction action movie set during the late 1930's when the world was both in the Great Depression & was inching towards World War II. This particular movie was made in 1991 and based on a graphic novel by Dave Stevens.

This movie is of the same flavor of the Republic serials of the 1930s and 1940s and it captures the spirit of the pulp magazines of the time. This is fitting since the original Dave Stevens comics captured the spirit of 1930's aviation pulps, as well as Doc Savage and Republic Studios. Unfortunately, Doc Savage could not be included in this movie, but Howard Hughes made a great substitution. The film was full of action and humor, cliffhangers and character; just like Stevens' creation.

The movie opens in the year 1938 when air races were as important to the American people as NASCAR auto racing is today. Heroes were made out of aviators. Airplanes that later became famous as fighters in WWII, Curtis P-40s and the British Spitfires, were originally designed as racers.

Hollywood is at its zenith, and Cliff Secord (Bill Campbell) and his friend/mentor Peevy (Alan Arkin) are getting their newest stunt plane ready for a national flying competition. Meanwhile, Cliff's girlfriend Jenny (Jennifer Connelly) is a struggling young actress trying to make it in Hollywood, one bit-part at a time. Cliff finds and dons an experimental rocket pack.

Unknown to Cliff, actor/Nazi agent Neville Sinclair (Timothy Dalton) wants the rocket pack very badly indeed, and when he overhears bit-player Jenny and her boyfriend Cliff talking about the rocket while on the set of his latest film, he immediately sets out to seduce the young actress in an attempt to get to Cliff and his coveted jet-pack.

Although the film does have its credibility gets stretched pretty thin in places (why doesn't Cliff ever run out of fuel or get his legs burnt off?) the story is solid and enjoyable and the visual effects still hold up quite nicely. The movie also features a neat explanation for how the "HOLLYWOODLAND" sign was shortened to just "HOLLYWOOD".

The acting is consistently good. Bill Campbell was perfect for Cliff Secord. Alan Arkin made a great Peevy, although he a bit less cantankerous than in the original comic. He was more of a Connecticut Yankee than grouchy mechanic. Timothy Dalton made a great Errol Flynn type and this was the first on screen hint of Flynn's involvement with the Nazi's during WWII. Much has been written on the subject, but nobody, until this picture, dared to dramatize it.

This movie has everything: Hollywood in its golden age, German spies, G-men and gangsters, elaborate nightclubs, big band music, and best of all, a hero who flies around like a bat out of hell with a jet-pack strapped to his back. The fact that during his first few times with the rocket he kept crashing into everything made Cliff Secord more believable as the Rocketeer.

The Rocketeer is a "feel-good" movie. It has an All American, Mom, Baseball and Apple Pie feel, to it, and for that quality, I love it. It's just a very good movie for kids and adults alike. That's why this movie is great.

Stalag 17 (1953)

Long before *Hogan's Heroes* came to TV in 1965, there was **Stalag 17**. It's sitcom versus straight drama. And *Hogan's Heroes* was a much better production. While **Stalag 17** attempted to portray prisoners of war as being just as involved in the war effort as the troops on the front lines, the producers of *Hogan's Heroes* realized that was just plain silly. *Hogan's Heroes* took the **Stalag 17** concept to its ludicrous extreme and was a better show to boot.

In **Stalag 17**, the POW camp commandant was comical. He seemed more like a character straight out of *Saturday Night Live* than a real-life Nazi. His menacing, insinuating monotone was a parody of German commandants. Also, the prisoners were rather more upbeat than might have been expected. Obviously, they had to keep their spirits up in order to survive, but they just didn't seem very unhappy about being in a prison camp. This is a movie about wartime prisoners that treats being held by the Germans as being no different than being in a public school -- though with the slight possibility that the students might be shot during escape attempts. The characters simply lack depth.

The whole idea that the Germans would put a “spy” inside an American POW camp comprised of sergeants is ludicrous. Even worse is the idea that the Germans would get one of their own to immigrate to America pre-war to enlist in the U.S. Army and get himself captured so that he could serve the Fatherland as a spy in a POW camp. This movie is stupid, not to mention very predictable.

My father was a World War II soldier, and while he was never in a POW camp, he knew many guys who were. My father thought **Stalag 17** was absolute trash and an insult to all POWs. He liked *Hogan's Heroes* as that show made no pretense of being realistic about what prison camp was like.

What former POWs have said about what it was really like to be in a POW camp showed **Stalag 17**'s utter lack of basis in reality. The reality of staying alive under hardship without proper food, clothing, or medical attention -- not to mention sadistic guards -- should have been material for a great movie.

The War of the Worlds (1953)

The War of the Worlds is the absolute best alien invasion movie ever made. This great film keeps looking better and better especially in comparison to much of the over-produced, digitally created drivel that is released today. Unlike today's filmmakers, the folks who made this movie realized that it takes more than gore, ear-splitting soundtracks and drooling aliens to truly scare and thrill an audience.

The War of the Worlds entertains because producer George Pal & his crew were able to make the most out of the available special effects technology to create truly remarkable special effects. Despite the fact that this movie was made in 1953, the special effects clearly out-classes those in most movies made even in the following several decades.

One of the all-time best scenes in a science fiction movie was when the Martian crept up behind Ann Robinson and clamped its fingers on her shoulder. She freaked, but not immediately. She paused, reacted to that touch, slowly turned her head around and stared at the alien limb. The entire moment of horror and violation took about four to six seconds. Her mind - finally - comprehended it. The Martian had touched her. Then she let out one of the most memorable screams in film history.

As with Hollywood productions in general, there are certain differences between the movie and the original book. The movie takes place in America instead of England, and the ships flew instead of moving like in the book, and the description of the aliens in this one doesn't look like the one described in the book. But despite that, the different features made it better!

This has to be one of a very rare genre in Hollywood: films that are superior to the original work that they are based on.

The movie eschewed Welles' animated tripods. . When this movie was in preproduction the tripod concept was discarded as unworkable and visually unimpressive, even comical. The most famous "tripod" in film history is the pirate Long John Silver. Think about his gait and then transpose the image on the alien war machines. The movement and scanning swan necks of the Martian war machines in the movie are both impressive and menacing.

In H.G. Welles' original work, the Martians are basically body less heads, which make and use mechanical substitutes as needed. In place of arms and hands they have tentacles. Essentially, Welles's Martians were giant brains without a supporting suite of organs. However, advanced research shows that notion to be nonsensical. The movie Martians are both alien and quite plausible with their functional bodies, three-fingered hands, and their tripled-lensed eyes.

So many scenes in this film are quite memorable: the army fighting the Martian space ship while a man of God tries to make peace with the strangers, the old farmhouse, and the ending as the aliens attack Los Angeles. The minister shows a remarkable curiosity about the alien invaders – an unexpected and refreshing take on the clergy considering the usual Hollywood stereotype. The movie also has a most memorable ending: The suggestion that divine intervention has spared Earth from the Martian hordes.

This movie clearly leaves the likes of *Independence Day* & *Mars Attacks* in the dust. The Martian warships are a lot scarier than the CGI fleet of *Independence Day*.

The War of the Worlds works because it treats its subject matter deadly serious. There's no cheesy cornball speeches by the President launching a counter attack and best of all no Will Smith hip-talkin' or jivin' his way through this with a smug wink to the camera. Additionally, there is none of that nonsense of Jeff Goldblum creating a virus on an Apple that can integrate into an alien races far superior technology.

If there is ever a science fiction movie that deserves to be in the collection of movie fans everywhere, then **The War of the Worlds** is the one.

Website Reviews

<https://www.astrobotic.com/>

Astrobotic Technology

When most folks think of private space companies, they think of bombastic press releases and blowhards like Elon Musk who are constantly promising that great things are going to happen any decade or so in the future. What most people do not realize is that Musk is a charlatan who is attracted to things like solar power and private space development because there are lucrative federal subsidies attached to them. However, not every entrepreneur who is into the private space scene is primarily in it for the subsidies. There are futuristic visionaries who are genuinely committed to making the world a better place as well as improving the state of humanity. In the case of Astrobotic Technology, the focus is on creating and developing robots that can be used in space activities. Astrobotic is a company that has made partnership agreements with many other concerns such as AGI, Alcoa, Ansys, Carnegie Mellon University, Caterpillar, DHL, International Rectifier and the German Aerospace Center. Ever since its founding, Astrobotic has striven to make the grade in prize competitions in order to reap the maximum publicity. Of these, one of the best well-known is the Google Lunar X Prize Scorecard. Astrobotic's first major project entailed proposed lunar landers called "Artemis Lander" and "Red Rover." It may only be a coincidence, but back in the early days of daring young entrepreneurs and their proposed space machines, one of the most prominent space enterprise companies that ultimately went nowhere was called "The Artemis Project." Although this company ultimately failed, it managed to impress a number of prominent futurists, chief among them the late G. Harry Stine who wrote a nice article about it and other space free enterprise endeavors that was published in *Analog*. The Astrobotic Technology website is a surprising place. At first glance, it does not even look like a corporate website. It looks like a showcase of all sorts of ideas for space projects.

<https://www.bio.org/>

Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO)

Ever since Genentech's groundbreaking Initial Public Offering in 1980, biotechnology has become an increasingly important area of the economy. Naturally, there came a time when industry big shots felt the need to create a trade association. Now, the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) is the largest group of its kind in both America and in the world. Originally its name was the Biotechnology Industry Organization, but in January 2016, it changed its name to better reflect its members' diverse interests.

One of BIO's main activities is that it holds an annual trade meeting. Here new innovations and products are both discussed and presented to the American public. There are a great many company executives who believe that these meetings are essential for both product development and establishing partnerships between companies. These meetings are always well attended with most meetings having over 10,000 participants. As you can expect from a trade association, it is heavily involved in lobbying in Washington, D.C. BIO's issues include cutting taxes, deregulation as well as supporting governmental research and development efforts in biofuels. It strongly opposes regulation of genetically modified organisms (GMO's). In order to enact the items on its political agenda, BIO has partnered with such organizations as the Coalition of Small Business Innovators. Unlike many other trade associations, a significant part of BIO's agenda is focused on small and mid-sized companies. This is important, since most scientific and technological innovation comes through small and mid-sized businesses. Another noteworthy activity of BIO is that every year at its annual convention, it makes an annual Biotechnology Heritage Award. The BIO website is exceptionally well organized and does a good job of presenting information to the reader. Features include the BIO Executive Committee and the governing boards that oversee different parts of the organization.

<http://ngtnews.com/>

Next-Gen Transportation

Next-Gen Transportation (NGT) is the leading news website covering the interesting world of the increasingly innovative transportation sector. All too often futurists overlook transportation as being dull and mundane. However, innovation in transportation whether it be in improved gas mileage or whether the transportation of tomorrow even uses gasoline at all is something that can have quite a beneficial impact on humanity. Currently, NGT is considered by business management as being the leading source of news and insight into the cutting edge of transportation in America. For instance, NGT is one of the few news sources that has documented how such major trucking fleet operators such as UPS and Waste Management have been converting their vehicles from gasoline to natural gas-based fuels. NGT also carries news concerning the development of the infrastructure necessary to service these alternatively fueled fleets. Service stations featuring Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) are springing up all over America with over 900 stations already in existence with hundreds more being in the works. There are even gas stations and convenience stores that are adding CNG pumps to their array of gas pumps. There are also some cities that are also working on creating their own CNG stations. Another area where NGT has beat the mundane news media to the punch is in electric powered vehicles. Over 6,500 Tesla cars alone are being sold in the United States each and every month with over 370,000 folks who have prepaid for Teslas being on the waiting list. Electric charging stations are being built in America with gas stations adding electric charging capabilities. Over in Norway, according to NGT, over 20% of all cars sold are electric powered. Right now the Norwegian government is even considering making it illegal to buy new gasoline powered cars by 2025. Self-driven cars is another area where NGT has the competition beat. All in all, NGT

News is the place to check out for the latest news from the world of emerging solutions to the problems of transportation today.

<http://www.planetaryresources.com/#home-intro>

Planetary Resources

Of all the private space companies, Planetary Resources certainly has the most ambitious program. It also has the highest public profile of any private space company. This is largely due to its ambitious website that features numerous videos highlighting the company's ideas for the future. One of the company's programs is summed under the headline of "Earth Intelligence From Ceres." Ceres is the company's "Advanced Earth Observation System" that enables its users to scan and study any spot on Earth that they want. This might be a risky venture given the number of paranoid dictators who might see it as being a sort of private sector spy satellite. Remember, all it takes to screw things up is just one paranoid dictator with an itchy trigger finger. However, Planetary Resources has other projects that seem better thought out. One such, its ultimate goal, is to engage in asteroid mining. This project follows on the heels of numerous research studies that have been going in since the 1970s. These studies have shown that asteroid mining and have also shown how it can be accomplished using today's technology. Another initiative by this enterprising company is the "Arkyd" orbiting space telescopes project. In theory, astronomers and other scientists would pay the company in order to use these satellites for research. So far, only one of these orbiting space telescopes has successfully been deployed in Earth's orbit. Thus far, there has been no word from the company about the success of this project either as an instrument of scientific research or from a purely financial perspective. A project that is closely related to all of the company's space initiatives is the development of a "laser-optical system for ground communications." There has not been any news from the company about how this project is faring either. Basically, Planetary Resources thus far, has been a company that is long on ideas and press releases and short of any actual accomplishment.

<http://www.xcor.com/>

XCOR Aerospace

When it launched, XCOR Aerospace had an ambitious program centered around its very own reusable spacecraft, the "Lynx" a kind of private sector version of the Space Shuttle. However, its ambitions have since come down to Earth and it is now focusing on creating new rocket engines for private customers. XCOR Aerospace has quite a bit of experience in this area as it has created a number of what it calls "proprietary engines and igniters." It has won quite a bit of favorable publicity for having created and successfully flown cutting edge aircraft with catchy names such as the "EZ-Rocket," the "Rocket Racer" and the "X-Racer." While the names may sound silly, their purpose is not.

The team behind both the founding and operation of XCOR Aerospace originally came together at the since defunct Rotary Rocket company. Rotary Rocket was a company that was known for the brilliance of its rocket designs and conceptions. However it was unable to procure the kind of investment capital necessary to bring its ideas to fruition and it went out of business in 2001. When XCOR Aerospace was started in 1999, its founders resolved to avoid the problems that were plaguing Rotary Rocket. Hence the emphasis on marketing that led to the creation of the catchy names for its rocket projects. XCOR Aerospace is divided up into two main units: Science and Space Expeditions. Science concerns the company's Research & Development efforts as well as spaceflight work. Space Expeditions is all about marketing and sales. Until recently, XCOR Aerospace's main project was the reusable spaceplane. However, the company recently suspended work on that project to redirect resources to other projects. The company's website is a pretty threadbare place. There are a great many photographs and some really good artwork. However, there really is not a lot of text informing website visitors about the company and its mission. There is no section for company press releases and other news. This is a deficiency that limits the website's overall effectiveness.

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Zackin Publications

Letters of Comment

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Hi, thank you. I read the issue with pleasure. Congratulations on another fine publication.

Robin

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Dear Charles Rector,

thank you for your eMail, Fornax 15 being attached.

I did like to read your eMagazine.

Well, it's demanding - as each editor of eMagazines does, just follow your line.

David Rubin: „Autism on the Rise“. Why autism which means a lack of ability to communicate? Are the autistic victims responsible, or will we find the reason elsewhere? „Inability to deal with other human beings“, the author writes. Who are the other „human beings“? Are they „aliens“, maybe? Do not laugh, please! Looking at the movies, I only can see monsters, killing, horror, crime. That's a nasty world, I believe, at least referring to these flicks. Are you interested in communication with this kind of „human beings“ (behaving like evil aliens)? Maybe that's a major reason for autism. Maybe the autists feel, this is a hell of a world. The author adds another possible explanation for autism. That is mutations. Well, as a SF fan you can think this over, too. For instance seeing in the background „Slan“, by A.E. van Vogt. For positive mutants this would be a difficult world, who knows?

There is more interesting in your eMagazine. For instance some remarks on flicks created in Hollywood's Golden Age (ending in the 1950 years). „The Crimson Pirate“, starring Burt Lancaster, I see there. Fine flick, indeed, I watched it twice.

Letters of Comment: there are maybe one dozen German fanzines, most printed on paper. Edition of 20 up to 350. I like to publish short philosophical articles there, because a lot of famous philosophers, looking at the stars, many years ago, said: they are suns, there must be planets, and there must be life there. Like Giordano Bruno for instance. Or Johann Gottlieb Fichte who thought there must be life on the surface of the suns (!). Or they thought about life on Mars. Or they discussed (Leibniz) the relation of aliens with (our) God. Or Immanuel Kant, he believed there are inhabitants on the moon.

Kant bets everything there are inhabitants on other planets, too. You see, reading old philosophers: they can be more modern than you ever thought.

No, there is no German eFanzines.com. Of course, I like to see my story, Journey into the Red Fog“ there. Having also some philosophical contents.

I would like to see more of my stories in Fornax. There are more stories available.

You can use this eMail or parts of it as a Letter of Comment, as you please.

Kind regards,
Gerd Maximovič

[Just hang in there and keep on writing up the good stuff and you'll get more published here. This fanzine publishes no more than one fiction piece and one nonfiction piece per author per issue. If you want to get more published, then send in more than just fiction.]

March 3, 2017

Dear Charles,

In Fornax #15, David Rubin's story "Stigmata" seemed quite strange to me. I went to a high school that was 60% Jewish in a state (California) where prayer in the public schools was never an issue. As far as I know, the Jewish population of Van Nuys High School was entirely either conservative or reformed. I didn't encounter any orthodox Jews until later in my life. In general, the orthodox don't send their children to the public schools. They tend to cluster together in colonies where they can have their own schools.

I didn't think much about religion when I was in high school. I thought of various religious groups as being something like fraternal organizations. To some degree, that's actually true. However, I didn't think religion was any more important than whether you were a member of the Rotarians or the Elks. The Jewish males I knew in high school didn't like the idea of growing beards, because it was Old World. The last thing they wanted was to look Old World. Nose jobs were common among the girls and a frequent topic for female meow mix.

I think The Guns of Navarone is one of the best action movies ever. I was aware the novel had been serialized in the Saturday Evening post, but I've never read the novel. About the third or fourth time I saw the movie I went to a midnight showing with some friends. We walked in a few minutes after the beginning of the film. I thought I'd go out for some popcorn at the first lull in the action. The first lull in the action came ten minutes before the end of the film. There was a lot of action in that film.

I've never seen Zorro Rides Again. At LASFS, we show a serial chapters before the meetings every week. We've shown a lot of serials over the years. I have seen Zorro's Fighting Legion. I thought it was a totally routine western. Zorro without swordplay just isn't Zorro.

The last ten years of my career with the LAPD was with the Crime Analysis Section. We dealt with computerized information, series, and patterns. I did all sorts of things over my entire career. I was the captain's adjutant at Southwest Division for a couple of years, and I was the budget coordinator for the Office of Operations back when we were only going through a million dollars a day. Most people lost track of what my rank was. I was a suit who Did Stuff. That's all they had to know.

Yours truly,

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[It has been my understanding that there has been quite a bit of friction between Jews and other ethnic/religious groups, most notably Catholics particularly Italians and Polish folks on the East coast and in the Upper Midwest than in other areas of the country. Also, Orthodox Jews primarily congregate in places such as Brooklyn and New Jersey where there are a lot of Italian folks. My suspicion is that David Rubin's story reflects his experiences growing up on the East coast that was very likely different from California. As for school prayer, remember the very first Supreme Court case involving prayer in schools involved a New York law. As for my experiences with this matter, in the town of Platteville, WI, where I grew up, there were hardly any Jews.]

I've seen *Zorro's Fighting Legion* as well. It seemed like a parody of Zorro with all sorts of guys dressing up like Zorro and getting in the way of the real Zorro. There was even a chapter called "The Flaming Z." Even worse, there was a female Zorro serial called *The Black Whip* in which Linda Stirling plays a black clad fighter for justice, who is not actually named Zorro, who teams up with a drunken newspaper editor to fight for statehood for Idaho. You see only bad guys could possibly oppose statehood. Truly a masterpiece of unintentional comedy that comes across like a Western serial version of *Plan Nine from Outer Space*. *Zorro Rides Again* was a far superior movie than either of the first named Zorro serials. However after serials were all over and done with, Zorro would be subject to even more Hollywood misanthropy such as the *Zorro the Gay Blade* flick and the truly inane *Zorro and Son* TV show. To be sure, none of these poorly conceived productions were anywhere near as awful as the Johnny Depp *Lone Ranger* movie of a few years ago, however you have to wonder just why there have been so many bad Zorro productions. Just what is it about this particular character that causes Hollywood hacks to want to produce shows about him?]