

FORNAX #18

Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea

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 issue #18 published May 2017

If you want to write for Fornax, please send email submissions to crectorATmywayDOTcom, with a maximum length of 20,000 words. 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>

A Matter of Feedback

One of the worst problems that I have been encountering while editing and publishing Fornax during the past two years is the lack of feedback from readers in the form of Letters Of Comment. In the typical issue of this fanzine, there are only three or so LOC's. What all this means is that I feel like I'm flying blind in producing a fanzine for you the reader.

This is not a problem limited to this fanzine. As Bill Burns of the indispensable website EFanzines.com noted in a recent email quoted with his permission:

The relatively low volume of LoCs for on-line fanzines is something that many editors encounter. I think the internet culture is largely to blame, with most consumers of on-line material giving little or no thought to where it came from, or that the producer might appreciate a response.

When a printed fanzine arrives in a reader's mailbox there's some sense of obligation to comment or contribute, and, of course, the threat of being dropped from the mailing list for lack of response.

Whatever the cause of the lack of feedback, it along with the lack of submissions, is hurting my ability to produce a fanzine for you the reader.

A similar problem that other fanzine editors have mentioned is the lack of submissions. Surely there are more writers out there who want to get published. Are they all holding out for the professional and semi-pro realms? Of course there are fiction fanzines such as *Planetary Stories* that have no problem attracting quality writers, but those have had several years more time to both gain a reputation and attract both writers and readers alike.

The Decline of Fayetteville, AR

Recently, my oldest brother and I took a trip to see our parents who are both buried at the National Cemetery at Fayetteville, AR. It was not an especially happy journey. This was because Fayetteville has clearly declined from the 45,000 population town that it was in 1987 when my parents and I moved there in 1987 to the 80,000 city that it is today.

In the years since 2000, which was the last time prior to this year's visit that I had set foot in Fayetteville, the city had clearly declined. Back during the years 1987-1996 when I was a graduate student at the University of Arkansas, there was a full-fledged university transit system that linked all sorts of stops that were at places where students such as myself could get free parking. Now, the system's stops are not at places where students can get any kind of parking, free or otherwise. Now, there are huge parking garages, that did not exist in 2000, where students are expected to park to the tune of \$1.65 per hour. This is yet another example of how today's colleges and universities oppress and exploit the students of today. Additionally, back during the free parking days, there were a lot of bus stops that were near major buildings such as the university library. This minimized the amount of time that you had to spend in the rain. Now, the parking garages are located far away from any major buildings so if it's raining, it's going to be a really long walk.

Fayetteville had also suffered a loss of cultural offerings. For instance the Hastings Books & Music shop that carried all sorts of small press and independent music items had closed due to the competition of the newly arrived Barnes & Noble. Back in the day, Dickson Street was a mecca of small businesses, all of them mom and pop shops and restaurants. Now most of them have been replaced by big businesses such as Jimmy Johns and Waffle House. Of all the places that were on Dickson Street during my student days, the Dickson Street Bookstore was the most significant place still open. What that shows is that even in these times, a top quality used bookstore still has a niche in a place like Fayetteville.

However, not all of the used bookstores were able to make use of the niche that they had in the old Fayetteville. Back in the day, Rock Bottom Books & Comics (RB&C) was a local used book chain that starting in 1996 came to be consolidated to a single spot on Garland Avenue where there was one of the biggest free parking areas for students. To an extent that probably seems unimaginable nowadays, RB&C was the main place to go for science fiction, not just in Fayetteville but in the entire state of Arkansas. Back then before the coming of big outfits such as Barnes & Noble as well as Books a Million and Hastings Books & Music starting in the early 1990's, it was extremely difficult to find science fiction books and magazines anywhere in Arkansas. Practically every place where you could find books and magazines for sale were basically mom and pop operations run by the kind of people who thought of science fiction as being "that crazy Buck Rogers stuff." Such was RB&C's reputation that when I moved to Little Rock in 1997, it turned out that practically every member of the Little Rock Science Fiction Society was familiar with RB&C and had made the drive all the way to Fayetteville to shop at the place with the absolute best selection of science fiction in Arkansas. If that does not tell you just how bad the situation facing science fiction fans in Arkansas was, then nothing will.

On a personal level, RB&C was the place where I got into my hobby of collecting/reading vintage science fiction magazines. Prior to discovering RB&C in the Fall of 1987, I had only a few back issues of *Amazing*, mostly from the Elinor Mavor era. While shopping at RB&C, I picked up multiple back issues of *Amazing* as well as *Fantastic*. It was in the "The Clubhouse" column that were in the Ted White era magazines where I first learned about fandom and most importantly, fanzines. I also was able to get all but the 4 very first issues of *Galileo* as well as some issues of *Fantasy Book* and *Vertex*. However, to my later regret, I passed on the chance to pick up some issues of both *Future Life* and *The Space Gamer*. There was/is a lot of great reading in those old magazines that were to be had at far lower prices than what the dreadful things that pass for science fiction magazines nowadays have on their covers. Nowadays, used bookstores, such as Half-Price Books hardly ever carry science fiction magazines, but I have Ray F. Bowman's irregular catalog to make up for that.

Now, everything has changed for the worst. RB&C no longer sells used books of any sort. Its entire inventory now consists of comics. While the RB&C of yesteryear carried old comics, some dating back decades, it now has very few old comics, most of which date back to no further back than the previous decade. Even worse, the size of the store has shrunk roughly 75% in size with the result that everything is squeezed into a limited area. You literally feel that you are in a can of sardines. Needless to say, if I ever go back to Fayetteville, I'm not going to waste my time at RB&C ever again,

Another dreadful development that has damaged the present day Fayetteville is the lack of diversity in restaurants. Back when we moved there in 1987, there was a tremendous variety of eating out places. Now, barbecue (BBQ) places are on the rise. It seems as if BBQ places are all over the place.

Back in the day, Fayetteville, AR, was a great place to live in that had a whole host of cultural opportunities. Now, not so much.

PDF REVIEW

Food Babe Health Guide by Vani Hari

Unlike most other PDF's that are potential review subjects for Fornax, this particular PDF is not something that you can access easily at a website. What you need to do is go to <http://foodbabe.com/> and sign up at the website. Once that's done, you will then be sent this health guide via email.

This is a rather unusual health guide given that its cover is a photo of its author holding a sign in a grocery store that reads "Welcome to the Food Babe Army! Thank you for joining." It is entitled "FOOD BABE: Organic Living, Nutrition, Fitness, Travel & Adventure."

Upon looking it over, you will find that this "Organic Living" lifestyle can be pretty expensive. It is based on eating plants, with wild salmon being the only protein rich food that is approved of in this Health Guide. Other approved foods in this health guide include coconut oil, garlic and cayenne peppers. This guide also includes a list of "10 low calorie foods that make you sick." Unlike the previous list, this is a compilation of name brand foods that contain what Vani Hari calls "questionable ingredients" that are marked in red. The list of suspect food include Kraft Mayo, Orbit sugar free gum and Red Bull. Finally, there is a list of a half dozen "healthy habits to start now." These include fasting for at least 12 hours every day and stop drinking liquids with your meals. Adopting these habits would mark a radical change in most folks' lifestyles.

Checking out <http://foodbabe.com/> you will find a surprisingly controversial website. This is the realm of one Vani Hari who calls herself the "Food Babe." At one time, Hari was both **over weight and unattractive** as pictures on her website demonstrate, but now she has shed over 30 pounds and now looks strikingly attractive. She also quit her job working in computer science and became a full time harridan of the food industry.

With her single minded devotion to food issues, Hari has attracted an "army" of over 40,000 hard core supporters who back up her demands on food companies to change their policies or else face their wrath. The Food Babe's supporters have been able to cause chain restaurants to drop ingredients that Hari deems dangerous from their products.

Hari's tactics have been both sharp and to the point, not to mention attention-getting. She has accused Chick-Fil-A of being "Chemical-Fil-A." Many of her targets are places that at first glance would seem like purveyors of pretty healthy food such as Starbucks, Subway and Whole Foods. The attention gained from these daring attacks gained her a sizable audience including a spot on Time Magazine's list of the "30 Most Influential People on the Internet." She also wrote a bestselling book titled The Food Babe Way.

The most recent addition to her website concerns the secret ingredients used in Bojangles' Famous Chicken 'n Biscuits. Hari and her supporters had been endeavoring to find out these ingredients for over a year, only to be met with corporate stonewalling. However an anonymous individual who Hari calls a "whistleblower" was kind enough to send Hari that list. Given her track record in persuading food companies to drop ingredients she does not like, one wonders just how long it will take Bojangles to stand firm from all the pressure that Hari is likely to inflict on them.

There is a backlash against the Food Babe as shown by this: <https://twitter.com/lesleyraekelly/status/836214358589890560> That posting was by the blogger at High Heels and Canola Fields who further wrote that <http://highheelsandcanolafields.com/2017/02/27/we-all-should-be-done-with-the-food-babe-and-her-fake-news/> "We should all be done with the Food Babe and her Fake News." There are also a number of corporate funded scientists who are increasingly turning to blogging and who are taking Hari on. Hari's detractors include the Dead State website that has called her "the queen of pseudoscience." Both the American Council on Science & Health and Real Clear Science have teamed up to create a chart ranking the best and worst science websites that you can access here: <http://acsh.org/news/2017/03/05/infographic-best-and-worst-science-news-sites-10948> On that scale, the Food Babe's website is ranked as being "pure garbage." There is also book that was published as a rebuttal to the Food Babe Way entitled "The Fear Babe."

Additionally, Hari has drawn the attention of Glenn "Instapundit" Reynolds who has one the world's most popular blogs at <https://pjmedia.com/instapundit/261476/#respond>. Hari's postings have also inspired a lab technician named Yvette d'Entremont to create her own website called SciBabe at <http://scibabe.com/> to offer a direct counterattack to Hari's Food Babe postings. d'Entremont also counters other websites that she says lie to the public on a regular basis and has even published a list of what she considers to be the worst of these websites at <http://scibabe.com/incomplete-list-bullshit-websites/>

Hari has given her detractors plenty of ammunition. For instance, she has claimed that if you cannot easily say the name of an ingredient, then you should consider it potentially dangerous. She has advocated people not use microwave ovens because she considers them unhealthy. She has made the claim that there are all sorts of "hidden toxins" in the food that you get at grocery stores. She also says that most people need to "detox" themselves from eating too much "refined sugar." To hear her tell it, America's food companies don't care if their customers die from their products just as long as they make a tidy profit in the process. She has even claimed that, "there is just no acceptable level of any chemical to ingest, ever," despite the fact that water is a chemical.

Additionally, the Twitter hashtag #foodbabearmy that was originally established by Hari as a means of amplifying her message appears to have been taken over to some extent by her opponents in recent months. Also, during the past few years, the growth in size of her army has slowed to only about 2% a year. One wonders just how much longer she is going to be able to keep up as a force on the Internet to be reckoned with by both big business and the scientific establishment.

The Online Multiplayer Gaming Ideas of Danielle Buntten Berry

During the past two decades, online multiplayer games have grown at a rate far faster than any onlookers in 1996 would have thought possible. Certainly, the growth of online gaming would have astounded my late friend Danielle Buntten Berry who was of the firm opinion that online games "suck" and as such they would never surpass traditional computer gaming.

Berry had a strong track record as a creator/developer of computer games, however, when it came to online games, she had some pretty strange ideas. For instance, she thought that there should be some way for the losers to "save face." That is for the losers to feel better. She thought that adding "randomness and chance" to games would make the losers feel better.

Berry had some other strange ideas as well. For instance, she believed that the maximum number of players in any online multiplayer game should be no more than a dozen. When games such as Earth: 2025 that had playerships of excess of 20,000 players, she refused to believe it. Berry claimed that the developers of these games were engaged in consumer fraud. There simply was no way to convince her that those player statistics were for real. Needless to say, modern online multiplayer games, such as Eve Online and World of Warcraft with player bases numbering in the millions would have blown her mind.

Berry also believed that if there was any chance of online games becoming massively multiplayer operations, it would only happen through proprietary services such as America Online (AOL). This was on the grounds that only a big budget operation could have the necessary "architecture" to carry off such a feat. To be sure, AOL, along with CompuServ, was a pioneer in multiplayer online games existing long before the Internet as we know it today came into being. However, as we have all seen online gaming companies today have pretty sizable budgets and with that, high technical capabilities.

Berry also believed that chat should be added to online games to enhance the game experience. This strategy was actually followed by several online gaming companies with dismal results. It turned out that few gamers were actually interested in having conversations with their opponents.

However, Berry also had some smart ideas. For instance, she believed that the most important thing that online game designers needed was originality. Even in 1996 when online games were just starting to get under way, there was very little originality. All too many online games were little more than rip offs of long established computer games.

Berry also wondered just why, outside of 2-player games, it seemed to be impossible for there to be electronic multiplayer games that were not online affairs.

Just why is it that these "offline games" seemed to be incapable of making it with the general public? Berry speculated that since these games were played with joysticks that were attached via wires instead of using some sort of beaming mechanism similar to that used by remote control TV devices, that made offline electronic games impractical.

Essay

Parasitoid Criticism

By Dr Robin Bright

The methodological literary approach developed in the 1930s by the surrealist artist, Salvador Dali, to describe his art, which involved optical illusions and other multiple images, is 'paranoid criticism'. The technique is to invoke a paranoid state (fear of the self being manipulated, targeted or controlled by others) in order to examine what causes the personal identity to fear deconstruction, while subjectivity remains the primary aspect of the artwork. In a work like *Autumn Cannibalism* (1936), for example, paranoid criticism examines why the individual fears being devoured. Painted just after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil war against fascist General Franco's dictatorship, *Autumn Cannibalism* shows a male and female couple locked in a cannibal embrace. Although war is symbolized, Dali's 'paranoid criticism' isn't enough. The step he was looking to make was 'parasitoid criticism' whereby the human host of women's womb is discerned in parasitological terms, that is, she produces a parasite which becomes parasitoid, which is a term employed in parasitology to describe a parasite that emerges from the host to devour it.

Franco's Spain was a Christian nation like Italy where fascism arose and Benito Mussolini became fascist dictator in Rome after the 1922 election. Mussolini's fascist symbol was the *fasces* of the Empire of ancient Rome, a bundle of wood with an axe in the center, which represented how the opponents of fascism were blinded. When the German National Socialist (Nazi) Party adopted the *fasces* as its symbol, after dictator Adolf Hitler was elected in 1933, the Nazis began constructing camps ringed with barbed wire behind which the Jewish people and other ethnic minority groups were exterminated where the local people couldn't see, which is why the *fasces* symbol was the Roman planners' blind made from cut wood. The Romans didn't want the people to see what they planned to do either, which was to recreate the human species as a single male brained creature wearing each others' clothes as a 'TV' transvestite killing itself for the entertainment of the Empire in huge amphitheaters built for that purpose.

Although the television 'TV' machine wasn't invented until 1926 by John Logie Baird, the Romans had already manufactured the human species on a grand scale as a 'TV' for the alien parasitoid devourer to watch on Baird's 'TV' machine. Fascism arose because Christians didn't understand Jesus' teaching: '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, Satan, with her foot, because futanarian 'woman's seed', who're represented by the birth of Jesus uncontaminated by male semen, are women who can sexually reproduce their own brains' powers from their own penis' semen, so that humans can run their own race from the host womb, rather than the alien parasite that, somehow millennia ago inveigled itself into the women's host womb of humanity, stole women's penis' semen and became her species' parasitoid devourer.

All of art, civilization and culture is parasitoid criticism, because the alien sets the conditions for the criticism. In literature 'meta-criticism' has been used as a term to describe an objective standpoint adopted by the literary critic to comment on a work of fiction, which itself was devised by the novelist as a comment on a fiction. The parasitoid critic identifies the world as the fiction being commented upon, that is, warfare against 'woman's seed' is the condition within which the novelist and the critic function, which is what Salvador Dali's paranoid criticism discovers. A work like *Autumn Cannibalism* depicts the 'TV' transvestite eating itself, because that's what male brained single creature's wearing each others' clothes manufactured for the 'TV' television machine of the alien parasitoid devourer do to entertain the killer of their human race, which are its armies. An ideological propaganda image of the German army was of a jackboot stamping on a Jew's face forever, because that's what armies are for. To get more juice out of the Jews so that the armies and its commanders have more 'choose'. When Jesus met a man near the town of Gadarene, he was possessed by demons and said: 'My name is Legion.' Because the Roman legions were then occupying Jewish Palestine as the armies of Rome. Jesus ordered the demons to leave the man and they entered a herd of pigs and ran off a cliff and drowned in the sea, because that's what demons do with men. The man Jesus met didn't want to belong to the legions of Rome.

Judaism is important because of the tradition of the Jews as the 'chosen people' of the *Bible* descended from the first woman, Eve, and the first man, Adam, who were expelled by God from the paradise of heaven on Earth, Eden, for rejecting God's 'fruit of the tree of life', that is, immortality, for the 'fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil', which was death, because the angel Satan, who'd been turned into a serpent for rejecting God's plan that the human host would be greater than the angelic, told Eve: 'You shall be as gods.' (*Gen: 3. 5*) God told Adam he must labor, and Eve must experience labor pain before Redemption: 'You shall crush the head of the serpent, but he shall bruise your heel.' (*Gen: 3. 15*) Jesus' birth uncontaminated by male semen as the futanarian foot of his mother, the Virgin Mary, was Redemption for 'woman's seed' and his subsequent nailing to a cross of wood atop the hill of Calvary outside the city of Jerusalem by the Romans as a 'dissident' where he died before having Resurrection and Ascension prefigured that of 'woman's seed' through her species' own brains' powers for the developing of permanent memory through immortality conferring medical science, and so the permanent maintaining of starship technology to facilitate woman's escape

from the Nazi jackboot seeking to crush some more choose out of the `chosen` forever enslaved in ephemerality`s blind ignorant unconsciousness while the pogromer secretly extinguishes her `seed`:

`Every woman adores a Fascist,
The boot in the face, the brute.`1

Although US` poet Sylvia Plath`s depiction of a Jew as a shoe seems whimsical, and the boot stamping on the face of herself as a Jew, surreal, she committed suicide shortly after writing the poem, `Daddy`, on October 12, 1962. If women are perceived as Jews, which is in accordance with the futanarian traditions of Judaism, where a Jew can only be born from a woman, like Jesus` mother, the Virgin Mary, that is, because women are Jews, then the Nazi perspective is that the piles of shoes outside the ovens at Belsen death camp and others, while the corpses of the women were burned, is what `woman`s seed` was for, because `Jew` needed to make shoes to walk in. Consequently, as applied to surrealist works like Sylvia`s poem `Daddy`, parasitoid criticism is a useful meta-critical tool, because it perceives that the alien parasitoid devour has constructed the conditions for its activity and can criticize the work on the basis of the fact that the devouring parasitoid has been exposed. Although paranoid criticism allows the critic to perceive that the individual is being attacked, parasitoid criticism perceives the nature of the attacker:

`You do not do, you do not do
Any more, black shoe
In which I have lived like a foot
For thirty years, poor and white,
Barely daring to breathe ...`

Sylvia`s species of women is a futanarian `foot`, which can`t live with a Nazi jackboot stamping on their face forever. The sexual reproduction of children is an illusion maintained by fascism as a propaganda instrument of faith in a future that can`t be, because the fascist system depresses the socio-economy through warfare against `woman`s seed` to prevent a cure for the `incurable killer disease`, like HIV/AIDS, for example, which cure would take immortality conferring medical science further towards maintaining young women in permanently developed brainpower and bodies of their futanarian species of `woman`s seed`. Consequently, ephemeral women is what the fascists want, that is, extinguishing young women until they`re senile demented is what fascism is. When the old die, the new generation is a `visual feast`,

but that's all. The aim of the fascist is to produce 'choose' from the womb of a blind ignorant unconscious host, which is why the paradigm of the late 20th century was the HIV/AIDS virus. In ancient Greece women's host wombs were enslaved for homosexuality in pederasty to spread its contagion of conquest through warfare against 'woman's seed', which gave rise in the late 20th century to HIV/AIDS transmitted through men's mixing of blood, shit and semen in each others' anuses in rejection of 'woman's seed': 'Men cursed the God of heaven for their pains and their sores, but refused to repent of what they had done.' (*Rev*: 16. 11) In modern society the Greek contagion was succeeded by the 'geek' contagion, which was the computer virus transmitted as 'bad machine code' to the brains of data processing equipment to destroy the memory function by programmers calling themselves computer 'geeks'. In short, the geeks were the latest version of the virus that was spread by the ancient Greeks as a 'biological weapon' to kill the brain of the human species. Women who look physically old are victims of the fascist system, which wants them to die, or they'd have permanent memories and young bodies. The generations of new bodied women arise in blind ignorant unconsciousness as ephemerals doomed to be extinguished like the previous generations before them, because men don't want 'woman's seed' to produce the permanent brainpower they need in order to escape from the Nazi jackboot crushing their faces to produce more shoes. In simple terms, the older generation are exterminated in fascism so that the younger generation will buy more shoes, and of course the manufacturer and retailer benefit.

The notion that shoes are Jews seems evil, but cigarettes are secrets centered around the notion that ground tobacco is 'snuff', which is the generic term for movies made of real life killings for the entertainment of the alien parasitoid devourer's modern cinema theater or home entertainment 'TV' on Earth. Because 'smoking' is a euphemism for murder with a bullet, which leaves a gun smoking, and 'smoking' is also a euphemism for *fellatio*, cigarette smoking is the 'secret smoking' of the 'snuff movie', that is, the penis' semen of 'woman's seed' is being 'smoked'. Or, in other words, the human species' brainpower is being extinguished to ensure enslavement in blind unconscious ignorance's permanent ephemerality, so there'll never be memory for the operation and maintenance of developed technology for eternal liberty through escape from the alien parasitoid's devouring of her. Although the idea of reality as a 'snuff movie' seems a nightmarish delirium to the simple person, homosexuality for pederasty in warfare against 'woman's seed' creates the conditions for men to believe that they aren't homosexual, so that they can be persuaded to act on behalf of the parasitoid devourer, which is. In short, there are two types of men, the parasitoid devourer in Satanism, and the man who believes that he's acting in accordance with principles that aren't created by the Satanists' conditioning, whereas it's the conditions that ensure that men act as homosexuals want them to, that is, as parasitoid devourers of 'woman's seed'.

Automobiles are a dragon's painted nails, because of the four nails holding Jesus to his cross. Homosexuality in pederasty's seeking to prevent the four-wheeled motor vehicle from being developed by human brainpower, lest starships succeed, is symbolized by the four nails. Consequently, Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension to heaven in prefiguration of 'woman's seed' represents the need for her to sexually reproduce the brainpower needed to construct starships to escape from her parasitoid devouring on Earth and colonize the planets amongst the stars.

However, because men are conditioned by homosexuality to act on behalf of the parasitoid devourer against `woman`s seed`, that`s what would happen amongst the colonized planets if `TV` didn`t produce edutainment for humans, rather than the alien. Though mass production of automobiles began in Detroit, Michigan, in 1908 at the Henry Ford factory with the Model T Ford, the pedal and wheel mode of progress resembling the treadmill in which a mouse runs hadn`t changed by the beginning of a 21st century in which `mouse` was the name for the device used to search on the internet for edutainment. However, as homosexuals condition humans to search for what their fictions promote, `woman`s seed` isn`t promoted, because homosexuals don`t want it for humans.

If Christianity is `woman`s seed`, Christians would have to accept Jesus` Christianity, that is, Jesus` teaching of Redemption through conversion from the sinful nature of parasitoid devouring to acceptance of women, whereas at the beginning of the 21st century Christianity was closer to Satanism. Invasions of Moslem nations in Eastern Europe (Yugoslavia), and the Middle East (Iraq) and Africa (Libya), suggested that Christianity hadn`t understood Jesus. Judaism was founded by Isaac, son of Abraham, borne by Sara, who barren thereafter gave her maid, Hajer, to Abraham, and Hajer bore Ishmael, who founded Islam through his descendant Mohamed, who received the *Koran* (610-30 C.E.) from the angelic host, who`d been told that the human host would be greater than the angelic. In Islam four wives are permitted to legitimize the birth of Ishmael from Hajer, although the four wife marriage is more important as a facilitator of futanarian sexual reproduction within the Moslem family, which is in accordance with Jesus` teaching of `woman`s seed`, that is, Christianity waged war on Islam conditioned by homosexuality`s ability to persuade men they`re acting as men, whereas they were acting on behalf of the parasitoid devouring the human race, who are Eve`s and Jesus` futanarian `seed`. As a Jewish rabbi Jesus` teaching was Islamic, because he prepared the way for Christianity`s acceptance of `woman`s seed` through the four wife Moslem marriages. Otherwise the Earth`s is a surreal environment described by Salvador Dali`s `paranoid criticism` as invasive, because parasitoid devourers need a host womb. Consequently, works like 1936`s *Soft Construction With Boiled Beans* (Premonition Of Civil War) are paranoid criticism, whereas parasitoid criticism is the approach for describing it. The figure in the painting is at war with itself, because that`s the nature of men and women manufactured as a `TV` by a parasitoid devourer for its entertainment. As a paranoid critic Dali`s surrealist reasoning about *Soft Construction With Boiled Beans* was: `... one could not imagine swallowing all that unconscious meat without the presence of some mealy and melancholy vegetable.`² At a meal with members of the UK`s Conservative government, leader Margaret Thatcher was asked: `What about the vegetables?` The apocryphal reply was: `They`ll have the same as me.` In *Soft Construction With Boiled Beans* men and women are the unconscious meat and vegetables, which the alien parasitoid devourer is having. Thatcher was famous for sending a fleet and an army to fight to recapture a small group of South American Islands, The Falklands, after they were invaded by Argentina in 1982, and from the perspective of the parasitoid critic the protagonists were meat and vegetables, that is, a meal for the parasitoid devourer who`d made out the dinner invitation, and who probably was but tangentially the Argentine dictator General Galtieri. In *Metamorphosis Of Narcissus* (1937) the figures are a man and a woman, and the man is broken while the woman is blossoming,

because it represents the reemergence of `woman`s seed` as the species of the Earth, while a work like *The Great Masturbator* (1929), has a nude female figure who, rising from the back of the head of a masturbating figure bowed forward, has her mouth near a penis visible beneath a bathing suit suggesting *fellatio*. As a premonition of the Spanish Civil war in which people smoke, that`s what the parasitoid devourer`s conditions produce. The masturbator surreally masturbates the woman`s penis, which it`s stolen, while the woman`s unconscious penisless desire is to fellate a penis which isn`t attached to her, and in men that fellation results in the alien`s desire for greater submission from the species of `woman`s seed`. Taught they can`t fellate, because women don`t have a penis, men don`t know they`re the alien that`s already smoked the women`s penis in war against her `seed`, and so the conditions of homosexuality in pederasty for war against `woman`s seed` continuing to obtain, alienated men smoke the human penis in accordance with the parasitoid devourer`s intentions.

1 Plath, Sylvia, `Daddy`, October 12, 1962.

2 Wach, Kenneth, *Salvador Dali*, New York, Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1996.

Fiction

INVASION IN THE WHITE SWAN

By Gerd Maximovic

(Translation: Isabel Cole)

Not all who read this documentary report may be sufficiently aware of the fact that our universe is relatively small and crowded. One thinks, after all, gazing up at the sky, that any number of stars hang resplendent in the sky, particularly as one is informed by books and other media that behind the visible stars a myriad of worlds is hidden, and we do not even know their names.

But the size of a thing is a matter of perspective. If one says, for example, that someone has big feet or bad breath, it is entirely a matter of the standards which are being applied. And the claim that someone has bad manners presupposes that others have better... Thus it is easy to see that everything is relative...

And so it is hardly surprising that the Hauhynois, members of an interesting race from the outer belt of the Andromeda nebula, were lastingly disappointed.

For they were in search of an intelligent race of their caliber with whom they could communicate and participate, and with whom they could converse on the wonders of creation, particularly those of gastronomy.

One must also understand that the great distances in the universe can be covered only with the help of the interstice, but even then only when certain windows open in the intergalactic currents. And thus it may happen that one or the other researcher is stranded on an alien world for a long time, until a return gate opens up for him.

Then he must wait until the time is ripe to begin the journey back. And until then he plays cards with members of the native species or goes into the cinema to watch science-fiction movies. Or he spends the winter in Southern climes, eats coconuts, toys with coffee-brown beauties or - if all this bores him - counts the grains of sand on the beaches of the earthly seas and waits until his time has come.

But mind you, these were not the specific problems of the Hauhynois. For they, at the time of this account, were a whole step further than other races in the universe, if not far enough really to pose a danger to mankind, as we shall see... But now to the heroes of our story...

In retrospect it is hard to say whether it was the time of night, his hangover, or the sudden cold snap which set in over Hamburg-Blankensee. At any rate, at the end of a year shortly before the turn of the millenium Ohm Feldmann (salesman in electrical massage devices as well as vacuum-spring mattresses and suction valves for the promotion of deep sleep, by trade) decided exactly at 13:13 to drive to Garmisch-Partenkirchen for a ski vacation.

En route his car seized up on the snow-covered Autobahn near the Kassel mountains and began to skid, nearly plunging down a slope. Just short of the Frankfurt junction he had a flat which he was able to repair only in makeshift manner with the spare tire of his new car. And near the Darmstadt junction the fuel pump of his diesel car froze, and the motor jammed; the car had to be towed to a garage where they used a heater to bring it back to its normal temperature.

Thus the salesman was rattled and frustrated in the extreme by the time he arrived in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, only to discover that his room had been booked under the wrong name. And so it was almost two more hours before he was able to stretch out his weary limbs, first in the bathtub, then in his bed. But he could not sleep. For outside his window, from which the highest mountain in Germany seemed close enough to touch, a blue fire burned, as if they had recently begun to illuminate the Zugspitze with floodlights for the tourists.

Ohm Feldmann reached for the telephone to complain to the night porter of the White Swan Hotel. But the latter knew nothing about a fire burning on the summit of the Zugspitze. And he was not about to look out of the window in this cold. And furthermore, he remarked ill-temperedly, if the exacting gentleman was dissatisfied with the room - he could always try the competition...

Replacing the receiver, Ohm Feldmann heard a humming sound nearby, from the living room. And he thought, in this dump they don't even turn the televisions off - at any rate he was quite sure that he had not left it on...

So, mood and temperature sinking, he swung out of his berth, which was modelled after the coop in which sailors sleep, of all things, and groped his way sleepily into the adjoining room, from which a light shone toward him, just as blue as that outside the window.

Well, I never, thought the salesman, scratching his head, that can't be.

And he took a few steps, distrustfully circled the television, which, however, was still and mute. So that couldn't be it...

But the humming which he had heard had not grown weaker, rather louder. So he began to wonder whether this might not be a product of his poor plagued head which had been through so much that day. And anyway, as he now realized, the previous evening he had drunk between ten and twenty bottles of original top fermented Bavarian Weizenbier with the wonderful slice of lemon (guaranteeing health and vigor) to put himself in the right mood for the long trip (for the life of him he couldn't remember the exact amount).

Aha, so that was the answer to the riddle!

And with this realization he slipped on his slippers, pulled on his habitual white nightshirt, tied the pointed yellow cap under his ears so that he would not freeze in this night which promised to grow cold and clear. And since he was still up, though dog-tired, he permitted himself a swig from the refrigerator, which - sole ray of hope - was well stocked with bottles large and small, alcoholic and for teetotalers.

That revived his spirits. And before finally going to bed he groped his way to the window - but outside it a breathtaking deep-blue light glowed as if all the mountain fairies, elves, snow maidens and goblins of every shade had swarmed down the slopes, lanterns in their hands...

Well, I never, the harassed tourist thought. I never saw that at home, even though you're closer to the arctic circle there.

And he decided to call the porter again. But he had to wait an unduly long time - the good fellow was surely drunk. Even before he had not made an entirely confidence-inspiring impression. And probably he was lying in a bunk in the back with the maid, amusing her with dirty jokes... Then at last his voice was heard, but so changed that Feldmann hardly recognized it.

"Yes, what is it?" the porter wanted to know - Wolpertinger was his name, the salesman now remembered.

"The blue light...", he said, and felt a breath of air like a cold, moist hand on his shoulder, as if a ghost had entered his room and wanted to possess him.

"Oh, go on," said Herr Wolpertinger, "enough of this tripe. Go to sleep in the lovely air we have here. Tomorrow is another day. If the light isn't gone by tomorrow, I'll look into the matter."

Then there was a click on the line, a deep breathing, gurgling and growling, as if at the other end a werewolf were having difficulty keeping his mental balance, or at any rate a man who had run a long way. But Feldmann had probably been right in his conjecture about the various activities of Herr Wolpertinger. And now that he was almost drunk again, he had forgotten the breath of air on his shoulder..

But when he turned around, the curtain was moving. And it seemed to him as if a shadow there slipped quickly outside. But that - when he considered the fact that at fifteen below all the windows and doors were shut tight and even the open fireplace was barricaded - was impossible. He smiled somewhat madly. But at the same time he shivered. For from the window, which opened out onto a beautiful Spanish balcony, there came a draft, and it was icy...

In one bound the salesman was at the window, tearing open the curtains as if he had caught someone climbing through his sweetheart's window, red-handed and in dubious, disreputable circumstances. There was no one there. But the French windows were open. And from outside tiny, needle-sharp ice crystals drifted, glittering brightly in the light of the street lamps.

Ohm Feldmann, bold enough to step out onto the balcony, shivered again. He looked to the left. He looked to the right.

And since the snow lay so thick on the balcony that it even penetrated his slippers, to both sides of the threshold footprints could be seen, as of children or small men...

From the mountains in the distance a long drawn-out howl resounded. And as the salesman, his lips already turning blue, looked up to the sky - across which, as it yawned open for a moment, ragged clouds could be seen racing along beneath a gigantic bright moon - he saw glittering stars which seemed to waver, almost close enough to touch in the clear night, while shooting stars fell in unusual splendor.

Then he heard a sucking noise. And this was directly over his head and seemed to come from the roof. And indeed, now a whole load of snow plunged into the garden and onto a large snowman, burying it completely. And something fell onto the veranda and, spraying up, settled on Ohm Feldmann's shoulders. And it seemed to him that he heard distant, hollow laughter. And, nearly freezing, he heard tittering voices, as if silly ghosts were playing a New Year's joke on him...

When he finally returned to the warm room, closing the window tightly behind him, he thought for a moment of Herr Wolpertinger. But then he decided that he was overestimating his own importance - why should a harassed porter with nothing but women and the cover story of the tabloids in his head take such troubles with a guest from the far North...?

He muttered a little more, drank a sip of this and that in compensation. And thus his mind was transfigured. And now he had quite a different explanation for the blue radiance - a knock came at the door of his apartment... But now he no longer wanted to hear. He laughed. But the knocking went on.

And then he heard a delicate distant voice, anxious-seeming, but without a doubt belonging to female, which immediately electrified the salesman: "Hello, can you help me?"

Any time, thought the salesman, he too was one for the ladies, he just hadn't found the right one yet, and on his trips he always hoped for a romance at the spa or something of the kind - pretty, the right size, and equipped with a decent amount of money...

"Hello" - again this delicate, fragile voice.

"Yes!"

The travelling salesman in air mattresses was now officially awake. And the brandy snifter which he had last used for a Pernod nearly fell to the floor. With one silent leap (he was beginning to adapt) he was at the door, through whose keyhole he could see easily. There stood, wrapped in a robe which only barely covered a fine pink nightgown, a woman, hopping from one foot to the other. He could not see her head, but he could see the small delicate hands which gathered up the robe around her body.

Then there awoke in the salesman a myriad of good instincts which had so long been buried and now, like an avalanche, had been set free by almost-bare feet. And he regretted only that he had already drunk so much. For if something important was to begin now, he would rather have been sober...

But every state in which one finds oneself, he thought, has its good sides as well... If only he wouldn't make too much of a fool of himself...

"Jeez!" the woman's voice said from the other side of the door.

Ohm Feldmann jumped up and flung open the door. And the blond woman, who had been watching him through the keyhole as well, straightened up in the same moment. Ah, she was truly impressive. She was simply enchanting. You could also see how graceful she was in the way she straightened up from the unaccustomed squat. And all the same, though he wanted to play the cavalier, perhaps even the hero, he could not help turning red...

She asked, interrupting his stammer: "Do you think you could help me, Herr...? Because the porter...", she went on. She seemed close to tears: "Please come into my room for a minute. But I don't want you to get the wrong idea..."

"Oh, no..." The salesman giggled foolishly.

"I keep hearing noises in the walls. And there's a knocking under the floor. And there's a fire burning in the fireplace - I didn't light it, and it wasn't burning when I came in..."

Ohm Feldmann rolled up his sleeves. And his face, which was supposed to look determined, flushed. And the bluish veins on his nose, which he owed to the extremely frequent comfort of alcohol, lit up in this very moment, as if to light him the way to the Fräulein's suite...

"Pooh," said Fräulein Weber, who had finally introduced herself to him, as the door fell shut behind them - and she already seemed to feel a good bit safer in the presence of a strong man.

The salesman knelt down and pressed his ear to the soft carpet, but heard nothing. He went to the fireplace, in which the embers smoldered. He went to the window, which was tipped open. The snow, as he now noted in almost professional fashion, was decorated with tiny footprints.

Then he, and the woman, spun around, for the large picture on the wall, depicting a mountain landscape with plowing peasants, had fallen to the ground. And the walls, the floor, indeed, the entire room swayed. Even the chandelier on the ceiling was in motion, as if an earthquake - highly unlikely in these latitudes - had shaken the mountains. An a vase standing on the television shattered on the ground. And a moment later the television came to life. But its channels seemed to have slipped, and only swirling streaks flitted across the screen.

Fräulein Weber fled spontaneously into the arms of the salesman, which temporarily reconciled him to the White Swan's world of spooks and ghosts. But of course - as he held the warm, trembling, good-smelling, rapidly breathing woman in his arms - the matter was not closed. And before she should escape him as quickly as she had come, he stroked her hair. And although Christmas was already past, he could not have wished himself a better present...

His thoughts were about to get carried away when a high, singing noise rose, followed by three dull blows. Then there was silence. Then the thumping went on. And suddenly a light seemed to shine from under the floor, as bright as if a thousand candles were burning down there.

"I'm not staying in this dump any longer," said Elvira, whose name he owed to their first embrace.

"I need some rest too," the salesman murmured with wrinkled brow. And then his face became grim. "Now I really want to know what's going on here! I think the best thing to do is to call the police..."

For reasons of security he picked up the receiver in both hands, but he let it fall again immediately and hopped on one leg as if he had touched a glowing burner. More cautiously she touched the receiver as well, and "Ouch!" she cried; it was hot. Indeed, it glowed, as if a mysterious fire had been lit within it.

"Do you have anything to drink?" asked Ohm Feldmann, and explained that he would be able to think much better with something warm in his stomach...

He needed only to follow her eyes to detect an unmistakable bulging bottle of cognac in a cabinet in the corner. And with the liquid in him, his courage grew. And it seemed to him that he himself was growing. And he laughed again inwardly: They would solve this riddle soon enough...

They were the only guests this evening, as they realized after knocking on the doors of all

the suites on their corridor. It was dark in the corridor. And an old-fashioned gaslight flickered in the corner as they cautiously proceeded down the hall. The hotel trembled slightly. And now a humming filtered up from far below, unceasing.

They descended the stairs gingerly. And once Ohm Feldmann had to put his hand over Elvira's mouth when she was about to scream - it was only a coat rack, on which more than two dozen robes, capes and entire suits hung, as well as red, yellow and blue dresses which on the whole did not quite seem right for the upcoming New Year's festivities... And they were surprised as well when they came into the porter's lodge - for the pigeonholes in which mail for the guests was kept were literally overflowing, as if the deserted house were filled with a great hurly-burly and uproar.

"Shh," said the salesman, pinching Elvira in the arm.

She looked at him wide-eyed and surprised, and the hotel wobbled a bit. And dust fell from the walls. And the chandelier swayed in the lobby as if a monkey were swinging on it.

Ohm Feldmann took a bundle of letters out of one of the pigeonholes and read the addresses of guests who wanted to stay, or had stayed, in the White Swan Hotel. The return addresses revealed that the guests came from far away. There were addresses from throughout Europe, from Africa, from America, even from Burma. Since he had taken nearly twenty letters from a single pigeonhole, and since the other pigeonholes looked no different, he judged that about a thousand letters from all corners of the globe must have been stored here.

And he smiled as he reached into the pigeonhole with his own room number and then into that of the woman. But soon he was laughing on the other side of his face, for on a dozen letters he read his name, and Elvira's name on just as many. And so, as she quickly drew him into a corner, in the shadows, he opened several of the letters, not paying attention to the cellar stairs, whose door had opened.

There, as Feldmann lifted up the first letter in the twilight, a deep breathing could be heard, indeed, a panting. And two eyes with a green shimmer glowed in the dark. And Elvira's heart nearly stopped. And she clung to Ohm Feldmann, who was unable to put down this first letter and did not want to look away...

He read: "From: Domenico Castrioli, Via Areggio 500, Sisterio, Italia - Dear PPP, this address is perfectly suited, as it is isolated and located behind a small wood. The inhabitants will notice nothing of the invasion. And it should not be difficult to gain influence there and win a few people over. Arrival, if desired, should take place in the evening. Equipment, furnishings, star fittings at a later, suitable date. This letter should be destroyed as soon as you have memorized the address. P. S.: Don't drink any more than absolutely necessary! You know that we have not quite mastered the customs of the natives! So it's dangerous! P. P. S.: The sender of this letter, as you will recall, has temporarily been put under remote control. Hurry before the effect wears off! But enough for now! With best wishes for a good window..."

Now Elvira trembled so violently that she nearly pulled Ohm Feldmann around. But now he too let the letters fall. For Herr Wolpertinger had appeared in the door, looking as if he had to struggle with his shape and self-control. His eyes still gleamed slightly. But the fire which they had spat a moment ago was now extinguished.

And, as he came down the hall toward his counter, he grew increasingly confident, as if he had temporarily fallen into a deep sleep out of which, as he walked, he gradually awoke. And indeed, he rubbed his eyes, yawned a little, and lounged against the wooden partition without noticing the missing letters from the two pigeonholes.

"What do we do now?" Elvira asked very quietly at Ohm Feldmann's ear.

"We'll have to go into the cellar," he breathed.

"And how are you going to do that?"

"You'll have to distract him," he answered.

"Oh God," she said, and trembled again.

After a while Herr Wolpertinger went out briefly, to fetch himself a bottle of beer, as they soon saw; he held it up in mistrust and uncertainty. Then he shook the closed bottle, sniffed it, licked off the moist glass with an enormous tongue, scratched his head, cast a resigned glance toward the ceiling, as if he could see through it straight to the stars, and then opened the bottle, which, after the long handling, foamed over.

Quickly he lapped up the beer from the counter and finally - as the two still lingered in the gloom - raised the bottle to his lips, shaking slightly, as if, like a child who has never drunk alcohol, he dreaded the drink. But then, with the courage of despair, he tossed back its contents in a single swallow, choked, retched up part of the beer, and in their direction too, gagged and rattled in his throat with bulging eyes, clutched his throat, pressed one hand to his nose as if the beer stank, had tears in his eyes and finally had to disappear into the back, where the toilets were, staggering and reeling. And there they heard him cough, retch, rattle in his throat and mutter invocations or curses in a language unknown to them - Bavarian? And now and then some did sound Bavarian, such as "Sakra! Malefiz!" and the like.

At any rate, it was a welcome opportunity for the two involuntary heroes to slip quickly out of their hiding place. Ohm Feldmann squeezed Elvira's little hand warmly, to tell her once again - after a first kiss - that she should persevere, and she had already unfastened her garter. And he himself glided toward the cellar door just in time, for Herr Wolpertinger had stopped groaning, panting and retching. And in the back a door slammed. And the porter returned to the counter just as the telephone began to ring, and Ohm Feldmann pressed himself against the wall before the landing at the corner of the cellar, to hear what was going on in the lobby.

"pon my soul," the surprised Wolpertinger said to Elvira, looking at the lobby's white clock with the big black numbers, which were slightly bent.

"Oh," replied Elvira with pouting lips (for recently she had seen an entire series of Marilyn Monroe movies in television), and the telephone rang in a frenzy, "I couldn't sleep. And since my television set is broken, I wanted to ask you whether you could give me a sleeping pill."

"pon my soul," said Wolpertinger, picking up the receiver: "Yes, White Swan Hotel. Yes?" The veins swelled on his forehead, and he went on: "No, disturbance? Oh no!" Now he had turned red. And it seemed to Elvira that he was close to a stroke. "Those are the children," he went on, "setting off their firecrackers already. The whole building is shaking? Oh no, officer?" And now the veins stood out quite clearly on his forehead. "That was the snow sliding off the roof... Yes, no, nothing out of the ordinary... Yes, happy New Year to you, too..."

And all the while his eyes strayed to Elvira, who had struck a pose, mouth half open, legs showing, bosom thrust out provocatively, a position which was more tiring to hold than she had thought, and she was afraid that she would collapse in cramps and spasms any minute.

At any rate, Ohm Feldmann saw through the crack, for the cellar door was still open, that Herr Wolpertinger had forgotten to replace the receiver, and his eyes were filling with tears, while - almost involuntarily, following only his urges, completely out of control - he came around the counter, once again a profound yellow gleam in his eyes. And it cost him an effort to keep his tongue from lolling out between his lips.

And the salesman deliberated rapidly whether he could really leave Elvira alone with this

man - if it was a man. But then the thumping and humming below, which had been audible all the time, grew still stronger. And thus, with heavy heart, he decided to take a quick look into the cellar. After all, what could happen in the short time that would take...

So he closed the cellar door quietly, so that no chance suspicion could arise in the mind of the porter, who might possibly have an excellent sense of hearing. In the last moment he heard a heavy slurping behind him, as if the porter were sucking at Elvira's breasts.

Then - somewhat dazed - Ohm Feldmann climbed down the stairs, which shook as if in a slight earthquake and glowed in a blue shimmer which grew more and more intense. And just as he thought that he was about to reach a red-painted cast-iron fire door, he stepped into emptiness as if he were out of his mind.

And he felt that he had slipped as if on soft soap, that the shaking floor was dissolving under his feet, that the walls were going hazy. And he felt how he plummeted, how he fell far down, as if there were a gigantic hole deep into the earth, a hole which reached to the center of the earth, and from which no one once seized by the vortex of gravity could ever free himself. And now, his eyes swimming, all he noticed was a shaking and a humming. And with one last hazy sigh, he saw blue flames, blue sparks, for he had temporarily left this world, or it had been removed from him. He was wakened by a quiet knocking, by the quiet humming of a machine. And there was a humming in his head as well, as if a hornets' nest had settled there. And his eyelids were heavy, as if cast in lead. And his tongue was heavy and furry. And all his limbs felt like lumps. And again it seemed to him, as a bright light fell through his closed limbs, that his bones had grown longer. Yes, he thought, I bet I'm two meters twenty. And then - at a soft, silky touch - he opened his eyes, and shut them again at once, for he was looking into the harsh light which had woken him, and the complementary colors danced in front of his face and seemed to go their rounds in his brain as well.

But, in his tense state, this one short look was enough to tell him that he was - of course - not alone. But what kind of beings were those anyway, standing around the table on which he lay? Green creatures with cats' tongues and cats' eyes looking at him yellowly. Beings with bald heads and with long ears. Beings dripping with moisture and - all this he had registered with a single glance - swaying before his eyes as if on heavy seas. And then there was the humming, which penetrated the very marrow of his bones.

And then Ohm Feldmann thought of Elvira. And without this thought, his story and the story of the green beings might have ended in an embarrassing dream or an embarrassing memory. But he saw the porter in his mind's eye, bending over Elvira, tugging first at her robe, then at her nightgown - but to bend over her, tug at her, perhaps to slurp at her, perhaps to drool - he wanted to do that himself, no one else could do that, that was reserved exclusively for him himself. Yes, and as he realized this, he had to return to this riddle, he had to return to this world which smelled so strangely sour, bitter and stale, of some kind of effluvium, as he noticed for the first time.

No, what he saw now was no dream. There were droll little green men standing around him. And their eyes, which had only just seemed - in his semi-conscious state - mean, malicious and dangerous, now seemed almost cheerful. And the yellow gleam which he had noticed in them had a bluish tint.

Then the being which stood nearest him burped. Yes, it belched! And it belched again!

Then the poor thing hiccuped, and this was clearly so embarrassing for it, who came from another, distant world, that it grinned awkwardly.

And it showed its teeth, which gleamed brown, as if that world, despite its advanced technology,

did not even have a single decent dentist...

Well, I never, the salesman thought, quite perplexed.

And he pinched himself in the arm but the creatures remained. And when he pinched himself on the cheek, to make sure, and looked about him, the beings had by no means vanished. And a moment later he heard glass - a bottle - rolling across the floor. Another one of the creatures let loose a terrible belch which rolled like thunder.

And a third being, which Ohm Feldmann - still lying on the table - could see between his shoes, began to sing in the local parlance: "Yeah, we did it yesterday, and we're gonna do it today..."

Then the salesman, his courage and consciousness returning, swung himself down from the table, clinging to it, for he was still somewhat dazed. But he realized at once that he was much larger than the little green men. And now, head pensively tilted, he realized that the sour smell quite clearly came from stale beer. And now - as his eyes finally focussed - he was sorry for the little ones, who were obviously heavily intoxicated, and were afraid of him, or of something else.

And as a matter of fact, in the depths of the cellar - it was a perfectly normal wine and beer cellar used for the provisioning of the hotel's guests - Ohm Feldmann saw a gray-painted generator, now running on very low speed, but shooting sparks nonetheless, one of which must have struck our hero when he lost consciousness. Thus it seemed advisable to act cautiously and circumspectly...

So, "First of all I need a drink," the salesman said to the little man, who understood him very well.

And with satisfaction he saw how their yellow-blue eyes, which now swam green, lighted up in a friendly fashion at this request. The one Ohm had noticed first pointed to the shelves, which were well-filled with bulbous, shimmering wine-bottles which lay on their sides. In the corner beer crates were piled up in pyramids. And a whole keg of cognac reposed in the corner under a high arch from which cobwebs hung.

On weak but increasingly steady knees Ohm Feldmann went into another corner in which he had discovered bottles of cognac. These - like the champagne coolers on a high shelf, and the other drinks - must have been meant for the coming New Year's party. He held one of the bottles up to the light which shot from the generator, and the beverage shimmered golden behind its five stars.

Ah!

Was that bliss as it flooded through him, warm and cheerful, as the radiant sun of France moved into his stomach.

And ah!

Another drop, a swallow now taken from a real snifter, which one of the dwarves had handed him with mischievous, cheerful eyes.

And once again ah!

Ohm Feldman had taken another mighty swallow.

My God, how good that tasted!

And gradually the dwarves gained confidence too and tossed back a few drinks, and several of them began to sing again: "I'll buy me a bride, I'll buy me a bride, a bride of velvet and silk."

That was a song the salesman hadn't heard before.

And after taking a few more sips to pluck up his courage, and as the dwarves were

catching their breath, he struck up the song with which he usually joined the fray: "I had a dear lassie, dear lassie..."

And the green dwarves, who were clearly quite quick to learn, were already joining in on the refrain, expanding the song by a few verses.

Now, as can be seen, Ohm Feldmann had originally had the firm and immutable intention of getting to the bottom of things. But as the evening progressed his perspective changed. And so he was enlightened about the love-lives of the Hauhynois. He found out about the salesman situation on their planet, especially about vacuum-powered mattresses. He learned what they did with their diesel sleds in the winter. He heard that they celebrated New Year's with cosmic proportions, by catapulting material from the birth of the universe into their planet's atmosphere. And gradually he began to understand - along with many other useful things - roughly how the generator worked.

All you needed to do was go through this door and pull that switch there and bend this ray of light to the right and wind this spool there. And if you then pulled on the cord at the top and sang the appropriate song (no dirty songs, for the generator was very sensitive and responded best to celestial harmonies, which was probably where the music of the spheres came from)...

Yes, and Elvira, thought Ohm Feldmann in one lucid corner of his consciousness, actually made a very resolute impression, and it shouldn't be too hard for her to ward off Herr Wolpertinger...

All the while he had to babble and bellow alternately in order to drown out the dwarves, who were now telling him about the three-eyed giant cows with the quadruple- folded udders on Aldebaran 5.

Now it should be noted that the cellar walls of the White Swan Hotel in Garmisch are quite thick. And that is also the reason why precisely this inconspicuous and remote outpost had been chosen for the invasion, considering the proximity of the Zugspitze, over which the galactic St. Elmo's fire incidental to the invasions was being conducted.

This is also the reason why Elvira and Wolpertinger, upstairs, noticed nothing of what was going on in the cellar. Thus Elvira believed that her future husband needed more time to clarify the situation. And in a way this was true, for it is well known that truth lies in wine, and one needs only to dig deep enough to find gold there...

At any rate, Herr Wolpertinger - after accidentally ripping the telephone out of the wall - was already staring with demented, deeply-reddened eyes, for time and again Elvira had refused to let him at her. And his remarkable tongue hung down to his neck, and he slavered and slimed and nearly wept in despair over his hard luck and misfortune, because he was not going to have a chance at her this night.

She had gotten him far enough to drink with her to the coming New Year's party, more than once, even, while she - when he was not looking - dumped the drinks, which he had to fetch from the refrigerator, into the geraniums, which made a very sickly impression the next morning...

At some point Elvira heard a heavy thud and started, and there she saw Herr Wolpertinger, lying on his back. And the poor man began at once to snore horrendously. And since he was so frazzled, embracing a bottle blissfully (it did not hold out on him or get on his nerves), she had some understanding for him, and so she let him sleep, for now she was uneasy again; what could have happened to her cavalier, whom she had hardly had time to know?

And so she crept to the cellar door on tip-toes, opened it wide, but heard nothing. Even the generator had stopped humming altogether. Cautiously she went down the stairs. But

still she could not hear a single sound apart from the horrendous snoring of Herr Wolpertinger, which sounded as if he were sawing away at the thickest boughs in the Bavarian Forest.

But then, as she descended further, she heard quite similar sounds, and at first she thought that her nerves must have been overstrained by the trial she had just been through. For she could clearly hear deep, hollow, rattling snores as if from a grown man, now and then breaking off as he turned - smacking his lips contentedly - to scratch himself here and there. But there were also sounds which could have come from children, from cats, or from ethereal beings howling, whistling, whimpering and singing in their sleep...

This surprised the good, virtuous Elvira, who had already begun to think that she would have to fetch help from the street in order to protect her precious new acquisition. And so - for she did not think that the familiar noise could mean her any harm - with brave strides she descended into the cellar once and for all, flinging its door wide open. And no sooner had she set foot in the musty chamber, hung with cobwebs and smelling of mildew, than the sight of the unfamiliar technology, but still more of the little green men, even more than that the sight of her cavalier took her breath away...

For a moment she had to steady herself against a shelf of wine bottles, which promptly fell over with a crash. But the snoring group, where one embraced the other and Ohm Feldmann tugged at the ear of one of the green beings, slept on undisturbed. Now and then a grunt could be heard. In the corner one of the green mannikins lifted a gigantic eyelid in front of a great eye, as if this lid were operated by a string, and then, with an expression of deep weariness, perhaps even a bit of scorn, let it fall again - and went on snoring.

Just you wait! thought Elvira, deeply insulted as a woman and future wife.

And - after freeing herself from the toppled wine shelves, the bottles and the dust which she brushed from her clothes - she reached for a broom in the corner. But then, though Ohm Feldmann gave the impression of a normal, if drunken man, she began to have second thoughts.

Those were no normal beings! Though she had no special knowledge of ethnology, she knew that the green wights could come neither from the heart of Africa nor the roof of the world nor from the depths of Mongolia. Or should Ohm Feldmann, the rascal... But no, she realized that she was completely perplexed... All the incidents, apparitions and noises of that evening, which Feldmann too had been unable to get to the bottom of... There had to be something going on. And thus she decided to wake the salesman, discreetly but effectively. But just as she was about to bend down to him, a deep rumbling laughter resounded from the stairs.

And the porter, who stood up there with blue light shining out through his clothes, said, holding his belly: "Really, my dear. Did you actually think that I'd let you dupe me so easily?"

And his eyes glowed as if his head were a jack o' lantern, and flames shot from his ears. And his hairs stood on end, and electrical discharges crackled among them. And as he reached his left hand down to Elvira, it was as if the entire cellar were bathed in a sea of radiation. And the bottles jittered on their shelves, and the beer began to ferment rapidly, and the wine effervesced so violently that the corks flew from several of the champagne bottles...

And as Elvira stood completely paralyzed, unable to move for the life of her, Herr Wolpertinger came down the stairs with heavy, trudging steps, without turning his absent gaze from the single sober person in the cellar. And as his hollow eyes gazed at Elvira with increased hypnotic power, the machine in the background came to life and jittered, chattered and pounded. And a dynamo which started up with a hum sent out a first intergalactic shock in warning, covering Elvira's exposed left shoulder with delicate gooseflesh.

This frightened her so that she let out a shrill cry which would have perfectly suited to

waking the dead. But the party which had taken place down here must have been something awful, for Ohm Feldmann merely grumbled something which sounded as if the damned females should leave him - the plagued salesman - in peace. And from the green creatures nothing more could be seen than a blue flicker. Then the entire group turned to the other side as if on command, without loosening their embrace. And they snored on, sniffing a bit, mumbling a bit, but angry as well - their lips twitched at this godless disturbance.

Now, as the machine came to life glowing and hissing under its cobwebs and gave ready signals with deep gasps and sputters, the porter came down all the way into the cellar. And truly his eyes were filled with a red glow which had to have sprung from inside his head. And there was a blue glow on his teeth, in which his tongue, which slowly lolled out, looked like a long bill which had yet to be paid.

He raised his hand, and Elvira shrank back before him. By now she was already bathed in the showers of radiation which hissed over her electrically. And the electrons which rolled down over her face, her shoulders and her stomach were not only refreshing, as in a bath, they also simultaneously wove a veil over Elvira, as if a vacuum cleaner were sucking her back - right to the big machine, which now looked like a big black idol which in this very moment opened its mouth.

Wolpertinger came closer. Yes, he came closer, grinning and subservient, and slime and slobber rolled over his chin, down across his bared chest. And then, as Elvira retreated as far as she could without plunging into the vast, terrible abyss behind her, Herr Wolpertinger reached up with both hands - where the local mountain of voltage had built up. And it was as if he had reached directly into an electrical discharge. And as he grunted and groaned, the showers of energy flowed over his body as well, as if in reward.

But now the cellar was already beginning to totter on its firm foundations. Dust trickled from the walls in dense clouds, repelled by the energy fields around Elvira, Wolpertinger, and the machine, and finally settling upon the magnetically charged hair of the sleepers, who now seemed like the inhabitants of an enchanted castle who would sleep the sleep of eternity and death, waiting for the brave virgin to come and redeem them with a kiss, a look or a gesture...

And then Herr Wolpertinger reached for Elvira with pudgy, sweating fingers. But just at that moment Elvira's fear of the werewolf, whom the remote ignition had so surprisingly cured of his drunkenness, came to exceed that of the black nothingness in the machine.

And that is why, without really thinking, she took the decisive step backward and fell down, fell into the depths, fell into a blackness such as she had never seen before, fell and fell further and further, past galactic energy summits, past nebular ice floes, past stellar molecular barriers, down and down, reeled and somersaulted, grew long and longer in the suction of the time canal, heard the intergalactic airstream roaring in her ears and whispering voices inside her head, fell past black faces in which red eyes burned like coals, and at last - not without dutifully thinking of Ohm Feldmann - lost consciousness.

But in that very second, as the lights went out in her head, the salesman stirred up there in the cellar and shook off the weight of the world and the heaviness of intoxication as if mysterious energy spell had been upon him, cleared his throat, frowned, found himself in the company of the green dwarves, took a few seconds to grasp the significance of the green beings and remember the orgy which - why oh why? - he had gotten himself into. And then he saw Herr Wolpertinger standing before the black maw of the machine and staring into an abyss which Feldmann could not see at first, and saw how Wolpertinger grinned spitefully and waved and then, altered by a noise which Feldmann had made, spun around with narrowed eyes.

And just then the machine, which had just now raged, whimpered and whined, stopped shrieking and fell silent. And the radiance which had flooded everything faded. The energy field collapsed, simultaneously freeing Wolpertinger.

Several of the green dwarves had woken up as well, but without assuming a hostile stance toward Ohm Feldmann. Rather they seemed, if not benevolent, as if they were going to wait and see. And to the salesman it seemed that their sympathy toward Herr Wolpertinger could not be of very great caliber. And this realization gave him courage and lent him undreamt-of powers in this unfathomable, this tricky situation in which he had so abruptly been transported into a world whose existence he had never suspected.

In the blink of an eye the porter - now fully human again - approached in a few strides, grabbed a flail which someone had left down here, of all places, and marched toward Ohm Feldmann with such momentum that all Feldmann had to do to escape the monster, who rolled his eyes and bared his teeth, was to roll over slightly.

But the movement carried the salesman to a large keg filled with wine, in front of which he cowered as the porter rushed at him again. And then it happened - carried by his own momentum, the monster fell head-first into the tub and immediately sank like a stone, emitting a few bubbles, paddling and drinking the first precious sips...

Suddenly Ohm Feldmann was completely sober. And with eyes which had grown clear again he looked into the opening in the machine - whose remains were just collapsing - and, as if in a hologram, saw Elvira's reflection, but also her reeling and spinning down in the depths, and her fluttering hair. And he thought he could hear her cry, torn by galactic winds...

The salesman set one of the green dwarves, who could not have weighed more than thirty pounds, onto the table on which he himself had lain not long before, and looked the dwarf in the eyes, but they were still glassy and had a rapt expression. And so he pulled the green one's ears a few times until he could be relatively certain that he was really listening.

Yes, it was an invasion from outer space. Yes, the seven dwarves who were all gathered in the cellar of the White Swan Hotel made up the vanguard; they had landed on Earth on a favorable energy burst to carry out preliminary explorations and assemble the equipment so that the invading army could land as soon as the interstellar winds blew favorably.

"No" - the little man had gone quite red, and, as he sat on the table, his legs dangling in the air, he seemed quite harmless - "we didn't mean any harm. And we had no idea what delights awaited us here. And we're also amazed what a high level gastronomy has attained on the Earth" - and again his eyes strayed toward the shelves on which the bulbous bottles were piled.

Ohm Feldmann licked his dry lips too. But now, that was out of the question at the moment...

"Say," he wanted to know, "how come I'm this thirsty, anyway?"

The little man gave an embarrassed smile. "That's because of the energy field. At this point even we aren't able to take the voltage, and we're used to it. That's why such a powerful thirst sets in under the strain, and you end up drinking to distract yourself, too. The porter, whom we bent to our will by using drugs, is the best example. The energy has such a powerful effect on him that he does whatever we want, and most of it better and more eagerly than we would ever demand of him, since after all he is a human being now and then..."

"And how," Feldmann wanted to know, "can we help Elvira?"

The little man shook his bald head. "She's over there now. Oh, dear," he said then, "so over there they also know that our window has already been open for a long time..."

"Which you were supposed to go through?"

The little man grew embarrassed, and his eyes strayed to the bottles again. And Ohm Feldmann, bearing in mind his physical powers, took pity and allowed the little man to take a few sips, which markedly deepened the shine in the green man's eyes.

"You like it here?" he asked.

"Yes, yes," the little man confirmed hesitantly, "first we want to enjoy all the pleasures of this world. That was why we dragged out work which should have been finished long ago."

"I can understand that," murmured the salesman.

Then, after he considered the fact that the green men - at least once they had tasted of the spirits of this world - did not seem so dangerous after all, a thought occurred to him.

"Weren't there other guests in the hotel here? It's awfully quiet so soon before New Year's..."

"Oh," said the little man, "the hotel was booked up, but they're all over there now, and the other guests who gradually showed up, we caught and pushed through the door..."

"Hm," muttered Ohm Feldmann, thinking of Elvira, "isn't there a danger that they'll be hurt?"

"No, not really," the little man shook his bald skull. "Not at first. We are a cautious race. It might be different if we already had this world under control..."

"All right," said the salesman, for he had come to a decision, and poured the little man another glass of wine, "we'd better not alert the police yet, they'd just make a mess of things... But," he went on bravely, "I'll have to put things to rights... Is the window to the other side still open?" he asked, in his mind's eye already seeing himself as the savior of this world.

The little man nodded: "But you're not used to it, it might be dangerous..."

"Ah," Ohm Feldmann brushed aside the objection, "I have to go over there."

And for the first time, as he scratched his head, he noticed his terrible hangover, the buzzing skull which he owed to the fact that that night he had drunk all sorts of beverages in the wrong order.

And the little man asked, "Is it all right if we stay down here for a while?"

Ohm Feldmann nodded generously: "Our beverage industry is suffering from low sales anyway... But don't drink that one here," he said, and stopped the little man from helping himself to a fat, bulbous bottle of juice of the vine, "there's glycol in there..."

"Glycol?" the little man echoed.

"Yes," answered the salesman, "those are certain traditions we have here. But you won't understand that yet, I'll explain it to you later..."

The little man's cheeks and ears were glowing, and now, as they tossed back a few more, he was no longer alone. And the others were of his opinion as well.

Ohm Feldmann had a look at the porter, who was still splashing in the tub. With his superhuman powers he held himself above the surface of the wine, but swallowed it in greater and greater quantities and was now so content that he no longer wanted to leave the tub.

The green dwarves wrapped an energy rope around Feldmann's hips; they said it would be like Ariadne's clew in the time-space labyrinth. It was his only chance to find his way back into this space and this time, above all into this cellar. Then they adjusted the machine, and Ohm Feldmann, with roaring skull and half out of his senses (as he later admitted), stepped up to a dark tunnel, when suddenly a terrible noise resounded from above – voices echoing through the hotel so loudly that they could hear them down here through the open doors.

And Ohm Feldmann, with a feeling of foreboding, tried to draw back from the black abyss. But he was already inside, in the flashing colors and the roaring intergalactic waters and the maelstrom in which the hotel, in temporal distortion, looked like a dollhouse bathed in blue energy shadows. And he had a last glimpse of the Zugspitze, mighty flames flaring from its summit. Then even the raging noise of the machine, which had lured in the newcomers after all, faded behind him...

"Ouch!" cried Elvira; it was onto her, and no one else, he fell with a thump.

And, still dazed from the tearing pace of his journey, he clung fast to her stately bosom, for he calculated rapidly that she would surely forgive him in this unusual situation - until she rapped his fingers and finally pulled him down from the ceiling up to which he had floated.

Now, despite his hangover, he was fairly sober. His gaze fell upon Earthlings who had gathered around Elvira in a room lined with melted glass. They all seemed weary, perspiring, but at the same time they seemed glad to receive a visitor from their native dimension.

Elvira lifted Ohm Feldmann's left eyelid to see whether he was conscious, then the right, and said, satisfied at last: "The tunnel we fell through is developing an unusual heat at the moment. The walls of the reception room have melted, and the approach from outside is no longer as rapid. See over there?"

And the salesman saw: everywhere against the melted, glazed walls, green creatures could be seen, pressing their little noses to the outside wall, which must already have cooled off, to watch the events inside the room.

"How long," asked Ohm Feldmann, "will this protection hold?"

Elvira shrugged her shoulders: "I can't say exactly. Maybe another quarter of an hour, until the glass has cooled off, then..."

"And why is it that the hotel guests are in this hall?"

"They were robbed of their will, like the porter," replied Elvira, "a fate which we were spared. They turned them around and wanted to send them back to the Earth to smooth the ground for the green men and create bases from which the invaders could operate."

"Are these all of them?"

Elvira nodded.

"Then hurry up," said Ohm Feldmann, feeling his buzzing skull.

"Hurry up and what?" she wanted to know.

Ohm Feldmann touched his hips and was promptly misunderstood by Elvira, who boxed his ears resoundingly.

"No, not at all," the salesman gurgled, his tongue lolling out of his mouth under the influence of the strong field which prevailed here.

He fumbled at his hips, revealing the energy rope which the little men had given him. He briefly explained its significance. Then the rope was slung around all the hips, beginning with himself. And as it was not quite long enough, Elvira - behind the salesman's broad back - had to add her pink brassiere to the end of the rope so that not a single hotel guest would be left behind.

When they were finished with their preparations, a cool breeze blew from the congealing glass around them, and it was already beginning to creak, and a broad crack could be seen running through the glass.

"Hurry!" Ohm Feldmann urged.

But before they could climb into the black maw, one after the other, a great round keg of beer whistled past their ears, coming from their own world - then three or four more kegs, one of

which shattered against the glass wall, spilling on the floor its contents which frothed white in great splendor. At this time sundry other kegs and containers came flying through the air.

Then, from the other end of the tunnel, one of the benevolent green dwarves shouted in a distorted voice: "Hurry up, the gate is about to close!"

And thus the human beings who had found themselves in an alien world, in another dimension and in a warped time, escaped the clutches of the green men. At the other end of the tunnel two constables wearing spiked helmets and with heavy sabres at their sides were waiting for them.

Hardly had the field collapsed behind them for the next millennia with a mighty rumble and crash, than Ohm Feldmann inquired as to the meaning of the kegs which had been hurled into another time and another dimension, and one of the constables answered craftily: "We want to give the brothers of the green fellows there an impression of the joys and pleasures of our world as well, so that they won't have to go without..."

"But with a special beer," the other made himself heard.

"Which," the other explained with sparkling eyes, wiping his moustache, "mixed with bromic acid, the poison gas from the First World War - that way the beer keeps longer and has a better head, which our beer drinkers should well know..."

"That ought to make the invading army forget about looking into our gastronomy," commented Elvira, pressing several sloppy kisses on Ohm Feldmann's cheeks, in reconciliation.

Incidentally, they were not the last which these two saviors of the Earth would exchange...

"Oh yes," continued the first constable, "and we do have other selections from the sphere of nourishment at hand..."

The seven green dwarves who had showed such loyalty were secretly - for no one else in Bavaria would have believed the story - decorated by the Bavarian Government, and were sentenced to life-long incarceration in the cellar of the White Swan Hotel - which did not bother them in the slightest. For in the contract which they were forced to sign, the said government committed itself to supply them with all the sensual pleasures of the Free State of Bavaria - veal sausage, meat loaf and pretzels, among other things. And among other specialties they were prescribed several liters of beer per person per evening, beer brewed according to the Bavarian purity regulations. And their teeth were fixed as well, by a discreet dentist who was not averse to a drink.

The New Year's Eve party in the White Swan Hotel was an overwhelming success, thanks in part to the green men. And at a late hour, in the midst of the din and the racket, people looked in vain for light signals which could appear above the Zugspitze. And despite the violent din, the energy field failed to take shape.

Not long after that, Elvira and the salesman tied the knot. And every time they presented the world with a new Earthling, which happened quite frequently, after the baptism they would visit the Hofbräuhaus in Munich with the seven green dwarves, disguised as Lilliputians for this purpose, to spend a night in the temple of beer and pay their respects to Gambrinius, the patron of the brewers.

By now it is surely clear to the reader that there is some truth in those stories about green men from outer space.

However, he must surely realize that they are not to be sought on Mars... But should he ever care to visit the White Swan Hotel in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, let him be assured that the name of the

hotel has been changed for reasons of safety, and that unmistakable clues like the Spanish balconies have been removed...

But the Zugspitze has been left where it was. The sight of it rising into space on a clear night will not only make up for the missed rendezvous with the green men, but also confirm that every word of this story is true. One need only look at the comets and shooting stars which fall from the sky, for they - contrary to popular opinion - are nothing but the green men's attempts to get some unadulterated beer after all...

As far as Herr Wolpertinger is concerned, thanks to his supernatural powers he was able to disappear without a trace from the wine barrel, probably by changing himself into a drunken wolf, surely the forefather of all the dogs in the area who sniff at every beer keg they see standing around, finally doing their business on it... In this way, at any rate, his existence is assured, even if it must be understood that the people who invent stories about him know no actual facts about him at all, even if they happen to live in Bavaria...

THE END

The Last Tramp

By Robin Bright

A man walks into a hotel and goes to the reception where he stands and says to the receptionist, 'I haven't any money, but I'd like a cup of coffee.' The receptionist dispenses to him a *cappuccino* from behind the reception desk with the brass bell on it to ring if there's no one there to deal with the visitors hoping to be admitted as guests of the establishment. The man asks, 'Where can I sit to drink the coffee?' The receptionist comes around from behind the desk through the aperture devised to admit and afford egress to the encumbent within the reception area and leads the man over to a table amongst some other tables by a window and seats him upon a *chaise longue*. 'Do you need anyone to work here? I haven't any skills, but I'm strong and physically unimpaired.' The receptionist tells him, 'Yes, we need someone to sweep the stairs. We have a lot of stairs and it's a needed employment, which the hotel can afford to give to you.' 'I accept your generous offer,' says the man, 'please show me the tools I will require and tell me when to begin.' He drinks the *cappuccino* in a single gulp and stands. The receptionist says, 'Come with me, please.' He follows and is led to a lift where the receptionist says to the lift attendant, 'Please take this man to the second floor of the hotel and put him into room 213.'

Here's the key.' 'What,' the receptionist pauses to ask, 'is your name?' The man tells her, 'Geoffrey Monmouth.' 'This man, who attends to the needs of the guests with the lift, is Gregory

Liversidge, and I am Everest Snow.' The three watch the progress of the lift's descent by means of the indicator lights as it travels down from 7 to G-for-ground floor.

The lift attendant, resplendent in his hotel uniform of red serge, with golden stripes along the outside of the trouser legs, and golden buttons to fasten the double breasted jacket, takes care to adjust the red and gold striped pillbox hat on his crown and stands aside gesturing for Monmouth to enter the empty space within the lift as the doors open. The attendant passes through and into the lift before turning to press the button for floor 2. Before the doors close behind the lift attendant, and the newly ensconced sweeper of the stairways, the receptionist has something else to say, 'You'll find most of what you'll need for your stay in the bathroom. The hotel will give an advance so you can buy what else you need. There's a suit and shirt in the wardrobe in the bedroom, which may suit you. If not, we'll establish what you need in the way of suitable attire and obtain it somehow. I'll be along later with the advance.' The receptionist turns a heel and retreats without further remark from either of the occupants of the lift with its now silently closing doors. The attendant and his charge ascend to floor 2 and they leave the lift to cross the hallway to the room 213 where the attendant gives the key to the sweeper of the stairways, who says, 'The key.' He takes the key and ceremoniously unlocks the door to the room. Uncertain whether the lift attendant has anything else to contribute to the scene, Monmouth walks through the hallway to the round brown glossy table he can see at the further end inside a room that he supposes is a lounge area. Placing the key on the table, he turns and asks, 'Coffee?' Liversidge smiles, 'There's usually coffee in the bedrooms, along with a water heating jug and some bags of tea, dried milk, sugar, and non-calorific sweeteners; for if you don't want sugar. I'll leave you here now.' The lift attendant, resplendent in his red and gold, leaves through the hallway and out the door; closing it simply.

Monmouth goes through the lounge past what he supposes is the bathroom, because of the white gleaming marble he can see is there, and on into what he presumes is a bedroom as he can see the pink silken curtains parted to give a view of some trees with a similar pink and bedroomly colored carpet beneath the window. That causes him to gravitate towards the window's trees, where he stands self-admiringly staring at his reflection, while barely acknowledging the correctness of his perspicacity as the bed looms into his peripheral vision upon his entering that portion of the suite of rooms made available to him by the receptionist of the hotel. Drawing his self-admiring gaze from his reflection, Monmouth goes over to the jug by the bed and, picking it up, returns to the bathroom where he fills the water heater before returning it to its stand and switching it on. He sits on the bed for a while, selecting from the various brands of coffee available and, having chosen a sachet of *El Cordoba*, tears it open and pours it into the cup provided. Monmouth adds dried milk from another sachet, and sugar from two further sachets. Observing the jug click itself off - as an indication that the water is ready for the coffee - Monmouth takes hold of the jug, and pours it thoughtfully amongst the crystals. Sipping it carefully, because of the heat that might burn, Monmouth watches the day turn to dusk.

Placing the cup onto the saucer provided, Monmouth blinks circumspectly towards the wardrobe and goes over to inspect the contents. Throwing wide the wardrobe doors with their close brass handles, Monmouth observes not one but four suits of presumably varying size inside. Taking the suit that looks good to him, he puts it on, and opening the drawers located below a mirror, and beside where the suits hang, he discovers several shirts of differing sizes and colors inside their shop bought plastic wrappings. Going through to the lounge area with its brown glossy round table and sofa, Monmouth espies the kitchen area with its hotplate and sink. Opening a drawer beneath the sink unit, he takes a knife. Going back to the bedroom, he uses the knife to open one of the shirt packages, blue, and spends some time removing the pins, plastic and cardboard, before satisfied that he's located all of the devices and contraptions designed to prevent his wearing the shirt, he puts it on, 'Ouch!' A pin remains in the collar and it's stuck into his neck. Monmouth can't see the pin and so he looks into the wardrobe mirror to locate and remove it, 'Ouch!' He removes the pin and stabs it into a section of the cardboard that had supported the collar in its cellophane wrapper. Crumpling the debris into a nondescript shape of manageable proportions, Monmouth deposits the rubbished pin and the other shirty paraphernalia into a waste bin thoughtfully provided by the establishment under a desk beside its chair next to the bed.

Making another coffee, Monmouth watches the dusk turn to darkness and the moon and stars come out. Finally, around 6. 30 pm, there's a knock at the door of the room. He goes to open the door. The receptionist is there and hands him an envelope with his name on it, and also with the hotel crest and its name, *Chaise Longue*, 'There's 500 Euros inside. The salary is 2000 a month and you live here.' 'Thank you,' Monmouth replies, 'as you can see,' he steps back, 'the suit and shirt fit well enough for me.' 'Yes,' the receptionist agrees, 'I'll show you where the broom cupboard is. Please come with me.' Walking together along the hallway of floor 2, the pair reach a doorway at corridor's end and Snow pulls sharply on the knob to reveal a dark interior, which then illuminates automatically. There are an assortment of brooms and other equipment needful for the occupation of stairway and stairwell upkeep. Snow reveals, 'When you have time tomorrow, take a look at what's here. If there's anything else you feel is needed, stop by at reception and tell whoever is there that you need something more to accomplish your tasks. Usually, the stairway sweeper begins up on the roof, which does actually require a broom to deal with the dust, etc., that accumulates up there. The muck has to be bagged, rather than swept off the roof; so as not to annoy the guests and the municipality. After that, it's up to you how fast you progress to the ground floor. There's a basement area too, and an underground car parking area. All of this is your responsibility now. Go at your own pace. When you've finished, it's time to go back to the roof and begin anew. I hope the arrangement is satisfactory to you. There'll be a contract after a week or two; for a year or so. We'll have it drawn up for you, and you can sign it if you remain agreeable. I'll be at reception until 12. 00 am if you need anything further. '

The receptionist and the stair sweeper return along the hotel corridor. Snow departs at the lift and Monmouth continues to room 213 where the door has remained open. He steps through the entrance and the door closes. The door's glossy brownness is identical to that of the table in the lounge and the camera on its trolley with the crew that have been following Monmouth about during his sojourn within the hotel environs can now be seen dismantling their equipment outside the door of room 213 and retiring to their rooms in the *Chaise Longue* where all are staying while the film is being made there. Inside his room, Monmouth is seen to be drinking coffee seated on the bed and looking out of the window at the clouds passing silently across the moon while the stars twinkle piercingly through the bedsheets of heaven. Shortly, the sound of bathroom water is heard running and Monmouth is seen brushing his teeth in the mirror there. Outside the bathroom door can be heard the sound of an electric shaver, although it's difficult to discern where Monmouth could have produced such an item. In the reception area Snow is seen speaking to no one, 'Perhaps he had a shaver in his pocket when he arrived.' Music is heard playing, 'Hotel California' (1977) by the Eagles: 'They stab it with their steely knives, but they just can't kill the beast.' Finding a pair of pajamas in a bedside cupboard drawer with a lamp upon it to read the thoughtfully provided novel, *The Number Of The Beast* (1980) by Robert Anson Heinlein, Monmouth is seen to retire for the night.

Before he switches off the lamp, however, he does take time to read the opening to Robert A. Heinlein's book, 'PART ONE: The Mandarin's Butterfly', '... it is better to marry than to burn.' Monmouth dreams, but first he switches on the device he keeps by him to gain esoteric knowledge about people, and things that interest him, while he is sleeping. The ear phones are tiny and unobtrusive, and the data oozes into his unconscious mind as he enters that deep sleep state where theta waves arise to become the mind's highest level receptors, "It's a quotation from Saul of Tarsus (*Cor: 7. 9*), the Christian apostle who took the name Paul (c. 5-67 CE). He'd been a persecutor of Christians before his conversion to Christianity, which occurred after he was blind for three days subsequent to a vision on the road to the city of Damascus, Syria, of a resurrected Jesus Christ, the founder of the Christian religion, and based upon his simple preaching of non-violence: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' (*Mk: 12. 31*) Paul had been present at the stoning of the deacon of the church in Palestine's Jerusalem, Steven: 'And Saul approved of their killing of him.' (*Acts: 8. 1*) Steven was 'stoned' because of opposition from the Jewish religious police, the Pharisees, who'd had Jesus crucified by the then occupying Roman Empire for 'blasphemy'. Accused of calling God, 'father', Jesus was born from his mother, a virgin, Mary. Jesus' subsequent Resurrection was the basis of Christianity's growth through those who wanted to live after death and Saul's own conversion followed upon his vision of the resurrected Christ and restoration of his sight in Damascus by a disciple of Jesus, Ananias. The Roman church, with the Pope at its head, that is, the apostle Peter, was established in Rome after the collapse of Italy's pagan Empire, because of the wider acceptance of Jesus' teaching.

Labeling Mary, 'the mother of God', the church of Rome suggested women had their own 'seed', which was the reason for the Pharisees' labeling Christianity 'blasphemous'. Consequently, Paul's belief in wedlock derived from his perception that women bore God.

'The Mandarin and the Butterfly' (1901) is a fairy tale written by Frank L. Baum about a Chinaman who hates children. He's sent from China by the Emperor to the United States of America (USA) where he persuades a butterfly with the promise of a longer life to transmit his magic spell transforming children into pigs. The butterfly likes girls, and so tries the magic on a pig, which becomes a boy who torments girls. The butterfly turns the boy back into a pig, and then turns the Chinaman into a pig. When Jesus met a man possessed by demons on the road near the town of Gadarene, the demons, named 'Legion', asked to be allowed to go into a herd of pigs, after Jesus' expelling of them from the man's body, and the pigs promptly ran off a cliff into the sea and drowned, because they were a metaphor for the occupying Roman legions of the Emperor, which obeyed orders and had no will of their own. Because Jesus' mother was the Virgin Mary, that is, his birth was uncontaminated by men's semen, Baum's fairy tale is a criticism of men's desire to invade and possess, that is, girls aren't boy sons (poisons), which correspond to 'Legion' seeking to drive humanity to its death. *The Number of The Beast* is about a 'magic car', which takes its occupants wherever they want to go, for example, Frank L. Baum's 'Oz', a fantasy land made famous by actress Judy Garland's performance in the MGM film, *The Wonderful Wizard Of Oz* (1939): '... on the advice of Professor Wogglebug, we made small changes in Gay Deceiver - ' Glinda the Good, witch of Oz, reveals to Heinlein's crew that she has adjusted their flying car: '... no harm has been done to the structural integrity or to the functioning of your beloved craft. When you notice - you will notice - if you do not like the changes, all you need do is say aloud, 'Glinda, change Miss Gay Deceiver back the way she was.' (XXXII, 'Where Cat is, is civilization.') Glinda has changed the car's mind, that is, she represents 'woman's seed', which doesn't want to be invaded and possessed, whereas that's men's evil nature.

Gay's crew consists of two married couples. Jake, the inventor of the space-time 'continua craft', which translates as a flying car that can time-travel and access all universes 'real and imaginary', and his wife, Hilda, and Deety, Jake's daughter, together with her husband, Zeb. In the course of the narrative, Jake and Zeb are described as MCPs, that is, 'male chauvinist pigs', because they aren't girls, although the possibility of women sexually reproducing by means of their own 'seed' - as mothers of God - remained a publishing taboo: '... when it involves changing male minds, it is better to let men reach their own decisions; they become somewhat less pig-headed.' (XIV, 'Quit worrying and enjoy the ride.') Part One of Robert Heinlein's novel is succeeded by 'Part Two: 'The Butterfly's Mandarin', which suggests that, in the second half of his book, Heinlein's Co-Pilot of the 'magic car', Zeb, evinces 'pig-headed behavior' (XXX, 'Difference physical laws, a different topology.') towards Captain Jake, because Deety and Hilda correspond to female 'butterflies' after the Japanese fashion. In the short story, 'Madame Butterfly' (1898), by John Luther Long, the central male character, Pinkerton,

takes a geisha as a temporary wife, and leaves only to return to the city of Nagasaki as an MCP married to a young blonde woman seeking to legitimize the bastard by adopting 'butterfly' Cho-Cho-San's baby. In short, women don't produce pigs, men become so through MCP interaction with other males, which is what Heinlein's description of the men as 'pigs' by their wives, and each other in the 'magic car', Gay, comments upon during its routine bouts of realistic *repartie*.

Often euphemisms for bureaucrats, Heinlein is attributing the absence from Western literature of women's futanarian mode of sexual reproduction between themselves to the censoring of those who're capable of perceiving the truth by international agreement amongst 'Mandarins', who give the responsibility of blinding those among the population to intelligence agencies employing assassins, who thereby permanently 'dumb down' the masses: 'Deety would kiss a pig if the pig would hold still for it (if he didn't, I would turn him into sausage; kissing Deety is not to be scorned).' (XXXIII, '- solipsism is a buzz word.') Zeb's observation is tantamount to a declaring of the hidden truth, which is that bureaucratic Mandarins prefer pigs, and girls are conditioned to embrace them. 'Part Three: Death And Resurrection' is devoted to an encounter with Lazarus Long, the long-lived-by-rejuvenation hero of several Heinlein novels, for example, *Time Enough For Love* (1973), in which Long travels back in time to the period of the First World War (1914-18) to have sex with his mother, Maureen, in an escapade stopping just short of Long fathering himself. In *The Number Of The Beast* Heinlein's 'magic car' participates - on June 20, 1982 (XLV, 'A Stitch In Time') - in a time-travel rescue of Long's mother, 99 + years Maureen, from ephemerality. It's a critique of modern religion's handicapping of medical science to promulgate a univocal mysticism denying the role of bio-technology in the conferring of bodily immortality, along with the perception that Mandarins' preference for pigs doesn't resurrect 'woman's seed', which is what Jesus' mother, the Virgin Mary, represents, and what Maureen Long could have meant for Heinlein's readers if he'd been able to break the publishing taboos against depictions of human futanarian sex between women.

The last, and briefest part of Heinlein's novel, is 'L'Envoi', which is the French word for 'shipping', and takes cognizance of the value of the socializing role of the science fiction convention at which fans arrive dressed as favorite characters. Heinlein's characters 'ship in' as themselves, and the ubiquitous hermaphroditic 'black beast' that lurks in the shadows to plague the adventurers throughout the novel's progress is finally identifiable: 'Mellrooney! The worst troublemaker in all the worlds.' (XLVIII, 'L' Envoi') It's an anagram of a Heinlein pseudonym, Lyle Monroe, where Bam Lyle was his mother's name, and 'mell' is the Hungarian word for the breasts of women like those of the famous Hollywood movie star and sex symbol, Marilyn Monroe, so hinting that, from the perspective of the Mandarins' pigs, the character of the 'beast' is unconventional enough to pose a threat to conditioning, because it represents the unfulfilled potential of futanarian women's semen. Although 'futanari' is a generic word used in Japan for Hentai manga cartoons, and other forms of animation featuring penis women, 'fut' meaning 'run', and 'tanar' meaning 'teacher', translates in Hungarian as 'running an education program'.

Heinlein was aware of English fantasy writer J. R. R. Tolkien's knowledge of Finno-Hungarian, in his construction of the Elven language, Sindarin, for his celebrated work, *The Lord Of The Rings* (1954), featuring the 'Dark Lord', Sauron, a slaver of elves, humans, and other races. In Tolkien elvish 'Mellon' means 'friend', so Mellon [of] yore, which is an anagram of Mellrooney, is an old friend, and there are many such at the Heinlein convention. However, although several family names, and Christian names, are indicative of writers on Heinlein's 'guest list', for example, Harlan [Ellison], who wrote the short story, 'I Have No Mouth And I Must Scream' (1967), in which 'AM', a supercomputer, tortures humanity to death, and [Jerry] Pournelle who, with Larry Niven, wrote the novel, *The Mote In God's Eye* (1974), about 'first contact' with alien 'Moties', who keep museums to restore civilization after it collapses, 'Isaac' isn't Asimov, author of *I, Robot* (1950), which was made into a 2004 film about slavery starring black actor, Will Smith. He's Sir Isaac Newton, a Venusian 'dragon', and a character in one of Heinlein's 1950s novels for juveniles, *Between Planets* (1951), who is a physicist symbolically masterminding Venus' war of independence from Earth. Consequently, although Tolkien isn't mentioned as being amongst the guests, that's not unusual, because no one is mentioned other than ambiguously, that is, by last or first name only. However, the spiritual affinity of Heinlein for his contemporary, Tolkien, appears in the 'Mellrooney' anagram as Mellon [of] yore, that is, Jonathan Ronald Reuel's an old friend, like Isaac, representing freedom from slavery through Christian love and friendship. Heinlein's contemporaries aren't actually invited, because bound by alien publishing conventions advocating misogyny against the human race of futanarian women. Equating monogamy falsely with monotheism, men saw themselves as God, because they were monogamous host womb slavers in parasitoid parasitism for war against humanity, and so they couldn't ever be considered Christians by Heinlein who, in 'L' Envoi', surreptitiously excises them from being invitees to prevent the terrorist warmongers from shipping in as conventionists.

Before the hall of Moria, where the dwarves mined precious ores and jewels, Tolkien's fellowship in 'Part One: The Fellowship Of The Ring', as they journey on to Mt Doom to unmake the ring of Sauron's slavery (by dropping it into the mouth of the volcano), remain puzzled for a time by the elvish inscription, '*Pedo Mellon a Minno*', which translates as, 'Speak, friend, and enter.' (Bk II, Ch. 4, 'A Journey In The Dark'). The wizard Gandalf guesses it's a riddle and mirthfully says, 'Mellon' (friend), which magically unblocks their path onwards. As 'mell', in Hungarian, means a woman's 'breasts', and her race seeks freedom from slavery, that is, she's beastly to men, because she wants to see their slave ring unmade, Heinlein's hermaphroditic 'beast', Mellrooney, as an anagram of his author's pseudonym, Lyle Monroe, is using Hungarian to contribute his understanding of the reason for men's slave rings. The conflation of 'mell' with his mother's family name, Lyle, and that of sex symbol Marilyn Monroe, represents the struggle of a writer bound by publishing conventions that represent the enslaver's ring, which broken would leave science fiction writers free to plot the Resurrection of the futanarian human race of 'woman's seed' unfettered by sexual repression and taboo. 'L' Envoi' is about convention, that is, MCPs don't want women to sexually reproduce their own

brains' powers to liberate their futanarian race from being warshipped for the entertainment of its Mandarins in conventional warfare engagements for the ring slaving of 'woman's seed': 'The men carried whips; vermin were muzzled. This one vermin - well, 'wog' - this wog had managed to pull its muzzle aside and was stuffing this weedy plant into its mouth ... when a whip cracked across its naked back. It cried.' (XXIX, '- we place no faith in princes.') In parasitology, the parasite that emerges to enslave the host and consume it as its food is termed 'parasitoid', which is the fate of the human species of hermaphroditic futanarian 'woman's seed'; if host womb slavery is what men perpetrate against humanity."

Awakened and refreshed the next day, Monmouth proceeded in as leisurely way as the hotel management allowed. It took him a while to move from the roof to the car park area where he swept up into his pan whatever dust laden grams of the busy consumerist civilization was to be found to have accumulated there, and bagged it to be left for the refuse collectors at the side of the hotel in the large bins placed there by the municipality for that very purpose. By that time almost a year had transpired. During his lunch breaks he'd be found lounging in a second suit from the wardrobe he wore for the occasion in the hotel reception area where he sipped *cappuccino* thoughtfully handed over to him by the receptionist. He was there now, sipping thoughtlessly, when the receptionist hailed him with a concomitant wave of the arm, 'Geoff! Come and stand behind the reception desk for a while, would you? I have something important to do elsewhere in the hotel.' Monmouth went over as bid, and took up his new station behind the reception desk. A man entered the hotel in dusty clothing. He came over to reception and said, 'I haven't any money, but I'd like a cup of coffee.' The sweeper upper hands him a *cappuccino* from the perculator on the hot plate kept behind the desk, and the new man says, 'Where can I sit to drink the coffee?' From his position seated on the *chaise longue* where the sweep has ensconced him, the newcomer enquires, 'Do you need anyone to work here? I haven't any skills, but I'm strong and physically unimpaired.' The sweep hands him the key to room 213, 'Wait for me there.'

There weren't any women in the hotel, and oinkoiling could be heard as Monmouth got closer to the car pool underneath the *Chaise Longue*. He poured himself a Hungarian *hosszú kávé*, or 'long coffee', before swallowing with relish a leisurely mouthful from a large ceramic beaker emblazoned with the hotel crest, a be-crowned *chaise longue*, and read from the small white gold-embossed *New Testament* with the edges of its pages gold leafed that he always now carried snugly in the breast pocket of his suit, 'Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.' (Mk: 5: 12) Listening to the oinking of the horns from the car pool, beneath the *chaise longue* where he was nostalgically reclining, Monmouth observed, 'The demon, Legion, seems to have survived its drowning in the bodies of the pigs, and is now looking to wend the serpentine way of the driven segments of its community.'

The hotel staff at reception were provided with cream inside small receptacles made of golden tinfoil, so it was possible to make Hungarian *hosszú kávé* that didn't make the mouth burn as black *cappuccino* without cream did. The plastic top could be removed from the tub containing the cream by means of a tab held between thumb and forefinger, which the coffee drinker could carefully pull to avoid spilling the cooling contents, which is what Monmouth had done. 'Standing still,' he mused and, seating himself upon the stool provided, made some toast, 'Here's to St Steven. Patron Saint of the Hungarians. Saul watched him while he was stoned, of course, which is why Saul was blind. Later Saul was decapitated. Those who rise from the dead, and continue to live, are often labeled 'vampire', and their heads cut off as a means of disposing of them. I prefer coffee to being stoned, and losing my head. At least it keeps my eyes open for as long as sleep comes.' Monmouth munched into the toast after spreading margarine upon it from a silver package labeled, 'marge', with a rounded stainless steel butter knife also carelessly provisioned by the hotel administration. The camera crew busy themselves dismantling their equipment, and make for the lift where the attendant assists them to get to their rooms from whence they'll shortly depart for good. Monmouth now has his own thermos. The crew prefer tomato juice and a vodka.

Baseball

Archival Interview with Detroit Danger General Manager Shawn Macurio

Shawn Macurio is the General Manager of the Detroit Danger Women's Elite Baseball Club which is a member of the Great Lakes Women's Baseball League, and she recently did an interview with Independent Thinking about the Detroit Danger and women's baseball in general.

Independent Thinking: What was your involvement in baseball like prior to the founding of the Detroit Danger?

Shawn Macurio: I have always been a baseball fan, a Detroit Tigers fan to be exact, since I was about 4 years old. The first memory I have of wanting to play baseball is when my dad played in some slow pitch softball leagues in the Grand Rapids, Michigan area back in the mid 1970's. I was 5 years old then. As my mom, sister, and I sat in the bleachers at my dad's games, my attention was more focused on the little league boys who were playing baseball on a nearby diamond. I noticed then that there were no girls playing. I wanted to play very badly, and I knew the reason why I wasn't playing,

but I didn't understand it (meaning, I didn't see gender as a reason why I shouldn't be able to play) and I didn't accept it. I remember asking myself, "Why can't I play just because I'm a girl?"

My sister, her best friend, and I also went to my sister's best friend's brother's baseball games a lot. That was during the same time. The same questions kept running through my mind... "why can't I play?" I didn't buy the gender thing as a reason for me not being able to play. I knew I could play just as well as any boy out there.

When I was a little older, and after we moved an hour north of Grand Rapids, I would spend hours a day in our driveway hitting rocks both right and left handed into the acres of empty land that was across the road from our house. As I hit the rocks, all kinds of thoughts ran through my mind. I dreamed about playing baseball some day. I was very angry and fired up about the gender discrimination, stereotypes, and chauvinism that kept girls and women from playing. I always had a strong gut feeling that someday I would play baseball and be involved with it somehow, but I wasn't really sure at that time how it would be.

My sister and I played baseball with our cousins and neighborhood friends from the time we were young up through about junior high. I started playing organized fast pitch softball when I was 10 (but I really wanted to play baseball) and played all the way through high school. I was a walk on on Wayne State University's fast pitch softball team in Detroit in 1989 when I was a freshman, but I never played any seasons for them, because I felt it was more important to get a job to save money and buy a car and pay my bills. Plus, I didn't see any opportunities beyond college for women to play. There were no pro leagues at that time for women. My sister and I would occasionally go out to a field and practice a little here and there after that. We tried to get into some fast pitch softball leagues in the Detroit area, but it was hard to find leagues and teams, and then they put you on a waiting list and never called.

My sister and I tried out for the Colorado Silver Bullets in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1994 in hopes of being able to play organized baseball. After what we and most of the other women at the tryout felt was nothing but a publicity stunt rather than a tryout, my sister and I headed back to Michigan very dismayed and let down. It was then that I finally decided to try and let my long time desire to play baseball go, even though I knew it would be very tough. I was so disappointed by the outcome of the tryout and the fact that women didn't have the opportunity to play baseball, I tried to bury my passion for the game. I did continue to watch baseball in person and on T.V., however.

All of what I wrote was important to mention, because it leads into why I started women's baseball in the Detroit area.

IT: What was the women's baseball situation like in the Detroit area before the Danger was founded?

SM: There was never a women's baseball team in the Detroit area before the founding of the Danger.

The team's first name in its inaugural year of 2000 was the Metro Detroit Renegades, and the name was changed to the Detroit Danger after that. My team became the first-ever women's baseball team in Southeast Michigan.

IT: Why is the Detroit Danger called an "Elite Baseball Club"?

SM: The Danger is an elite baseball club, because my goal all along since the beginning was to build the best women's team possible. I always wanted to build a team that could compete nationally as well as regionally. I wasn't satisfied with it being just a recreational league team. I have always had much bigger and better dreams and goals for the team and for women's baseball.

IT: How well have the Detroit Danger's baseball clinics for girls fared?

SM: We've only had a couple so far, but the girls we have worked with have loved them, and their coaches and parents have loved them, also. They find them very informative and beneficial. Most weren't aware that baseball opportunities for females exist, and they were very excited when they found out. Most girls want to play baseball, not softball. They often beg us to start teams and leagues so they can play. Most girls play softball only because they have been cultured to believe that that is the only thing for them, and that, for the most part, has been all that has been available to them.

IT: What is Motor City Women's Baseball? How successful has it been thus far?

SM: Motor City Women's Baseball is the new women's baseball program and league that the Detroit Danger front office has just started to give all interested women, 16 years of age and older, the opportunity to play organized baseball in a league of all women.

The program is extremely successful so far. We just started it about a month ago, and we already have around 100 women who are interested in playing. We have been scouting fall slow pitch softball leagues around Detroit and the 'burbs, and we have been getting enormous response from women who want to play. They are more than thrilled about the idea of playing real baseball. They say that they want to play something more competitive and serious, but slow pitch is the only thing they could find up until we approached them. Many also say that they haven't played on teams with all women since high school or college, and they are sick of playing coed, so all-women's baseball appeals to them in many ways. Again, they have played softball, for the most part, because that is all that has been out there for women.

We offer free instructional workouts twice a week currently, and we have new women showing up to each workout. They are very excited and grateful to have the opportunity to play baseball. They love to practice, get instruction, and learn more about baseball. Most say they wish we could practice everyday, and they wish they could play baseball for a living. Some have even begun to take hitting and pitching lessons from former pros in the area.

IT: How has attendance been at Detroit Danger games?

SM: Each year we acquire more fans at our games. In 2004, we saw a big increase in fan attendance. At most home games, we would have at least 25 people on our side, and there were also fans in the opposing team's bleachers. That may not seem like a lot of fans to most people, but when you are still in the developmental stages of a sport that has been dominated by males and that doesn't get any promotional support from the mass media, it's big to us. The Danger does spend a lot of money each year on advertising locally, joining different organizations, and doing as much as it can to get the word out. And the fact that we have higher attendance each year shows that people are noticing and are supporting women's baseball more and more. We expect to have even higher fan attendance in 2005. We will be trying some new techniques along with the old ones to draw more fans to our games.

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

SM: We are still working on that. We have some local sponsors helping us, and we are just starting to contact the bigger companies for support. In the past, we didn't have anyone in our front office who felt comfortable with approaching companies, but now that we do, we are going to go for it. We have been talking to a beverage company for the past few weeks that may be interested in sponsoring us in some way. We also have been talking with a local rep from a national baseball goods manufacturer who may be able to help us in some way. We will be contacting more companies as soon as we return from Florida.

IT: What has been the greatest obstacle that you have faced in organizing the Detroit Danger?

SM: Hmmmm... there have been many obstacles, or road bumps that we have to run over as we like to say, but we don't consider any of them something that will hold us back, ever. I'd say the biggest road bump is not having the financial support that would allow the Danger and other women's baseball teams to go pro, or even getting some financial support to make it more affordable for women to play on the amateur level and in national tournaments. It can be hard to balance working, going to school, having a family, and playing baseball at the same time for many women. Some have chosen not to play baseball because they don't have enough time, but they would love to play. Some can't afford to play, but we do our best to make sure they get to play anyway, because we don't feel that money should be the only thing holding a woman back from playing baseball. It is sometimes hard to have effective practices when players have to miss due to work and school, but we know that those things are more important than baseball at this point, so we have to work with it. Some players can't always make road trips because of that, also. You have to become good at balancing a lot of things. Right now there aren't a lot of scholarship opportunities from female baseball players, and because there aren't any pro leagues, many women say they have to focus on college and their careers, so they aren't able to play.

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

SM: I would rate them at being very high. We have very talented, dedicated, and experienced women going to Florida with us. We have as good a chance as any other team that will be there. It's up for grabs.

IT: What is the Great Lakes Women's Baseball League?

SM: The Great Lakes Women's Baseball League is the regional league that the Detroit Danger plays in. It is currently comprised of teams from Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, and South Bend, Indiana. In 2003, Manitoba, Canada had a team in the league, and Minnesota is trying to start a team. The teams of the league are working on ways to expand the league and get more cities and states involved.

IT: What is the National Women's Baseball Hall of Fame?

SM: The National Women's Baseball Hall of Fame is an organization that was started to recognize the achievements of past and present female baseball players. The NWBHOF states, "The objectives of the NWB Hall of Fame are to recognize, promote, and encourage women players and leagues by providing recognition awards, writing articles, and establishing baseball traditions. Programs support these objectives, identify individual and team successes, and provide information which may enable future players to learn, improve, and succeed." It's concept is much like the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. It is working on raising the funds to build a permanent home.

IT: What is Ponytail Sports?

SM: Ponytail Sports is a local sports magazine for female sports. It was established to give females info on sports camps for females, sports teams, sports leagues, to recognize female sports teams and athletes, to help promote females sports, to get more girls and women involved in sports, to give information on many aspects of female sports such as Title IV, gender inequality in sports, stereotypes, etc.

IT: Why do so many females seem to prefer softball over baseball?

SM: Most females prefer baseball over softball, actually. The general public thinks that females prefer softball over baseball because that is what females have been pushed into playing since the 1930's, when the Bloomer Girls baseball teams fizzled out because of the dying economy in the U.S., and when the sexism and chauvinism against females playing baseball started. National organizations and companies who provided sponsorship started pushing women into playing softball. Our culture has been brainwashed into thinking that females are only capable of playing softball and that's what they prefer, but that is very inaccurate. Chauvinism is the main reason for females not playing baseball, so people think that they chose softball. We are conducting a little poll on the Danger site to see what females prefer, and right now, baseball is beating softball, 75% to 25%.

IT: Why in your opinion has there not been any pro women's baseball leagues in the past few decades as there have been in football and (especially) basketball?

SM: Well, in my opinion, there are a few reasons why there haven't been any pro women's baseball leagues in the past few decades. The biggest one is because of chauvinism. Actually, all of the reasons are chauvinism-based. From the time the AAGPBL ended in 1954, women's baseball teams and leagues didn't start again until the late 1980's and early 1990's. Until recently, women have faced a lot of chauvinism and have had no support to play pro baseball, or any baseball for that matter. Females could barely play in little league baseball programs, so why would anyone support pro women's baseball? Another reason is that Major League Baseball does not currently support women's baseball. Major League Baseball was approached by a women's baseball organization, American Women's Baseball, in the late 1990's, and was asked to support women's baseball, but the league turned it down. The WBNA has the luxury of getting support from the NBA, and therefore it gets advertising, endorsements, recognition, TV time, etc, although the WNBA doesn't get nearly the recognition and promotions that the NBA gets. Also, no other women's sport has a thorn in its side forcing women to play a "substitute" sport. Women who want to play baseball have to overcome the stereotypes, chauvinism, gender inequality, and the cultural brainwashing that they can only play softball and aren't capable of playing baseball. Major League Baseball informally endorses this, as it has not yet accepted supporting women's baseball, and rather, is heavily supporting and promoting women's fast pitch softball. I see this as a way to keep women from threatening "their" sport. It boils down to chauvinism, chauvinism, chauvinism.

IT: How would you rate the chances of a women's professional baseball league being formed in the next decade?

SM: I would rate the chances as being very high. There are so many women's baseball teams, leagues, and organizations in the United States that are pushing for this. Many have been working for 10-15 years on growing women's baseball around the country, and it is really taking off and growing like wild fire. There are women's teams and leagues being formed constantly. Some of the organizations that have been instrumental in the growth of women's baseball are American Women's Baseball (AWB), AAU Women's Baseball (also known as United States Women's Baseball), and the Women's Baseball League (WBL). There are many individuals who have been instrumental in the women's baseball movement as well. American Women's Baseball has been working since the early 1990's to form teams, leagues, and opportunities for women to play baseball. All of these organizations, and individuals and teams and leagues within the U.S. are networked with each other to work towards the same goals.

Women's baseball exists in other countries along with the U.S., and they have been participating in international women's baseball events for about 6 years. The main countries besides the U.S., are Canada, Japan, and Australia. Canada has had girls' youth baseball in several provinces for many years, and it is developing teams and leagues for women, and the Canadian government supports it and helps to develop it. Canada has both a junior national team and a national team. Australia has collegiate women's baseball along with amateur women's baseball, and it has a national team. Japan has women's baseball at the high school level and at the collegiate level as well as at the amateur level, and it has a national team. The U.S. also has a national team that is sanctioned by USA Baseball. Amateur women's baseball in the U.S. is sanctioned by the AAU.

This year the Women's World Series IV took place in Japan, where almost 10,000 fans watched Japan defeat the U.S. for the gold medal. The inaugural Women's World Cup of Baseball took place in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, and it was sanctioned by Baseball Canada and the IBAF. Hopes are to introduce women's baseball into the 2012 Olympics or sooner. The International Olympic Committee totally supports women's baseball, and it doesn't accept softball as a viable replacement for women's baseball. Newcomers to international women's baseball in 2004 were India, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Chinese Taipei.

Women's baseball teams and leagues today are being formed for the right reasons. They are being formed by women who have wanted to play most of their lives, by men who have had moms or wives or daughters or sisters or friends who have wanted to play but were denied, and by many others who are just passionate about and sympathetic towards the women's baseball movement. With all of this happening, there's no doubt in my mind that there will be a pro league in this country within the next decade.

Book Reviews

Ghettoside by Jill Leovy

In the world of pro wrestling, there are two kinds of fans, the marks and the smarts. The smarts are the ones who know that it is all rigged, but enjoy the spectacle anyway. The marks are the ones who take it all seriously. The author of *Ghettoside*, Jill Leovy, is a mark pretending to be a smart.

Basically, this is a true crime book without 100 pages of padding in the form of pop sociology and the author's opinions on matters relating to law enforcement. The true crime case was pretty mundane except that the murder victim was the son of a police detective. That made it a higher priority case for the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). It took hot shot homicide Detective John Skaggs two days to talk to enough witnesses to put the clues together and figure out who done it. Fortunately for the LAPD, the culprits were already in custody on other offenses and one of them was so green with interrogators, that it took only a short while to extract a confession from him. The resulting trial was basically a cakewalk for the prosecution.

As you could see from the above, the true crime case in this book is not much of a case. So why did the author use it? My theory is that she used it in order to imply that families of police officers have a far better chance of seeing justice done in the death of their loved one rather than families of the poor schmucks who live down the street.

Another possible reason is that she wanted to lionize her favorite homicide detective, John Skaggs. Her book is full of anti-police bias such as calling police officers “coppers” and saying that they are “all fuzzed up.” You get to wondering why she does not use “pigs” to describe the police. Has that popular term of abuse from the 1970’s finally become off limits? The author continually makes statements praising Skaggs by saying stuff like “I am with John Skaggs in his preference for the field and the unmediated detail of lived experience,” just like Skaggs is the only LAPD homicide detective who does that.

Why does she single Skaggs out for high praise for doing the same sort of stuff that other LAPD officers do? One possible reason is that Skaggs agrees with her on a lot of things. Leovy calls the trend of the post-Warren Court years of having stiff punishments including such things as three strikes laws and victims rights legislation that were not present in the pre-Warren Court laws, “a really rotten system.” Turns out that Skaggs agrees with this saying that criminals should not be sentenced to anything more than 40 years in the slammer. Because Skaggs agrees with her on this and other things, he gets lenient treatment from the author.

Basically, *Ghettoside* is a waste of your reading time unless you enjoy reading about a non-complex police case mixed in with at least 100 pages of padding in the form of the author’s opinions of the police.

Blue Skies and Blood: The Battle of the Coral Sea by Edwin P. Hoyt

Unbelievable as it might seem as of 1975, there had never been a book published that focused specifically on the 1942 Battle of the Coral Sea. Equally unbelievable is the fact that the individuals who were most responsible for the United States Navy’s victory over a superior Japanese force that caused the Japanese to turn around in retreat are unfamiliar even to hard core history buffs. Let’s face it, the names of Aubrey W. Fitch, Frank Jack Fletcher, Thomas C. Kinkaid and Frederick Richmond are not especially familiar to most folks who are interested in World War II.

The reason why this battle is so little known to Americans is the fact that the Roosevelt Administration failed to promote it as being the major victory that it was. Instead, it portrayed the battle as being some sort of indecisive engagement.

Even worse, was the way that the victorious commanders were treated by their own government. Fletcher went on to command a task force built around the carrier *Yorktown* during the Battle of Midway, then never held another major command. Fitch was placed in a desk job in Australia while neither Mitscher nor Richmond ever held a position worthy of their abilities.

As for the book itself, during his lifetime, Edwin P. Hoyt was a leading popular historian of World War II.

While academic historians looked down on him since he was a trained veteran journalist before turning to popular history, Hoyt's books regularly outsold those of the academics. And with good reason too, since Hoyt's books were all written in clear concise English without the jargon that clutters so much academic history. This is a typical Edwin P. Hoyt history book, one that you really should give a try.

Movie Reviews

American Hot Wax (1978)

Revisionist history in Hollywood is nothing new. However, it is surprising that moviemakers should do it regarding subjects that are fairly recent and thus fresh in the minds of the audience. Movies that present a warped view of historical matters are generally controversial and often lose money at the box office. One such flick is **American Hot Wax** that purported to present the life and times of one Alan Freed.

Tim McIntyre stars as Alan Freed, a disc jockey (DJ) in Cleveland who recognized early on that rock and roll was not just some fad. In real life, Freed was a sleazy character who claimed that he created rock music and whose claims were repeated by largely gullible reporters. Freed associated with a number of unsavory characters including mobsters. McIntyre's performance is completely over the top as is most of the acting in this flick.

Basically, **American Hot Wax** has a fairy tale plot. Virtuous Cleveland DJ Alan Freed discovers a kind of music popular among black folks called "Rhythm and Blues" (R&B). Being a supporter of civil rights himself, Freed decides to play this "black music" on his show. Naturally, radio station management is shown as being irredeemably racist despite the huge ratings that Freed's R&B music show garners.

Freed then moves on to a juicy DJ position at a New York City radio station and achieves colossal success there. In a bid to broaden R&B's popularity among white youth, Freed invents the term "Rock and Roll." Flushed with success, Freed and his associates plan the first ever nationwide Rock and Roll tour with a racially integrated troupe of musicians.

This tour had a mixed record. On the one hand, it was sold out everywhere and played to full houses. On the other hand, the crowds often got rowdy. This played in the hands of the local police departments which are portrayed as irredeemably evil foes of rock music. The police are the enemy of the young people in **American Hot Wax**.

Following this tour, Freed moved to Hollywood where he made several low quality movies catering to the rock music fan audience. When looked as if Alan Freed had it all made, his world came crashing down on him. He was indicted and then convicted on charges of payola or taking bribes to play certain songs. He also was convicted of arranging for others to receive bribes. On top of all that, he was found guilty of tax evasion.

What is truly tasteless is the way that the downfall of Alan Freed was portrayed in **American Hot Wax**. Instead of recognizing that Freed was a sleazy character all along, the movie attempts to exonerate Freed of his actions insinuating that there was an evil cabal of law enforcement officers who were out to "get" Freed simply because they could not stand rock music. In other words, Freed is pictured as a martyr for the youth of America.

At the time of Freed's passing away in 1965, the youth of America fully realized that Freed was a sleazy character and would have scoffed at the silly notion that he was persecuted for promoting rock music. It is worth noting that when Freed died, there was widespread speculation that he was actually murdered by his criminal associates to prevent him from ratting on them to save his own skin. As of 1978, the memories of Freed and his criminal ilk were still strong enough to ensure that when the piece of revisionist claptrap called **American Hot Wax** was released, it would do poorly at the box office.

Black Dahlia, The (2006)

"Black Dahlia" was originally the nickname that was given to Elizabeth Short (1924-1947) by her friends. The origins of this unique nickname were that Short only dressed in black and was unusually beautiful. Additionally, there was a classic mystery movie named *The Blue Dahlia* made in 1946 of which Short was a big fan to the point that she saw the movie in theaters over fifty times during its run in movie theaters.

Elizabeth Short was not only a movie buff and very beautiful herself, but she was also an aspiring actress. Although she made little headway in Hollywood outside of being an extra in several movies, she had some success on the stage and she also became fairly well known to some of the leading men in show business. Here is where what is known about Short's life becomes blurry. Was Elizabeth Short a Hollywood mistress or was she something even worse, a prostitute? Or was Short able to afford her expensive clothing and jewelry from sources other than being a mistress or prostituting? Details such as this have eluded the would-be solvers of the murder of Elizabeth Short aka The Black Dahlia.

Ever since the murder of Elizabeth Short on January 15, 1947, the Black Dahlia case has loomed as the greatest unsolved murder case in the history of Los Angeles. The public interest in this case is on a level similar to that of Jack the Ripper. Numerous books have been published about the Black Dahlia murder case proposing various and sundry theories about who done it and why. Many of these works are quite specious and have added but little to the understanding of this case.

Now, with all the interest in the Black Dahlia murder case, you would think that by 2006 there would have been a slew of movies about it. However, many of the suspects and other persons implicated in the case were Hollywood types including many powerful figures in the movie business. As a result, it was not until 2006 that there would be a major motion picture about this most famous of unsolved murder cases.

You would also think that any big budget movie about the case would be an intelligent whodunit that would stick to the hard facts about this case. Or that it would be an intelligent thriller that would engage in plausible speculation about who did it and why. However, you would also be wrong. While it is true that the Hollywood elitists who were implicated in the Black Dahlia case are all dead, their sons and daughters are still living and many of them are involved in Hollywood as are many of the friends of the implicated big shots. Add in the fact that Hollywood does not like making movies that show it in a bad light and you have a recipe for a movie that does give the Black Dahlia case its just due.

Instead what director Brian DePalma serves up is an incoherent mess. The first 40 minutes of the flick concerns a boxing match between two cops. Most of the rest of the movie alternates between what is at best a half hearted investigation into the Black Dahlia's death and the perverted activities of the police officers in question.

On top of all that, the facts of the Black Dahlia's life and death that are in this movie are almost entirely made up. The suspects in this movie are also entirely made up. For instance, there is zero evidence that Elizabeth Short had any lesbian tendencies whatsoever or ever had anything to do with pornographic movies, however in this movie, she is shown in a lesbian pornographic movie. This is especially galling when you consider that back in 1947, there was hardly anything like lesbian pornography of any sort. Essentially, DePalma's flick is a fantasy masquerading as reality.

As a director, Brian DePalma has gained a reputation for films with excellent atmosphere and cinematography. Those traits are on display in **The Black Dahlia** to great effect. On the other hand, the acting is not very good with Hilary Swank turning in an especially poor performance.

The end result is a movie that should have been very good but since Hollywood prefers fantasy over reality especially when that reality has the potential to make some powerful folks from the so-called Golden Age of Hollywood look very bad, **The Black Dahlia** is a movie to avoid.

Boxcar Bertha (1972)

There is a special variety of Hollywood movies in which the film has a great premise, yet the actual production is lacking so much so that the end result is a really bad flick. Back in the day, a writer named Dr. Ben L. Reitman fabricated the biography of the fictitious Bertha Thompson in a book titled "Sisters of the Road." Eventually, it was discovered that the alleged nonfiction book was a fraud. However, although the book itself was fiction, the story it told was a great tale of life in the American South during the Great Depression. It was a story that should have made the basis for a great movie.

However, the movie rights for "Sisters of the Road" fell in the hands of the hacks who ran American International Pictures and to make matters even worse, they picked Roger Corman to produce the movie for them. Corman had made a number of good movies based on the works of Edgar Allan Poe during the 1960's starring Vincent Price. However, after his last Poe movie with Price was filmed in 1965, Corman entered a creative depression that ensured that however profitable his later movies were, with painfully few exceptions, they were awful.

As it happened, **Boxcar Bertha** was no exception to this malaise. Corman's first mistake was hiring Martin Scorsese to direct the flick. This may not sound like a mistake until you consider that Scorsese at this time had little experience directing motion pictures. Another mistake was having a screenplay that was only loosely based on the original book and which left out most of the best aspects of the life of the fictitious Bertha Thompson. Then came the decision to cast mostly untalented hacks to do the acting. These included the beautiful but mostly untalented Barbara Hershey in the title role.

It is quite obvious from watching this movie that the Martin Scorsese of 1972 was way over his head in directing **Boxcar Bertha**. For instance, after saying their lines the acting talent, such as it was, often just stood there as if they were trying to remember if they were to say something else. That they did so was most interesting in light of the fact that director Martin Scorsese had the actors and actresses read their lines directly off large size cards that were right in front of them just off screen. This strange method was patently obvious to seasoned moviegoers who recognized that there was something fishy about how all the characters spoke their lines while staring straight ahead just as if they were reading something.

There were other problems as well. Although the story was set in the worst years of the Depression during the early 1930's, one of the cars used in the movie was a 1939 model. Another problem is the fact that almost everybody and everything in this movie are so clean, orderly and well washed. This includes even such notoriously dirty things as boxcars and the camps that the tramps lived in. For a trashy flick, **Boxcar Bertha** certainly had very clean sets and well washed acting talent.

The end result of all this was taking a great, albeit fraudulent, book and turning it into just another stupid movie. **Boxcar Bertha** is a movie to avoid at all costs. On the other hand, the book "Sisters of the Road" is well looking up at your local library and if they do not have it, then by all means go to the folks at interlibrary loan and try to get it through them. You will not regret reading this classic book about Depression America.

Deadly Recruits (1986 TV)

Ever since the 1960's, espionage has been the subject of a fair number of movies. All too often, these shows have been James Bond fantasies with evil madmen bent on world domination. Espionage thrillers are usually grossly unrealistic flicks that are good only for some relaxation and popcorn. However, there are some espionage movies that are both realistic and intelligent. One such show is the 1986 made for British TV movie **Deadly Recruits** starring Terence Stamp as Dr. David Audley, Oxford professor of history who is also an intelligence agent with the British Ministry of Defence.

Dr. David Audley is a longtime fixture in British espionage novels and TV. He is the main character in a series of 19 novels by Anthony Price. These novels began with *The Labyrinth Makers* in 1970 and ran through *The Memory Trap* in 1989. These espionage novels are far more realistic and intelligent than the ballyhooed James Bond novels of Ian Fleming. Price's novels became the basis for a British TV series called *Chessgame*. **Deadly Recruits** was originally a made for TV movie that was part of this series.

Deadly Recruits begins with the investigation of a motorcycle accident. United Kingdom government agents discover in the course of the investigation that an unusually high number of top students at Oxford University have either suffered mysterious deaths or have been forced out of school due to scandal. One Oxford professor suspects that the Soviet KGB is responsible for it all. Audley is skeptical of this theory but, after discussing it with one of his superiors, decides to check it out.

The investigation uncovers a network of intrigue and deception among Oxford students. Audley enlists his young wife (Carmen du Sautoy) to search for a missing female student. Another agent checks out the home of the student who was killed in the motorcycle accident only to find that it has been set on fire. He pursues the arsonist who runs into a fire engine and perishes. Audley and the other agent engage in a series of double crosses and mind games with one of the KGB's top agents who is the mastermind behind the whole sordid business.

Audley comes to suspect a particular student who hails from one of the Commonwealth nations as being a Soviet agent. Audley has the other agent pose as an expert on Roman Britain and got to Hadrian's Wall as part of the deception. Meanwhile, Audley takes the suspect student and another student out to the countryside near the section of Hadrian's Wall where the other agent is.

The KGB agent is also a top sniper who deliberately misses when he has a clear shot at Audley and the 2 students. Audley takes note of this failure since this particular sniper has an excellent record as a marksman. Clearly, something is up. Audley is determined to get to the bottom of things and solve the case.

Deadly Recruits is an unusually good espionage action movie. It is much better than what you would normally expect from a made for TV movie. Due to its intelligence and sophistication, it requires much closer attention from the viewer than the great majority of movies. If you like movies that engage you intellectually, then you should find this movie an enjoyable experience.

Julius Caesar (1953)

If there is a name that strikes fear in all too many public school students today, it is "William Shakespeare." Shakespeare is dreaded because the nature of his writing renders his works difficult to understand. Shakespeare's choice of poetic language is baffling to many young people who have no place for poetry in their lives. Such is the intellectual barrenness of the public school system.

This barrenness was was evident even back in the days when most people think of public education as being in some sort of golden age. Well, even back before the slide in college prep test scores that started back during the 1960's, literature was not anywhere close to the choices made in selection of fictional reading material made by young people when they were not in an educational environment.

As a result, previous Shakespeare movies such as the classic 1936 production of "Romeo and Juliet" starring Leslie Howard and Norma Shearer bombed out at the box office. By the early 1950's, Shakespeare plays were considered economic poison for the movie studios. This made MGM's decision to go ahead with this production all the more surprising.

The original play "Julius Caesar" by William Shakespeare is one of the bard's more peculiar plays. There are few heroes in the play for an audience to root for. The title character is a vainglorious swine who richly deserves to be assassinated. None of the conspiratorial assassins are characters who win the sympathy of the crowd.

Over half a century following its release, the 1953 **Julius Caesar** is still one of the best, if not in fact the very best, film adaptation of a play by William Shakespeare. It was nominated for five Academy Awards including Best Picture and it won the Oscar for Best Black & White Art Direction/Set Decoration. It was directed by the legendary Joseph L. Mankiewicz and produced by John Houseman.

One of the most notable aspects of **Julius Caesar** is the idea that people can have honorable motives for doing a heinous act. In this case, the conspirators were aiming at assassinating the dictator Julius Caesar and restoring the republic. In order to win public support for their attempted coup, the conspirators know that they must enlist the support of the dictator's nephew, Brutus, who is wildly popular with the Roman people.

The 1953 movie version of William Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar* is a movie with distinct strengths and weaknesses. On the plus side, you have a strong cast, solid script, excellent cinematography & consistent direction. On the minus side, the Battle of Phillippi was poorly done and some of the dialogue was rather dense.

All that said and done, **Julius Caesar** is still a great Hollywood movie adaptation of the classic play by William Shakespeare. If you want to watch an excellent Shakespearean movie, then this is the best one to catch at your local video shop.

Mad Dog Morgan (1976)

The Australian movie industry has never been noted for producing especially popular movies, not even among Australian audiences. As a result, whenever an Australian motion picture is made, it usually has a big name American film star in it to attract the audience needed for it to make a profit. One such actor was Dennis Hopper who agreed to star in **Mad Dog Morgan**, but after arriving in Australia and just days before shooting began, demanded that his role or Daniel Morgan be changed from infamous outlaw to a combination of Robin Hood and the Lone Ranger. The producers caved in to Hopper's demands and the result is the subject of this review.

In real life, Daniel "Mad Dog" Morgan was quite a bushwacker (Australian lingo for outlaw) who, among other things, shot 2 policemen in the back and terrorized the Australian Outback. Morgan was responsible for numerous acts of sadism and barbarism, much of which was perpetrated upon women and children. He often did so in company with other bushwackers. The real Morgan would have made a most fitting subject for a movie, and such was the producer's original intent before Hopper demanded that the role be changed from bad man to good guy.

Mad Dog Morgan begins in 1854 when newly arrived immigrant Daniel Morgan is hired by a railroad company to help build tracks. Once at the worker's camp, he encounters a man who wears a spiked World War I German Army helmet, which is interesting since the German Army did not use any such helmet for another decade or so. In the movie, Morgan sticks up for the large numbers of Chinese immigrants who worked on constructing the railroad and defends them from an attack by Irish workers who burn down the camp where the Chinese workers lived. In reality, there were few Chinese laborers in Australia at this time and it was Morgan himself who was the main leader of the violence directed against the Chinese.

Later on, Morgan was arrested for stealing clothes from other workers and sentenced to 12 years in prison. The prison where Morgan was incarcerated had inmates who received special privileges, such as early release, for serving as official rapists. Eventually, Morgan is released after only 6 years for good behavior and goes to the wild to fight for social justice and has to flee to the

Outback because tyrannical administrators believe that nobody has the right to challenge the established order. In reality, Morgan went to prison for murder, he escaped from prison killing a guard in the process and he went to the Outback to carry on as a bushwhacker.

In the movie, Morgan collapses from lack of food and water and is rescued by an Australian aborigine who subsequently becomes the Tonto to Hopper's Lone Ranger type character. Morgan is eventually shot and killed in cold blood after being captured. In reality, bushwhackers like Morgan preyed on the aboriginal population and there is no evidence of any aborigines following Morgan out of their own free will. Morgan really died in a gun battle after being surrounded by law enforcement officers in a farm house.

There are numerous problems with this movie. The script had to be rewritten literally on the fly and the result was a rambling story structure that is too disjointed and lacking in continuity to be considered a good movie. Law enforcers in this movie are nothing more than caricatures. This movie has poor production values and this is an ugly film. The makeup is quite bad with the result that many of the actors have obviously fake beards. The special effects are almost non-existent. Hopper's performance is completely over the top. The music is horrible. It was widely reported at the time that most of the cast and crew resented Hopper's bullying tactics and the fact that the historically accurate original script was thrown out due to his egomania. This resentment resulted in a poorly conducted production.

Mad Dog Morgan is a bad work of revisionist history masquerading as a movie and as such ought to be avoided.

Trapper County War (1989)

There is a local radio station that has a late night weekend show hosted by a guy who seems to think that he is an authority on film. On one recent show, this talk show host took some time to opine about stars and movies that he felt did not receive the praise that they deserved. One such star was actress Betsy Russell whom he confessed was the object of many of his teenage fantasies whilst growing up during the 1980's. The radio show host made it clear that he believed that Russell was not only gorgeous, but that she was a talented actress as well who deserved better treatment at the hands of studio bosses. He also praised several of the movies that Russell appeared in as being more or less forgotten classics including *Private School*, *Cheerleader Camp*, and its sequel *Cheerleader Camp II* and the movie at hand, **Trapper County War**. All this was most interesting since this writer is almost the same exact age as the radio guy, yet had no real recollection of either Russell or the previously cited movies. Naturally, curiosity was aroused and this writer wound up checking **Trapper County War**.

Throughout history, Hollywood has loved to trash folks who live in the Appalachians and the Ozarks as being “white trash” and “hillbillies.” There have been numerous movies such as the Ma & Pa Kettle flicks that were devoted to portraying folks who live in rugged rural areas as being hopelessly backwards and pretty much illiterate. Even now, hill folk are one of the few groups of people that normally politically correct Hollywood feels few compunctions about denigrating. One example of the way that Hollywood treats folks in the rural mountain regions is 1989’s **Trapper County War**.

Trapper County War begins when city guy Ryan Cassidy (Rob Estes) takes a wrong turn while on vacation and winds up in a backwoods North Carolina county run, owned and operated by the evil Luddigger family that is hell bent on lording over everyone else. Naturally, the city slicker does not have the sense to get the hell out of Dodge, err Trapper County, and gets himself deeper and deeper in trouble. He makes common cause with one of those Vietnam veteran psychos who populate Hollywood productions (Vietnam veterans are another group that Hollywood loves to trash) against the Luddigger tyranny. He also meets and immediately champions the cause of the abused stepdaughter of the Luddigger family, Lacey (Betsy Russell). What follows is just another cookie cutter formula action thriller that seems to have been originally intended as being a ripoff of the 1st Rambo movie, *First Blood*.

Trapper County War is basically just another rendition of the Hollywood theme of enlightened city slicker vs. the crazed backwoods creeps. The whole idea that taking a wrong turn on vacation gets someone in this kind of trouble is just ridiculous. The acting talent, such as it was, must have found it especially difficult to keep straight faces while spouting what passes for dialogue in this movie. As for the radio show host’s beloved Betsy Russell, she is quite beautiful in this movie, but evinces all the acting talent of a tree stump. Then again, she may have been doing this turkey of a movie strictly for the money. This writer will take at least one more shot at the work of Betsy Russell to see just how talented Mr. radio talk show host’s favorite forgotten actress really was.

In any event, **Trapper County War** is only worth your time if you enjoy ridiculing bad movies.

Website Reviews

<http://freebeacon.com/>

Washington Free Beacon

Remember the halcyon days of the early World Wide Web when it was confidently predicted that there would one day be all sorts of web-based newspapers on the Internet? Well, something happened to prevent that wonderful era of monopoly print newspapers being confronted with cyber-competition from happening. Back in 1995, there was a newspaper strike in San Francisco. As part of the union's tactics, the newspaper workers created the world's first web-based newspaper that ran for 17 days. This particular strike tactic sent chills up the spines of magazine/newspaper management. If the Internet could become the home of alternative media, then the days of print publications being licenses to print money would over. Something had to be done. The response of the publishing industry has been to make all the contents of the print editions free of charge to readers. This is great for readers, but it has been disastrous to the publishing bottom line. Lately, the publishing industry has been experimenting with such measures as limiting public access to content, but with limited success. Meanwhile, there have been web-based publications such as *Salon* and *Slate*, however these have generally been economically marginal endeavors that have all too often been voices of Establishment orthodoxy and have not offered any kind of an alternative. However, in recent years a new crop of alternative Internet-based publications have sprung up that are not afraid to take on the Establishment. Of these, one of the very best is the iconoclastic *Washington Free Beacon*. Despite its name, the *Free Beacon* is not focused on the affairs of Washington, D.C. Instead, it is a national publication that covers national issues. Specifically, it is a muckraking outfit that engages in the very best sort of investigative journalism. It is also what might be called a conservative bulldog media outlet. It is this combination of aggressive, combative conservatism and a commitment to exposing fraud and deceit in places of power that makes the *Free Beacon* such an interesting and unique website.

<http://www.fsf.org/>

Free Software Foundation

For the past few decades, Richard Stallman has been one of the most controversial figures in software development. He is the originator of the free software movement that holds that software should be sold in such a way that the purchasers can distribute, modify, study, use, that software any way that they please. Stallman has told several different stories of how it came to be that he made a break with the software industry, opting for the nonprofit route.

Whatever the case, in 1983 Stallman launched the GNU Project (GNUP) with the meaning of GNU being the recursive "GNU's Not Unix." GNU is an alternative operating system based on UNIX. The GNU Project's success in garnering donations in terms of both money and volunteer labor kick started the free software movement. In order to cement his position as the leader of this movement, in 1985 Stallman founded the Free Software Foundation (FSF). Along with the GNUP, the FSF sells its software under Stallman's "copyleft" concept. Under copyleft, software purchasers have the right to make any use of the software in question that they please. This includes messing around with the source code. Originally, the FSF, like the GNUP, was mainly devoted to creating and distributing new software. However, for the past two decades, Stallman's energies have been mainly devoted to legal issues concerning the free software movement. Unfortunately Stallman has also been spending some of his energy on stroking his ego by attacking the creator of Linux, Linus Torvalds and accusing him of trying to steal the credit for the growth of the free software movement. Stallman's private one sided war against both Torvalds and Linux has distracted him from his work with the FSF. Fortunately, there are a fair number of volunteers who have stepped on so that the FSF is still a productive organization. One way of measuring this is the fact that the FSF's website is very well designed. As you can expect from a leading organization in the free software movement, the FSF has a sizeable resources section as well as information on how you can join the FSF as well as information about FSF activities. This is a very well designed website that is helpful to all those who want to learn more about the free software movement and possibly even participate in it.

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

Perihelion Online Science Fiction Magazine

Back during the late 1960's, there was a general state of upheaval in both American society and in the science fiction genre as well. There was a general feeling among many science fiction fans that the genre had grown stale. As a result, many fans took to publishing fiction fanzines while others created the first semi-professional magazines aka semiprozines. Most of these efforts came to naught. One such endeavor was entitled *Perihelion* and was launched in 1967. *Perihelion* was 40 pages long and published using a photo offset process. For the most part, this was an undistinguished effort and it only paid in copies. Ray Bradbury was the only famous author who wrote for it. There were a few writers who would eventually become well known including David R. Bunch, Dean Koontz and Robert E. Toomey. However, as a whole, the literary quality of *Perihelion* was mixed at best. Its editor/publisher Sam Bellatto made a name for himself by sending intemperate letters to fans and editors that got published. After sputtering for five issues, *Perihelion* died out in 1969. In 2012, 43 years after its original demise, Sam Bellatto made a comeback by relaunching *Perihelion* as a professional webzine. According to Wikipedia, the new version publishes "hard science fiction" with the emphasis in the original. However, it is difficult to find stories on the new *Perihelion* that most folks would consider to be hard science fiction. T

The Wikipedia entry for *Perihelion* reads a bit like advertising instead of anything objective. Overall, the stories on *Perihelion* run the gamut of different kinds of science fiction and ways of storytelling. The quality of the stories themselves tends to be below average while the artwork is better than average. What's really striking is that *Perihelion* pays one cent per word while *Planetary Stories* and its companions do not pay anything at all, and yet *Planetary* is a much better publication than *Perihelion*.

<http://solarindustrymag.com/>

Solar Industry Magazine

Given the exponential growth in the solar power industry in recent years, it's not surprising that there is a major magazine devoted to covering this increasingly important area of the economy. Actually, there are not just one or two or even three significant solar power magazines, but a seeming multitude of titles. Of these, perhaps the most important one is the prosaically titled *Solar Industry Magazine* that is published by Zackin Publications as both a print magazine and as a regularly updated website. Zackin is a longtime outfit in the business of publishing magazines related to science and technology, such as wind power and the future of transportation, so it is not much of a surprise that they would be entering solar power. Perhaps the most interesting facet of *Solar Industry Magazine* is the "People" section that tracks the comings and goings of various and sundry industry figures. Another interesting section is "Events" that chronicle important industry events such as the California Solar Power Expo that is planned for May 1-2 of this year. There is also a "New & Noteworthy" section that relates important industry developments such as a new study by The Solar Foundation on how difficult it is for the solar industry to recruit qualified workers. While *Solar Industry Magazine* has its strong points, it also has some weaknesses. Although *Solar Industry Magazine* was originally founded in 2007, its online archive only starts with the January 2013 issue. This limits the website's usefulness to researchers and others who are interested in learning more about solar energy. Although there are a number of web only feature articles about matters related to the solar power industry, the last of these was published in October 2016. This limits the website's appeal to readers at a time when both the company and the magazine are facing stiff competition. As of the moment, *Solar Industry Magazine* can lay claim to the title of being the industry leader, however there are signs that it might be weakening as time goes on.

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

Zero Hedge

During the past decade or so, news aggregation websites have become increasingly popular to the point where they are arguably the most popular news sources on the Internet. That being the case, it was only a matter of time before there would be financial news aggregation websites. Of all this type of website, Zero Hedge with its mix of editorial opinions from all over the world combined with some staff written efforts is almost certainly the most popular. The news portion of the website is written under the group byline “Tyler Durden” named after a character in both the book and movie versions of *Fight Club*. Zero Hedge is also a leading antiestablishment website, which is something that has attracted a lot of criticism. In any event, Zero Hedge was originally founded in 2009 as a blog by Bulgarian nationals. Reportedly, as many as 40 different writers all make their postings under the Tyler Durden name. One reason why Zero Hedge has been so controversial is that during the Obama Administration, it was one of the main purveyors of the idea that Vladimir Putin was a far better leader than the American president. Zero Hedge has also featured a great deal of investigative reporting, especially about the banking industry and high frequency trading. While other financial news outlets on the Internet are noted for their optimistic bearing, Zero Hedge is a relatively pessimistic place, perhaps as a result of insights gained from its investigative reporting. Like many other news oriented websites, Zero Hedge has a free E-Newsletter that is sent directly to your email box. You have three options, a daily e-mailing, a weekly recap or both. You can also take advantage of offers from the website’s “partners” that consist of even more free E-Newsletters being sent your way. Whatever you think of its antiestablishment political stance, Zero Hedge is certainly an information filled website that you should find useful in making your investment decisions.

Websites of Interest

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

Age of Autism

<https://answersingenesis.org/>

Answers in Genesis

<http://exploredeepspace.com/>

Coalition for Deep Space Exploration

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

Danger and Play

<https://www.epsa.org/forms/documents/DocumentFormPublic/>

Electric Power Supply Association

<http://foodbabe.com/>

Food Babe

<http://www.foodinsight.org>

Food Insight

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

Frontier Tales

<http://hoosiersagainstcommoncore.com/>

Hoosiers Against Common Core

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

InfoWars

<http://januarymagazine.com/wp/>

January Magazine

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

Mercola

<http://mysteryfile.com/>

Mystery File

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

Natural News

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

Organic Consumers Association

<http://www.politico.com>

Politico

<http://spacefaringinstitute.com/>

Spacefaring Institute

<http://venturebeat.com/>

Venture Beat

https://www.vice.com/en_us

Vice

<http://www.wirepoints.com/t>

Wirepoints Illinois News

Letters of Comment

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April 17th, 2017

Mr. Rector,

I wanted to thank you for sending me your fanzine *Fornax* #17. That's a classic name for a fanzine – stars and constellations have been fan favorites going back to “The Comet,” of course, and anytime you can get a K or an X in your single-word title, it really helps people remember it. I'm sure it helped prod me into opening the attachment, rather than letting it percolate in the mail queue like so many other e-zines....

Your layout is simple, and the large face makes it easy to read, but at the same time, it hardly seems like this fanzine really needs to be 61 pages long. When it's possible, I still like to print paper copies of the zines I like, so I can read them in the well-lit window of a Thai restaurant, but 31 sheets of paper is a lot. Given that I am stuck reading it on a screen, the likelihood that I am going to wade through 61 pages – particularly those pages occupied with amateur fiction – is very small. Your fiction writers, in particular, would be better served with a more sophisticated layout, and maybe an illustration or two.

However, you caught my attention with several of your pieces in issue #17. *Chivalry & Sorcery* was the best High Medieval tabletop RPG ever written, but like *Empire of the Petal Throne* and *Runequest*, it required a degree of immersion in its specific milieu that relatively few players and game masters were able to commit. It was the ideal game for Doctoral candidates in their 30s, and most of the people that I haltingly played it with in the late 1970s fell into that category. The Magick System was particularly cool and arcane, but it seems like we didn't play enough for our Magician characters to develop any real chops. After about three years, the game master who conducted most of C & S games started running a *Bushido* campaign instead. *Bushido* was also published by FGU, but it was written by a completely different team, and seemed to play much faster. And I think that as players, we actually understood life in 16th Century Japan better than we did Europe in the 12th or 13th Century. The exception was our friend Dan Olsen, who was a devout Catholic, and felt right at home in the 1100s.

Americans must indeed be poorly educated regarding the history of the Ancient Near East if we are prepared to allow you to blandly assert that the Hittites defeated Ramses II at Qadesh. Ramses famously spun the event into a victory on his heroic stele, but I'm not sure I'm comfortable flatly asserting that the Egyptians genuinely lost the battle. The strategic concessions that resulted certainly favored Egypt in the long term, but as you point out, the Sea People would eventually resolve the conflict by ravaging both empires.

And it's true that the Hittite Empire never reasserted itself after its fall, but there was a variety-pack of Neo-Hittite Kingdoms all over Anatolia and Syria, one of which, Charchemish, had rulers who claimed direct descent from the Hittite Royal family. These were picked off one-by-one, by either Assyria or Urartu, but some persisted for nearly 400 years, from around 1100 to 710 BC. Many remained culturally closer to their Hittite and Aramaean forebears than to their transient Assyrian rulers.

I'm a member of a miniature gaming club, the Northwest Ancient GamerS, or NAGS, for whom the Hittites are a not-infrequent topic of conversation. (We're all also members of NHMGS, the Northwest Historical Miniature Gaming Society.) We focus specifically on *De Bellis Antiquitatis*, a fast-play rules set written by Phil Barker and Sue-Laflin Barker. The game allows us to fight battles between armies ranging from ancient Sumeria to the 15th Century. Last Thursday, we had one of our "scenario days," where we used historical situations rather than randomly matching two opponents on an anonymous battlefield. One of these was titled "Flight of the Marduk," and took place in the aftermath of the Hittite sack of Babylon that you referred to. The Hittites were laden with a double-depth baggage element, in which the great Babylonian idol of the god Marduk was prepared for shipping back to Hattusa. Depending on their initiative rolls, the Hittites will probably get the idol off the board in 7 or 8 turns, unless the Later Amorites (the ethnic group that conquered Babylon and made it into an empire) can block or capture it. The Amorites can try to take possession of the baggae element, and one unit of ill-disciplined religious zealots **must** attack it if they get within 400 paces. But if the Amorites can kill 4 of the 12 elements in the Hittite Army, that will cause it to collapse and abandon the idol. And sincethe Hitities begin the battle marching (and facing) directly away from the enemy, it is pretty easy to overwhelm at least some of them. We played it out 6 times in 4 hours on Thursday, and the Amorites recaptured Marduk 4 times, while the Hittites escaped with it twice.

Walter Hill's *The Long Riders* is actually one of my favorite Westerns ever made, not just in the "post-Western" era. Apart from the novelty of casting the real-life Carradine, Guest, Keach and Quaid brothers, the family connections it portrays makes the motivations of 19th century characters clearer to a 20th/21st Century audience. The beautiful locations in the forests and meadows of rural North Carolina made for an intimate, green image of pre-electric America. And the fantastic soundtrack, composed by guitarist Ry Cooder, is still one of my favorite pieces of music going on 35 years later. I'm so glad you like the movie too. The fact that it did poorly on its theatrical release in the era of *Caddyshack* and *Xanadu* is perhaps a badge of honor, although it was nominated for the Palme D'Or at Cannes that year. It even made less money than the other major Western of 1980, Michael Cimino's *Heaven's Gate*.

Walter Hill went on to make much more successful pictures – *48 Hours* was his biggest, and he was a producer/director for the pilot of HBO's *Deadwood* – but I know *The Long Riders* is still one of his favorite projects. I think it makes a superb double feature with his 1975 picture *Hard Times*, set in the world of underground bare knuckle fights in 1930s Louisiana. The great character actor Strother Martin's recitation of Poe's "The Bells" is not to be missed.

Well, this was a fun way to avoid working all afternoon, surely the greatest purpose of any fanzine. Thanks for sending me *Fornax*, and keeping the traditions of fan activity alive.

Yours in Roscoe,
Andy Hooper

[Believe it or not, you are the very first person to recognize the significance of this fanzine's name. I picked it out only after doing research and coming to the conclusion that there had never been any previous fanzines named Fornax. Nobody else seems of have had any idea concerning its astronomical significance. I don't understand your comment about *Xanadu* since it was a bust at the box office while *Caddyshack* was a hit. Had no idea that *The Long Riders* did less well at the box office than *Heaven's Gate*. As for who won at Kadesh, the Egyptians claimed victory, but their behavior was that of losers. After the battle, they southwards allowing the Hittites to advance as far south as Damascus. The next year, there was an Egyptian offensive and then things settled into desultory fighting that did neither side any good until the first ever preserved peace treaty in history was arranged. Here in McHenry County, IL, there are no gaming clubs and I have never encountered anyone who was into tabletop gaming. Thank you for your nice comments and hopefully you like future issues.]

April 26, 2017

Dear Charles,

In *Fornax* #17, I'm not surprised that I haven't seen most of the movies that are reviewed. I can console myself that at least the movie on the Hittites isn't going to be at a theater near me any time soon. I wonder what percentage of the American population has even heard of the Hittites. If they read their Bible, they would have heard of Uriah the Hittite. However, there are so many minor tribes and groups mentioned in the bible that there isn't any particular reason to pay attention to the Hittites.

When I was in college about the only comment on the Hittites was that not much was known about them. By now, fifty years have passed, and archaeologists have had plenty of time to dig around.

The Battle of Kadesh was remembered because the Egyptians put up so many public inscriptions saluting their own great victory. Apparently, the battle was a very bloody draw, and neither side wanted a rematch for another century or two.

I remember seeing a film titled "Princess of Mars" with Tracey Lords. It appeared to be very low budget but not too bad considering its limitations. The film you describe sounds like another one.

"Tora, Tora! Tora!" is definitely one of the best films ever made about warfare. "The Longest Day" is another one. Both films view the events with a neutral eye. There aren't any good guys or bad guys. There are simply people engaged in a massive struggle. You can show either of these films in any of the countries involved without raising any public objection.

As far as dramatic presentations of warfare, I think "All Quiet on the Western Front" is about the best. There aren't any good guys or bad guys in this one either. The protagonist is just a young man on the other side who thought he had good and sufficient reasons to be doing what he was doing. Experience caused him to doubt that.

Yours truly,

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[I got the Hittites film from Netflix. Within "another century or two" from the Battle of Kadesh, the Hittite Empire had collapsed and Egypt was badly damaged and never regained the position that it had before the attacks of the Sea Peoples that ravaged the Ancient Near East for decades.]

Gerd.Maximovic@t-online.de;

Dear Charles,

thanks for your eMail, Fornax 17 being attached.

Therein we find the essay „Eating its Foot...“ by Robin Bright. Well, as I told you, I am highly interested in philosophical questions. I have been reading a lot on these themes for the last 30 years. Now, in Bright's article we meet Buddhism, Hinduism, Ascension to Heaven, and more.

I have read (amongst many others) „The Tibetan Book of the Dead“ (edited by W. Y. Evans-Wentz). I did read the German translation. You know, asiatic religions believe in rebirth (reincarnation). Your soul is walking its ways, till – finally – it enters into heaven (nirvana). In between we (our souls) are moving on, and moving on. From being minerals, from being animals, till now, today, being human beings. Now, look at this: even a backward process is possible. So, normally you (your soul) is rising, and improving, but – dependend on the circumstances – you can also move backwards. For instance, now being a human being, becoming a maggot or a rat. Think of it!

And more. Normally, your rise is positive. You are changing bodies and beings, and you always are improving. So, when you die, you are NOT dead, because your soul is living. There is an interval between your dying, and your rebirth of 42 to maximum 49 days. They call this interval „Bardo“. Therein, of course, you are looking for your improved rebirth. That means, you aim to be rising higher in quality, as a human being. So (in this Bardo-interval between death and rebirth) you must pick out the „right“ new parents. And you, whilst watching them (your new parents) at sexual intercourse (producing YOU!) will be reborn in a better state than before. Please, believe me, this is no joke! Read this book, or look at other authors treating of this subject.

Fiction „Idiots from the Planet Idiom“ by Robin Bright. There is a „Ministry of Idiocy“. Well, I believe, the author is referring not to another planet, but to our – poor! - earth. It's no real story, no dialog, a lot of theoretical thinking, resembling somehow the article mentioned above. A real fiction story should look different.

There is fiction, „From Boom to Fortune“ by Charles Rector. Bank robbers acting in „Platteville“, and successfully. „I“ is one of the hoodlums. There is a problem, to my feeling. There is no criticism of this illegal behaviour. Else well written.

Your book and movie reviews are okay. A lot of those flicks I have seen in German dubbing. Once I went to the cinema, here in Bremen, to watch a US western, in it's original language. The woman at the box office, recognizing me as a German, told me: „You know, this film is in English?“ „Ok“, I told her, „that's what I want to see or better hear.“ Ok, a Western, starring John Wayne. But in English? No, not at all. They are using a secret language there. It is NOT English. Maybe an alien language (so the aliens must have landed there in Texas, or somewhere around there).

That brings us to the point, maybe I am the only German fan writing for English language fanzines. I cannot judge this, but it is possible. The communication barrier has broken down with the Internet. But there still is the language barrier.

That brings us to your very good column on Planetary Stories. Your appreciation of Shelby Vick's work is highly appraised. And now look, he published some of my stories. And he delivered one chapter of my article „The Greatest Discovery...“ You are writing: „You can always count on Planetary Stories“. Indeed, you can, and I hope sincerely Shelby will recover excellently, he had eye surgery in January this year.

In Fornax 17, Letters of Comment, their number is rising. That's a good sign.

Referring to German fandom. German SF fandom of today is okay. They are publishing my short philosophical articles on aliens in space, on the beginning of the universe, on rebirth, and on many, many more themes. That's very okay. But, somehow, „yesteryear“ it even felt better to me. „Yesteryear“ all was new, and there were good (new) friends, publishing my first stories of half a page. And there was Gary Klüpfel (Munich), for instance, I could stay the night there, having travelled to his city. Well, it was a good time. But, alas, they are dying. All of them are dying. Walter Ernsting (1920 - 2005), the greatest German language fan, died a few years ago. And now I get notice, Waldemar Kumming, another great fan and friend of Walter Ernsting, died April 5, 2017.

But they, for sure, have entered paradise. And are producing new fanzines there.

Kind regards,

Gerd Maximovič

[Would you be interested in writing an essay about spiritual matters for this fanzine?]

ghliii@yahoo.com

Guy Lillian

Many thanks! ZINE DUMP inna werks!

[Will be looking forward to that!]