

THE THOUGHT

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The Quest for A New Frontier

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THE THOUGHT

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"SINCE 1981"

What Humans Need

By Ronald C. Tobin, Editor & Publisher

I will admit that I have been impressed by the photographs and the scientific research that has been conducted by the two rovers NASA actually managed to land successfully on Mars. However, this does not mean that I approve of NASA's continuing existence, or that we were all robbed by the American Imperium to fund this, and any other, space project. No private company would have built a launch vehicle as absurd as the space shuttle. Clearly designed by bureaucratic committees, the only surprise is how often they actually have completed their missions. I have said it before, but just to make it clear: I am opposed to ALL government programs, just as I am opposed to ALL formal government. I am in favor of space exploration and settlement, but I want it done by private individuals and groups with the wherewithal to make it happen.

Among the many problems facing the human race is that we lack a tangible frontier. Every bit of land on planet Earth is claimed by some gang of thugs (some people call them nation-states). The frontier was the place for misfits to go, for people willing to take a chance at making their lives better and living freer. A frontier is a safety valve, a way of unlocking the imagination. We all know the benefits and the risks involved with that, but I say we need it.

Far from being useful in getting people and companies out into space, the nation states have, by and large, been very successful in keeping folks bound to the planet. Technically, one could launch their own rocket, however there are so many regulations and laws and hordes of bureaucrats that would be there to stop it

from happening on American soil. As with NASA, all of this must also be put to rest so that space exploration, settlement, and development can finally get underway.

To some the notion of humans living on other worlds is a very frightening thing. We have not done terribly well as regards resource management and living in harmony with the environment here on Earth, so why would we do better anywhere else? The State aside, how would we keep the multinational conglomerates at bay so that they could not step up the kinds of command/control economies that we have all seen in movies? The first question I will answer with I have hope that the first wave of settlers out will lead the way by example. It may be an empty hope, but I think that the human race can learn from its mistakes and become wise stewards. The second question can be answered thusly: the first wave will likely be smaller firms, the big ones will wait and see. I think, however, in the vastness of space, the small entrepreneurs should be able to hold their own. Should the Imperium collapse before then that would resolve the problem because the corporation, as presently constituted and understood, could not exist in a stateless society.

So, let us resolve to open that frontier in space, one that will last even longer than this precious race of ours. As a child, I wanted to walk on the surface of Mars. Frankly, I would still like to have that opportunity, even if it were to mean going as a very old man, or perhaps cyborg technology will be perfected soon enough to allow for that to happen. So much to see, so much to learn. Do not let the state and the multinationals rob you of that sense of wonder when you look at the stars, and

really say, "I truly want to know what is out there." Then, I'm naturally curious.

Enough from me for the moment. Let us get on with this issue as THE THOUGHT continues to get back on schedule!

GUILD ANNOUNCEMENT! KEVIN HAYWARD JOINS PHILOSOPHERS GUILD EXECUTIVE STAFF!

By Ronald C. Tobin, Chair-Founder

I am pleased to announce that we are expanding the Executive Staff of the Philosophers Guild, which also acts as the Editorial Board for THE THOUGHT. Our newest staff member is Kevin Hayward, our latest recipient of the Friend of Philosophy Award. Mr. Hayward brings a lot to the table, and I, along with the other members of the Staff, agreed that his input would be most useful in helping us meet the challenges that are to come.

In the coming weeks the Executive Staff and me will be discussing various ideas to keep the Guild on solid ground as well as insure the future viability of THE THOUGHT. I want to avoid any repeat of 2002-03 when I know there were times that many people wondered if we would manage to pull through. We have, but I want to make things better. Also, as material submitted for publication consideration increases, I intend to have more material reviewed and critiqued by the Board.

I trust you will all join me in welcoming Kevin Hayward onto the Philosophers Guild Executive Staff. His appointment was effective on 1 March 2004. Be advised that, if growth continues at its present pace or goes higher, we may well be looking to put another person on said Executive Staff early next year. Those who have an interest should let me know as soon as possible.

Also, I am going to give Staff member John McKay a warm and hearty congratulations for finishing up his Bachelors Degree. He will be graduating in late May. Good work, John! I know you worked hard!

DEDICATION: IN MEMORY OF SAMUEL EDWARD KONKIN III

By Ronald C. Tobin, Editor & Publisher

Samuel Edward Konkin III, fiery, feisty libertarian activist died on 23 February, 2004. Born in the Canadian prairie province of Saskatchewan on 8 July, 1947. Sam grew up in Alberta and then headed south into the States in 1968. Sam, better known in the movement as SEK3, was heavily involved in the creation of the modern libertarian movement in the critical years of the 1970s. In 1973-74, Sam was even a member of the fledgling Libertarian Party, which he left in disgust because he did not see any way to keep the Party true to its principles.

SEK3 was best known for his publications: *NEW LIBERTARIAN MANIFESTO*, *NEW LIBERTARIAN* magazine, *TACTICS OF THE LIBERTARIAN LEFT*, and so on. During the 1980s he also ran the Agorist Institute, teaching the principles of the Agora, his spin on more 'traditional' anarcho-capitalism. While still around in the 1990s, he seemed to have lost much of his drive and thunder, though to his credit he was trying to pull it all back together even in the weeks just prior to his untimely death.

I met Sam a few times at various conferences in Southern California from 1985 to 1987. I never had the opportunity to just sit down and talk to him. I should have tried harder, after all he lived less than thirty miles from me all those years until I left Southern California in 1995.

Well, I'm not going to give Sam a long eulogy here. I direct those of you who are interested in such to an article by Jeff Riggerbach in *RATIONAL REVIEW*, which can be read online by going to: <http://rationalreview.com/guest/030904.shtml>. Many other articles about SEK3 and even by him are available online, best found by using the Google search engine.

SEK3, like several others, died too soon. He was only 56 years old, which is way too young to go. So much he may have accomplished on top of what he did accomplish. Therefore, with profound regret, I do hereby declare:

BE IT KNOWN TO ALL: Issue #139 of THE THOUGHT is dedicated to the memory of stalwart libertarian activist Samuel Edward Konkin III.

So long, Sam. You are missed by many, including me.

DISCLAIMER: Let it be known that the opinions expressed in any article or artwork we publish are those of the contributor and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Philosophers Guild. Any and all rights are retained by the contributors. The general purpose of THE THOUGHT is to provide an open forum of expression to facilitate the active and constructive discussion of ideas and opinions.

READERS' LETTERS

FROM JULIAN TEBYE RE: COMMENTS ON ISSUE #137

Dear Ron:

Received and read Issue #137. Interested in your switch from right-wing conservative to liberal. I have a friend in Georgia who is diligently collecting everything he can find to nail "Baby" Bush. He and I seemed to agree on a great many things; he's young (22) and toying with atheism--not quite ready to take the plunge to anarchism--but, it turns out that, a couple of years ago, he was a staunch right-wing Republican! I shake my head in disbelief. As a child, I mouthed my family's Republican credo--not particularly interested one way or the other. Switched on my own to being a "damned, deluded Democrat" when I was sixteen--at the third of FDR's four elections. No--I wasn't driven out of my family nest; I simply kept quiet about my transition. My family rarely discussed politics, anyway. But it was reading Bakunin's "God and the State" at the age of 26 at Ohio State University that really settled my thinking. ("Settled?" I argued the pros and cons for many years, though, if asked, I'd have stated the atheist/anarchist credo.) It is the total

transition from right-wing to left-wing that amazes me.

Well, I suppose it shouldn't amaze me. The story is that the ACLU was founded by a conservative, right-wing Harvard student who went to an Emma Goldman lecture to heckle her--but he came away transformed.

At any rate, I wished to comment on my stance re Michael Jackson--I argued my case too well! I did not mean to anywhere state that I condone adult-child sexuality; I merely wished to remove it from the "buzzword" environment in which it is placed by our legal organizations--which ensures that the adult is automatically guilty. I advise that we approach each case calmly without prejudgment.

As for Lawrence Jarach, I guess I must learn to never say "never" or "always." I was aware of the positive relationship between Jews and Muslims in Spain; I was unaware of the negative examples. I do my mea culpa with gratitude to Mr. Jarach. (It is not sarcasm when I say "thank you;" I am genuinely pleased to learn--and, while I sometimes act as if I know everything--it simply isn't true.) But, I'm not sure that the conflict is "silly" if the conflict is said to be between "Muslims and Israelis." Most Muslim states are not exactly welcoming Palestinians, so perhaps I should have said "Palestinians vs Israelis?" I wonder how the enemy of the Palestinians could be anything other than Israelis? (Israelis backed by the U.S.) And Sadat of Egypt was murdered (state officials are not murdered, they are assassinated) for daring to accept a cease-fire treaty with Israel. And, lest Mr. Jarach object to that statement, I should direct him to Mary Anne Weaver's A PORTRAIT OF EGYPT (1999/2000, New York City, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux) which indicates that as the precise reason for his death. The book also includes a wonderful biography of Osama bin Laden--published well before the 9/11 disaster--but heralding it or something like it.

And, I sincerely wonder. Mr. Clapp--what other method do we have to reach agreement other than by voting? Condemning abuses of a system is not quite the same as condemning the system itself. And, yes, I must agree that it is unfair to tie

49% to the decrees of a slight majority. But, instead of condemning, how about being creative and suggesting an alternative method? I suspect this in itself can produce some very productive results.

Julian Tebye
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TOBIN'S REPLY TO TEBYE:

Well, I would not call myself a 'liberal,' unless one is speaking of the 19th Century concept of the 'classical liberal,' but even that does not truly fit me. I put anarchism outside of the old conservative-liberal equation. Some social anarchists would still call themselves leftists, but more and more often even they eschew that label. I am an individualist anarchist, free-market anarchist, anarcho-capitalist, libertarian anarchist, those labels are suitable as regards my political philosophies. Some refer to individualist anarchists as right-wing anarchists, so you see the whole issue can get very confusing.

I must take some serious issue with Mr. Tebye as regards voting. I hope you know, sir, that there will NOT be a lot of voting going on in a stateless society. I will not say there will not be any, I'm sure there will be organizations that will employ it from time to time for issues concerning them and their members. Voting when it comes to a government is an act of force and fraud against your neighbors. You want an alternative? Alright, if you believe that, say, your community could use a flood control channel, you can go talk to your neighbors and have like minded people do the same and see if you can convince them that you are correct about this perceived need. Those that agree will then gather the resources needed to build and maintain said flood control channel, while those who did not want it are respected by NOT being forced to contribute to it.

Frankly, if voting in government elections really changed anything for the better, it would be illegal. Go back and read Mr. Clapp's article again. You will see that the system is rigged. Yes, it is rigged even here in the American Imperium. Stop sanctioning your servitude, Mr. Tebye.

Take a truly bold step and don't vote. I join Mr. Clapp in condemning voting in Statist elections. The system is hopelessly corrupt and cannot be reformed. It needs to go away. True freedom, the stateless society, is the best answer that I know of.

FROM NICK GUREVICH RE: COMMENTS ON ISSUE #138

Hi Ron!

Just received #138. Thank you for publishing my essay on "Prelude." I totally agree with your comments at the end. It is time "to move things along." The subject is too emotionally charged and reason, alas, in human affairs often yields to passion.

Thank you also for sharing your personal matters. This is one thing I missed about America and Americans - openness. People in Toronto are so "secretive" about their personal lives, you "know" someone for years without knowing really anything about them, which inevitably creates the climate of discomfort and alienation.

Nick Gurevich
E-Mail: nick.gurevich@sympatico.ca

[EDITOR'S COMMENTS: As always, thanks much for sharing your views with us. I am giving Lawrence Jarach the 'last word' on that discussion as an issue of fairness. The subject is very emotionally charged, but I remain certain that it will be brought up again sometime in the future. Nothing wrong with some passion in a debate. In fact, without passion it is very difficult to carry on in a cause. I do what I do because I think it is important. I feel it in my bones and I have the fire in my belly (and no, it is NOT indigestion). Any activist needs that fire. Without it one loses the drive to go on. I should know. I have experienced burnout firsthand, as have many others here.

As for sharing my personal life here -- I want people to know me as more than the Editor and Publisher of this fine magazine, more than the Chair-Founder of this illustrious Guild of ours. I want them to know me as a person. I have shared my health problems here. I thought it was high time that I shared some positive news for a change.]

FROM DANIEL UST RE: TOBIN'S COMMENTS TO STUMM IN ISSUE #138

Hi Ron:

I just got in TT138. Looks to be a good issue.

By the way, regarding Jim Stumm's "Comments for Lawrence Jarach," I think you're being a little harsh there. It does not seem Stumm is saying he's a minarchist but really for statism. Instead, he's settling for minarchism because he believes it's a more realistic goal.

When he declares that states can conscript and tax, he is talking about the present capabilities of real world states -- not whether this is legitimate or minarchic. Obviously, according to libertarian and Objectivist sensibilities, neither capability is a proper function of government (or of any social institution for that matter), but actual nation states do draft armies and tax people.

However, it is debatable whether states are more efficient at doing this. *The Myth of National Defense*, a collection of essays edited by Hans-Hermann Hoppe, takes that view to the task and Stumm might want to read it before commenting further. (True, nation states now have the day and he might be right, but he should consider the evidence of private military forces before dismissing them out of hand.)

I do agree, though, that minarchism does appear to be utopian. Part of my position rests on the common sense view that it's easier to get to statism from minarchism than from anarchism, therefore the temptations to it are much stronger. In other words, once you have a state in place -- even a minimal one -- it's much easier to augment and abuse its powers. States as such have already eliminated threats to this and minarchists have to rely on a good portion of the citizenry jealously guarding freedom despite the temptation to use state power for their own ends. There are no real structural impediments to expanding state power.

Minarchies also face the twin problems of incentives (to be libertarian as well as to

remain minarchies) and information (given the lack of price information from their monopolistic position). All species of monocentric legal orders -- a fancy term for government, since a government is a legal order where a specific institution monopolizes the provision of legal order -- face these two problems. Free markets in law -- polycentric legal orders -- historically have done better and tend to be much more stable. (See Bruce L. Benson's *The Enterprise of Law: Justice Without the State* and Harold J. Berman's *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* for more on this.) There seem to be good theoretical reasons for this difference too -- basically because free markets work better.

Stumm might reply that this still does not make anarchism any more likely. As well, any proof that minarchy is unstable or that it can easily evolve into statism is not necessarily an argument for anarchism. After all, it could be that anarchism is impossible and so is minarchism and the best one can have is holding operations and frequent reforms -- that the regulatory welfare state is stable in the long run and all that can be done is to try to not let it get too out of hand. After all, he's right about nation states being the dominant form around today.

[EDITOR'S COMMENTS: I suppose, on the issues of conscription and taxation, Mr. Ust is correct in saying I was a bit harsh in my comments to Jim Stumm in the last issue. Suffice it to say, however, that I think the rest of what I wrote was dead on. Stumm keeps harping on "wishing real hard" and keeps saying he would love to be an anarchist, when it is obvious that he lacks the vision and the determination to be one. It may, at first blush, seem easier to support the minimal state versus supporting no state, but as Mr. Ust points out, once a state is in place it is simple to augment and abuse its powers. Very difficult to control the beast.

As for the possibility that in fact the regulatory welfare state is the most stable human social form -- I see no reason to think that is really the case. If I did, I would have thrown in the towel a long time ago and gone ahead and pursued a career in electoral politics. I'm not going there.]

ANTI-IT

By J.F. Pytko
Poet Laureate, Philosophers Guild

Out of the now
we move without a thought
of then.

Movement is a stretch
of inches in the abstract
like the idea of a palm span
on a handrail of air.

Condemned silhouettes chase after
light's mercy.
Fly-by-nighters steal solfeggios
from the sale of an opera angel,
and sell them to an automated diva
caught in the act of imitating
a mockingbird.

Then pats us on the back
and hoists us to the shoulders
of a desire to be flawless
as permafrost, brave enough
to be roasted at the stake.
Time runs around circuits of faces
that charm the integrity
out of mirrors.
And our desire falls apart
before we can reach our mirror,
and before we go beyond the now
and into the not.

WANTED: MORE LIBRARIES AND STORES TO CARRY THE THOUGHT!

By Ronald C. Tobin, Editor and Publisher

Now that we are getting back on track and making great strides to getting back on schedule, I think it is time to have a few small press friendly stores carry THE THOUGHT. I have some I will be speaking to in the weeks ahead, but if any reader knows of such a store please bring them to my attention. I am also interested in having a few more libraries carry the magazine. I am proud to say we are carried by the New York Public Library and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, among others, but I would like to find some more. I would especially like to find a library in Canada to carry THE THOUGHT. I contacted several Canadian libraries in 2002 and not one took me up on the offer -- and I offered FREE subscriptions to said libraries! Thanks for your help and support!

FREEDOM ABOVE OR TYRANNY BELOW

By Daniel Ust

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Arguments

In the 1990s, I penned "For a Free Frontier: The Case for Space Colonization," an early version of which appeared in these pages. I had hoped it would spark a passionate debate in the libertarian movement on the long-range prospects for freedom beyond Earth. In this regard, it did spark some comment and I didn't realize at the time how many others had already tried the same thing. Regardless, I believe it's time to revisit this issue, especially given the US President's endorsement of a more ambitious manned space flight program with a lunar base and a manned landing on Mars.

Space tourism, too, is poised to take off – no pun intended – perhaps building a private space infrastructure from which space settlements might grow.

Linking space settlement to freedom is not atypical in libertarian circles, even if there are not a few libertarians who readily dismiss the idea because they believe space exploration, travel, and settlement are currently impractical and likely to remain so for a long time to come. Others also believe that space settlements would basically be more like military outposts – either because only governments would really put their elbows into the effort or because of the nature of settlements. The latter brings up the possibility of what some have called "airlock despotism." This means that the essentials for life, such as breathable air, would be in even shorter supply in a space settlement. The impact, too, of people's actions on each other would be much more quickly felt. This would lead, they argue, to strict rules just to survive in space. No doubt, airlock despotism might become a real problem, but it's diffuse and unlikely to be a means of centralized control. In fact, it would only push would be space settlers into being selective about the kinds of

people they shack up with. At worst, it makes more for local tyranny – not global tyranny.

Many others, including those not of the libertarian persuasion, claim that there're enough problems to keep us busy on Earth. A few people have even told me it's time to get it right here on Earth. They claim we only have one world and we should learn to take care of it before searching for other places to live – and presumably to mess up.

The simple answer to these people is that having only one place to live is a problem in and of itself. Should some catastrophe overtake humanity or even just our civilization, there's nowhere else to go right now. That's sort of akin to living on the Titanic and saying there's no need for lifeboats, no need for other ships or even ports of call until we've perfected seamanship to a degree never seen before. I'd prefer to have the added insurance of space settlements. It's a good idea even for those who would never want to live off Earth.

Add to this, space settlement is not just about finding another place to live. Among other things, it's about moving out into the universe. As someone once put it, space is like almost the entire universe. Our planet is but a tiny speck. To look at space settlement like moving to a crummy apartment in another part of town is, to me, completely the wrong attitude to take. (L. Neil Smith made the same point in his "Why Aren't We There Yet?")

Core Thesis

My chief argument about why space settlement for libertarians and other freedom lovers was actually toward the end of "For a Free Frontier." In a nutshell, it has to do with the nature of space itself making personal liberty much easier to attain and maintain than on any planet. I would like to revisit this argument, since I believe it's one that none of my critics have managed to counter and for the most part it has been ignored. This argument is that space enhances freedom because it enhances mobility and stealth. Unlike the surface of the planet, with space there is not edge. It is virtually infinite, so increased mobility in space means an increased ability to move

away from any power centers. (This happened on Earth as well. Edge societies tend to be freer than central societies. America comes to mind, but other cases include Iceland during its anarchic phase and Anglo-Saxon England. 1 The problem is, though, that eventually, the central powers either expand out into the edge or the edge societies themselves become new central powers. The former happened in the case of Iceland and the latter happened in the case of America.)

It's not just the mobility factor, but the mobility combined with the three-dimensional movement in an edgeless space.

This introduces high costs to those who would try to track-down anyone fleeing centralized control. In simple mathematical terms, unless the fleeing parties tell you where they are, you have to search ever more space. To give an idea of how much, think of hiding a moving encampment on Earth. The surface of the Earth is about 185 million square miles. That might seem like a lot, but, chances are, if an existing powerful government wants to find your moving encampment, it will, given enough time. 2 Increases in mobility – faster aircraft, faster ships, vehicles able to travel over rough terrain – and advances in detection technology – better spy satellites, better surveillance equipment, un-piloted drones – will only make this easier. Imagine instead, that using the same level of technology, the government in question had to search the entire volume of the Earth. That would be about 237 BILLION cubic miles of space to search. That's a much larger space to search. (The surface can still be considered a space. Let's not quibble over geometrical terms. The point is searching the volume would be much harder – several orders of magnitude harder – than searching the surface or just the thin sliver of volume around the surface.)

Let's transfer this example to space. Imagine having to search the entire volume that contains the Earth out to the Moon's orbit. That's 240 thousand miles out. The volume is some 51 quadrillion cubic miles – over 200 thousand times the volume of the Earth. Note the Earth's radius is about 4 thousand miles while the radius of this volume is 240 thousand miles – in other words, only 60 times the radius of Earth.

The difference is that the volume varies with the cube of the radius. That's a lot more space to search, but unlike Earth, this volume has no clear boundary. In fact, there is no physical limit to movement of the kind there is on the Earth's surface. This is not to say space settlements can violate the laws of physics, but their freedom of movement is much higher.

In this context, they are not constrained to that space. One can easily imagine, e.g., that a central government would get better at moving about in space and at tracking settlements and spacecraft. However, settlements and craft that don't want to be tracked can just move further out. No matter how good the technology, it still faces the same geometric problem: the increase in distance increases the volume of space by the third. Put another way, double the distance one can move around in a given time and someone tracking you must monitor not twice as much space, but 8 times as much. The geometry is against the central power, against the would-be controller. (This applies to pirates and criminals as well. So, law enforcement would be harder overall. This can rightfully be seen as a downside.) Space, thus, is on the side of those who don't want to be monitored or controlled.

Naturally, this does not guarantee that space settlement societies will be perfect in every respect, but freedom of movement and a sort of de facto ability to secede will allow social and cultural evolution to move more in the direction of freedom because individuals and small groups can break away from larger political and social units. Even just the potential for such secessions will likely make the larger units more tolerant of dissent, diversity, and experimentation. It also ruins the chances of individuals or small groups that desire to wield power over larger ones. Lacking any centralized machinery of power, there will be no destructive outlet for the power-hungry and the busy bodies.

The Future on Earth

Some might look at this from the angle of the potential for freedom in space alone. This is, after all, my main point – that freedom will be greater in space. However,

the other side of this is that freedom on Earth is very limited. The more transportation and monitoring technology progresses on Earth, the more limited freedom will be barring no outlet into space or no other checks on centralized power. Over time, even cultural and constitutional checks erode. Absent any external shocks to the world-system on Earth or off world expansion, there seem to be only two paths that will be taken. Either the level of freedom will rise and fall as governments rise and fall or it will reach a steady state. In either case, the total amount of freedom is likely to be a lot less than even now – and now is hardly ideal. This is because there are no checks on governmental power save for the stark ones that governmental power must not be abused to the point that people either openly rebel or to the point where society generally declines. (Even rebellion or a general decline and collapse only amount to a temporary period of decentralization of the worst sort before centralization gets back on track.) 3

Settling space solves this problem because it will not only allow people to move away from power centers, but will also provide an external shock to the system. This shock will likely not topple existing governments, but it will act to check their power. Why? Those governments that are less exploitative, less controlling will likely have better economies, more immigrants, more talented people and this translates into stability and stronger militaries. Absent an external shock of this sort, the disaffected have nowhere to turn to and there's no competition.

The space frontier, too, unlike any terrestrial one is inexhaustible. It will be the ultimate edge society, since the edge is highly mobile and practically infinite. Once settlements are established in Earth orbit, people will eventually migrate beyond there out into the solar system, then out into the galaxy and beyond. There is no physical limit to movement, save the need for energy and time.

Looked at this way, the option to settle space is not some pie in the sky dream, but likely the best option for the future of humanity and the future of civilization. In other words, those interested in freedom in the

long-range, in the survival of humanity, and in the continuity of civilization should think seriously about space migration and settlement.

Notes

1. See David Friedman's *The Machinery of Freedom: A Guide to Radical Capitalism* for more on Ancient Iceland and Bruce L. Benson's *The Enterprise of Law: Justice Without the State* for more on Anglo-Saxon England.

2. Granted, even now, many people can slip through the cracks, but this marginal existence is only because existing governments don't see these people as threats or sources of more power. As time goes by, there will be less and less chance to live on the margins – and certainly that sort of lifestyle is not one to build a society or civilization on. At best, in any time, only a few can achieve it.

3. There is another possibility on Earth that might act as a check on centralized power. This is mass proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including not just the traditional trio of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons but nanotechnological ones as well. Erwin S. Strauss first brought this to my attention. The problem with this, though, is that it does not result in a stable society in which freedom can flourish. Should it come to pass – and there's reason to believe it will eventually – it might work toward the extinction of humanity and possibly all life on Earth. This is because as the weapons become better and better as well as ever easier for small groups or lone individuals to produce and use, the size of the Earth does not change. In space, one can always move away from potential threats. On Earth, there's a limit and it's all one biosphere. Mass proliferation, in fact, is another argument for space settlement.

[Those interested in reading more of Daniel Ust's works are encouraged to visit his website, the URL for which is: <http://uweb.superlink.net/neptune>

Daniel Ust is a long time libertarian activist and I am pleased to have been able to present his work here over the years. He is always thought provoking.]

LEFT BEHIND

By Julie A. Jeffries

i look at the boxes around my room
i sit here waiting for you soon
its been 2 days since you said you'll come
but you are not here and i am not dumb.

i trusted you once again
and hoped that your past was truly the end
my room is empty my bags are packed
you said you would be here
i don't know how to act.
i don't know i am confused
you seemed so happy to hear the news.
Now you left me here,
by myself in my empty room and empty shelves
with walls bare and boxes on the floor,
me sitting on my bed and listing for the door.

Are you coming back,
are you going to leave,
or i sit here wondering,
why this happened to me.

RACIST DEBATE

By G.W. Brown

During the Presidential Election of 1964, I was in the Fifth Grade. It was a two room school with my class as the youngest in the Big Room that included Grades 5 thru 8. We were an all white school, reflective of community values in our young minds. Many of us had never seen a black person other than the troublemakers seen on the news and those depicted as slaves and servants on television.

A school project that year was to debate the merits of the Republican and Democratic parties and whose candidate should become President. My group of which I was spokesman took the Republican side. Party lines were basically drawn by asking our parents what they were. Both sides checked out our trusty encyclopedias to find a history of good and bad things about our respective parties.

Date of the great debate came. First to speak were the Democrats. I still laugh at their opening line, "Republicans are bad because they freed the slaves!" The remainder of their spiel was on how Lincoln was the first Republican President and by

freeing the slaves the Republicans had caused all the rioting and other problems facing American society in those days. My response was about the LBJ programs and how Kennedy Johnson and all the other Democrats were giving the nation to the "N-word people."

Sadly, I didn't realize how racist our debate was until years later, after I graduated from the big room. The teacher didn't stop us with a lecture on racism and the feelings of people from other cultures. She only praised us for our good work and pointed out we left out the fundamental difference in the two parties was that Republicans took care of big business and Democrats were for the working man.

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IN DEFENSE OF THE CRAFT

By Ronald C. Tobin
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As an intellectual living within the borders of the American Imperium, I have grown accustomed to a certain level of anti-intellectualism. It is generally a nuisance, just background noise that one learns to ignore and carry on with one's projects, one's work, and one's life. To attempt to actually attack it head on would be futile, save I have found value in discussing the matter with individuals who turn out to be capable of critical, rational thinking. I have often said that anti-intellectualism will be one of the major factors in the ultimate collapse of the American Empire.

I am provoked, shall we say, to go into an assessment of anti-intellectualism here is because I have seen an uptick of this attitude within the anarchist and libertarian milieu (I have not seen it in my interactions with the Objectivists, but then the ones that I have any direct dealings with are the very rational and tolerant and active-minded folks who tend to side with The Objectivist Center, based in New York State. Dr. David Kelley

opened the rift with the Ayn Rand Institute people – run by Leonard Peikoff – by giving a speech at a libertarian gathering several years ago. When one is immersed in philosophy as a way of life, one would normally not entertain anti-intellectual viewpoints).

What is bothering me is an uptick in the attitude that writers are not actively doing anything for the movement at large. Our critics claim it is little more than talking, and that concrete action is what is needed to really generate meaningful change and gain the critical mass needed to create the stateless society (or the night watchman minimalist state that the minarchists promote). What such folks are forgetting is that without the writers, who represent the ideologues and philosophers of the movement, it would cease to be. Granted, some people come by anarchism and libertarianism naturally, as a product of their environment and how they think and how they react to the world. Most people, though, become part of the movement because of some tract they read or some speech that they heard. It piqued their interest, they learned more, and they became activists, supporters, or sympathizers.

The writers are the ones who set the tone for any movement, any cause. They present people with concepts and ideas to discuss and debate. Some ideas take hold; others are discarded in the process. The philosophers develop what become the principles and the structure of the school of thought. This then gets taken up by the street activists and the grassroots supporters, wherein the wise philosophers monitors how well these ideas are implemented in the real world.

Let me assure the skeptics out there of this: there are very few libertarian and/or anarchist writers who just write. Most do their utmost to implement their principles in their daily lives. Most will, at least on occasion, take part in a protest, a conference, something that is hands on. Speaking for myself, I have been involved in a few protest marches, attended many conferences, and have sat down with the street activists and discussed at length what actions should be taken. I openly support non-violent protest. I do not and will not

support the activities of groups such as the Black Bloc, because I do not believe that wanton destruction of property leads to any sort of useful political dialogue. Throwing bricks into small stores does not endear the proprietors to anarchist ideas. I really believe that the Black Bloc inadvertently helps perpetuate the Police State (I welcome rebuttal from any supporter of the Black Bloc who would care to do so).

Remember: the writers play a vital role in our cause. I am proud to be one of them. I recognize the vital role also played by the street activist and the grassroots people. It takes all of us to make this work. Writers are using their minds to create ideas, and believe me that can be very hard and grueling labor. Articles that take mere minutes to read can represent days of work on the part of the writer. Just remember that the next time it comes to mind to criticize writers for allegedly not doing anything.

Thanks much for your time and attention, dear reader. I must admit that I feel better already!

A SHOCKING OMISSION

By Jim Sullivan

An academic faux pas, perhaps approaching a major scandal, has just been revealed at the U. of M. campus in the midwest of the U.S. Dr. Hamilton P. Alexander, distinguished professor of history, holding the Durwent H. and Maude P. Chowder Chair in American Studies, has been found, during his lectures, to have made not one single reference to, nor quote from the writing of, Alexis de Tocqueville.

When this startling omission was noticed and brought to the attention of the U. of M.'s Dean of Humanities, Henry H. Patrick, Ph.D., P.D.Q., S.J.V., and L.O.V., who oversees American Studies, he issued a terse statement on behalf of the institution, its chancellor, and himself at a hastily convened press conference.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the media, we

here at the U. of M. are utterly shocked, dismayed, and not a little discombobulated to learn, thanks to an honor student informer enrolled in Dr. Alexander's history class, that the professor has never referred to, once mentioned, nor even alluded to de Tocqueville or to his worthy tome, Democracy in America.

"To do so, of course, is not officially required of a tenured teacher at this university. But we know of no other professor of history, sociology, or political science who has taught at this venerable academic institution who has not made numerous references to de Tocqueville and his book.

"Now to find that one of our own, Dr. Alexander, has refused, denied, or, as we in university leadership would prefer to think, forgot to quote de Tocqueville at some point during the current teaching term is totally incomprehensible. Moreover, it's unacceptable. And he won't get away with it.

"The chancellor and Dr. Alexander's fellow professors, myself included, wish to disavow our affiliation with this negligent, so-called, professor. The chancellor of our fine school has also felt it incumbent upon himself to have Dr. Alexander's doctoral treatise, written and presented at this university over twenty years ago, pulled from the university archives and re-examined. This professor took, and that would appear to be the operative word in this matter, took, his doctor of philosophy degree in American history in 1968. That will now be a year that shall live in infamy around this history department.

"After a careful, line by line, analysis of that Alexander paper, entitled Frontier Men and Frontier Women Prior to Andrew Jackson's Presidency, there was not one quote found from de Tocqueville. Also, there were no allusions, referrals, nor any footnotes or endnotes to this famous Frenchman who wrote so elegantly and insightfully on his impressions of the United States at the time of his visit.

"How Dr. Alexander somehow managed to pass Ph.D. muster at that time with this treatise is beyond belief. With Alexander's

omission, it's hard to figure out why the degree was even conferred.

"Consequently, the chancellor wishes me to remind the public, alums, parents of students, and students themselves that he was not a university executive at the U. of M. when Alexander earned, so-to-speak, his doctorate in American history here.

"The AUP (American University Professors) will be holding its annual convocation and barbeque this summer at our institution to discuss and debate various academic minutia, ad nauseum, as is its habit. The chancellor will call upon this group to discipline one of its own members, Dr. Alexander, for his academic rudeness, disregard for educational protocol, and utter lack of professional etiquette.

"Our best guess is that the AUP will make Dr. Alexander an example. He'll likely be assessed additional dues to remain a member in good standing, be made to apologize to everyone for his blatant omissions, and have to voluntarily sit out from his teaching tasks for at least two semesters plus a summer session. If he won't comply, the AUP has recourse to strong punishment: it can formally request that the U. of M. pull Alexander's season football tickets.

"One final announcement: Professor Alexander will be taking a sabbatical, for which he applied just this morning. Tomorrow afternoon, at university expense, he will visit France where he'll study the language and people. The hope is that this trip will inculcate him with Francophile ways, one being a great admiration for Alexis de Tocqueville. Dr. Alexander may further be induced to quote not only from the astute Frenchman but also from others, like Henry David Thoreau and Vaclav Havel, which the history professor has neglected to do in the past."

SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS

By Michelle Nelson

Sanctify your self-made gods with invented parables, nose held high. Make-believe heavens are for those with unspoiled wings and gilded haloes, not for us,

fallen and bruised angels, who scowl sideways at the blue sky.
You've given a concertina crown to the new-disappointed Jesus, shakes his head.

Piety is the robe you've been donning to hide the rotting filth that lies beneath
Veritable food chain fools eat the shit you happily toss down to their starving gut
Twisting the words of death-scented men of old to suit your unjustifiable vows
Autonomy is only found with a hot bullet in cooling flesh; how he shakes his head.

WAITING ROOM CENSORSHIP

By Neal Wilgus

So I'm sitting in the radiation cancer patients' waiting room – waiting for my radiation treatment, what else? Forty treatments for prostate cancer, five days a week spread out over two months. Waiting to be zapped.

The wait is usually not very long and there are the usual magazines to read – TIME, NEWSWEEK, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, NEW MEXICO MAGAZINE, business and glamour, a bible, health and insurance stuff. I stick with the news mags but I'm mildly irritated that it's the same ones every time and I've just about exhausted what little I can find of interest. I think, in passing, of the stacks of unread magazines I have waiting at home...

Then I come across an article that I'd like to keep for future reference, and since there's no one else around I quickly rip out the page, fold it up and stick it in my shirt pocket. Then I remember last year, while visiting my dying ex-wife in the hospital I'd taken a NEW YORKER magazine so I'd have several articles I wanted to pursue. Rather than stealing, however, I made an exchange – and each time I visited thereafter I brought in a magazine or two from home to replace the one I'd taken.

Good idea – and so I began to bring something new for the magazine piles every time I came in to be zapped, starting with fairly bland nature magazines like NATIONAL WILDLIFE, ON EARTH and

DEFENDERS, then expanding to HABITAT WORLD, a Greenpeace brochure, the local ACLU newsletter and so on. This made up for the page I'd taken (actually two by that time) many times over, and it gave me a chance to propagandize the other patients who'd be cooling their heels there long after I'd gone home.

Exposing people to something beyond pop culture and media hype has always seemed like a good idea to me, although I doubt it's ever changed a single synapse in the brains of my intended targets. So this was nothing new – I've always put up signs, slogans, posters, worn caps and T-shirts with a message, left leaflets in the lunchroom, and so on. Way back in college when I became a conscientious objector I bought 30 copies of a pacifist novel and sent them to libraries all over Arizona, where I was then living.

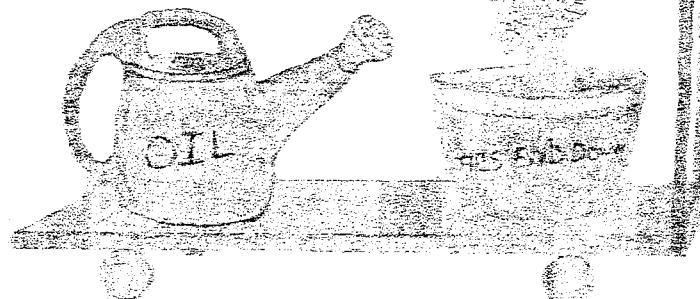
Back in the waiting room I began to notice that the magazines I'd been leaving would sometimes disappear after a few days and at first I shrugged it off, assuming they'd been moved to another waiting room nearby, or even "borrowed" in the same way I'd

borrowed that NEW YORKER. But when the Greenpeace brochure was gone the very next day after I'd left it I began to think that someone was on to me and was deliberately removing anything "subversive" I might leave. Paranoid, of course, but it seemed possible and I began to keep closer track of the material I left.

There were other radiation patients who were in and out of the waiting room around the same time I was there, of course, and we usually exchanged smiles and hellos as our paths crossed. Most of them were senior citizens like me, but there was one guy who was middle-aged who brought his mother in a wheelchair each day, then slipped out for a smoke while she was being zapped. He seemed unfriendly, even hostile, and only nodded or snarled hello if he had to, but I didn't think much of it at the time.

Then comes the morning when I'm sitting there looking at a magazine and wondering who's censoring the stuff I bring in, when the door bangs open and in comes Snarleyface with a magazine in hand, which he throws down on the stack next to me

Neal Wilgus
will not be included
on the guest list
for an afternoon
Texas Tea
to support the
current shrub
planted at the
White House



(upside-down), turns and stomps out without a word. At first I think it's a religious magazine, but on examination I find it's ESPN SPORTS or some such – a different religion altogether. But in any case, I figure I've found out who the censor is without even trying.

Soon after this my 40 treatments were completed and I've only been back to see the doctor once – using a different waiting room, where I left a fresh copy of POPULATION CONNECTION. I never saw Snarleyface again and probably never will, but I still wonder from time to time why he, and all those other censors out there, get so upset – even threatened – by the appearance of a dissenting point of view. Certainly his worldview is the overwhelmingly predominant one, at least in this country – so why insist that other views be squashed?

Waiting room censorship is of minor importance, of course, but it is a reflection of the bigger picture, where criticism of the Bush Gang and its criminal policies is seen as unamerican and critics are considered traitors. As if going through 40 radiation treatments isn't enough, I have to go through this too? How depressing.

Addendum: on a follow up visit at a different waiting room I found a MOTHER JONES left by someone else. How encouraging.

[Kudos to Neal Wilgus for trying to enlighten the general population by leaving 'subversive' reading material in doctor's waiting rooms. I, too, on occasion have found non-mainstream reading material in such places, so be assured you are not alone Neal! On a few occasions I have placed copies of THE THOUGHT at airports, bus depots, and university common rooms. You never know when a seed just might hit the right spot out there.

Yes, there are many neoconservatives out there (some like myself generally refer to them as Imperialists) who want to portray criticizing Bush and his thugs as being a traitorous act. So be it, I refuse to give any form of obedience to tyranny. I will be just as strident should John Kerry and his gang of criminals prevail come November.]

HOW MUSCLEHEAD BECAME GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

By V.R. Smith

The American news media deserves some credit for the following remarkable achievements:

1. The downfall of the Carter presidency.
2. The over reporting of the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979-81.
3. The triumphant election of Reagan in 1980, plus the easy re-election in 1984, and the Reagan "mandate" in general.
4. The rise and fall of Gary Hart in 1984 and 1987-88.
5. The rise and fall of Michael Dukakis in 1988.
6. The election of George Bush Sr.
7. The promotion of the first war against Iraq in 1991.
8. The relentless defamation against president Clinton.
9. The rise and fall of H. Ross Perot's political career in the nineties.
10. The promotion of George W. Bush and the theft of an election in 2000.
11. The tugging of all the heartstrings following 9/11/01-with the subsequent American invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003.

After a quarter century of media manipulation, it would be an effortless procedure to assist in the removal of a legally elected governor, to be replaced by a manufactured celebrity/politician. The downfall of Gray Davis was plotted by California's Republican strategists, The Bush white house, the Republican national committee and certainly big daddy himself, George Bush sr. This was an elaborate plot-the end result: a very large and important state is in the Republican column with a Republican governor. Gray Davis was not expected to win re-election in 2002. The Republicans anticipated an easy victory. Surprisingly, Davis won. So a political crisis was created, with a recall election of the governor who was not supposed to be re-elected. The history of California and American politics re-confirms the fact that a dazzling ex-movie star can be an electable politician.

Arnold "musclehead" Schwarzenegger has dabbled in politics for several years, actively campaigning for Reagan and Bush sr. in 1988 and 1992. He was appointed to head the commission on physical fitness during George sr.'s presidency. He was prominent in George II's campaign in 2000. Carefully planted news items and rumors indicated that he had political ambitions. In the best showbiz tradition, musclehead announces his decision to run on the Tonight show. Within hours, the partisan news media all but crowned him governor---he was unbeatable. After several weeks of hype, the election came as no surprise. This is another major victory for the Republican plotters-the victims will be the residents of the not so golden state.

Musclehead does not understand economics and has no grasp on the issues beyond the party line. He has never held an elected office, and has no background in administration. The media attempted to emphasize that he is a "moderate." The extreme hard-liners in California like Simon and the aristocratic Huffingtons may believe that. (Simon even denounced him as a "liberal" -- the ultimate insult.) Crossover Democrats and so called moderate Republicans voted for musclehead. A domineering personality and Hollywood dazzle-an image nurtured by so many movies, mostly from musclehead's heyday in the eighties, and his very forced charm, wit and constant smiling and grinning, were assets for electoral victory. He will not be so charming or witty, and the grin will be replaced by fangs after he becomes the de facto dictator of California. Musclehead will not, and cannot solve California's economic problems any more than Davis could tackle them.

Alas, California may well be unmanageable and ungovernable. The economy is in a shambles. It is becoming too expensive for the middle class, much less the under privileged to live there. Still, the population expands. California's economic and sociological crisis is certainly due to rapid and extensive overpopulation---hordes of Americans still pursuing the mythical California dream, and attracted by the wonderful climate and scenery (which has been seriously altered by decades of overpopulation and over-development), plus

multitudes from latin america, south asia, the middle east, et al., also seeking the mythical California dream, and the even more mythical American dream, who, according to a few sociologists are, in effect, "balkanizing" California with their expanding enclaves.

Musclehead is not qualified to be mayor of a small village, let alone governor of America's third largest state in land area with a population of 35 million. Long past his prime as an athlete or an actor, -- musclehead appears to be a buffoon or an overgrown clown. In his extended career in the movies, he portrayed assassins, maniacs, automatons, and mythical warriors. True to form, he has always subscribed to a might is right outlook. Musclehead also utilized another asset. He is stereotypically teutonic or Germanic. This resonates with a Germanic population. The American white majority probably owes as much to Germany as it does to Britain for the common folkways, values, traditions and behaviour. The Austrian born Schwarzenegger (whose father was an Austrian nazi) is a ready-made Reich's chancellor or fuehrer for such a population. Most Americans would rather heel, click their heels and goosetep than think for themselves and question their masters.

Beyond the images and facades, there is the substance-or the lack thereof. Musclehead can appear to be in charge, but he is accountable to his handlers in exactly the same way that George W. Bush would like to appear to be in charge, when he is controlled by his handlers---Cheney, Ashcroft, Rumsfeld, and most of all -big daddy. The political turmoil in California was timed and orchestrated. Everyone understood that musclehead could be elected without difficulty. This was something akin to a coup de etat, but played out differently from the coup that placed George II into the white house almost three years ago. The same sinister forces are responsible for both coups.

In closing, it is enough to remark that the author no longer resides in "Looneyland," and is most fortunate not to be living there at this time. It may be appropriate to boycott California products or at least take vacations somewhere else in the months and years

ahead.

[EDITOR'S COMMENTS: While, overall, I find Mr. Smith's article to be timely and very insightful, there is one area that I will take some issue with him. It has to do with his contention that the California Recall of 2003 and the Bush hijacking of the Election of 2000 were orchestrated by the same group of people. The evidence does not tend to bear this out. One could argue, with some validity, that how the 2000 Election was decided represented a coup by the Supreme Court. One can also argue that Jeb Bush (brother of George W. and governor of Florida) managed to 'rig' the election for his brother -- but just barely. It was so sloppy it was unbelievable. Gore, in my opinion, blew it when he did not call for a manual recount of all Florida counties the day after the election (all he wanted recounted at first were ballots in heavily Democratic Florida counties). Bush would have been hard pressed to oppose such a request, and the circus would have ended in a way that would have kept the shrinking electorate happy, no matter who ended up being the winner of that mess.

Now, the California Recall of 2003 started with a very wealthy Republican bankrolling the petition drive to remove Governor Davis. Having lived in California, I have more than a passing familiarity with Mr. Davis. His victory in 2002 was done with smoke and mirrors, in that he covered up just how badly off California really was. All those facts came home to roost after the election and Davis became very unpopular. People expect politicians to lie, but Davis had really gone overboard.

Davis' biggest blunder in trying to balance California's books was tripling the car extortion fees (some call this the car registration tax). Had he NOT done this, I firmly believe the recall would have never happened. He largely dug his own grave.

Though I no longer live in California (I left there in June of 1995, long before the great electricity deregulation farce and the rolling blackouts and such), I have many friends and family who still do. I encouraged them to not bother with this Recall election or, if they simply could not resist, they should vote for the porn star Mary Carey (she, at

least, was amusing). I said they really needed to stay away from Schwarzenegger, who frankly I regard as being as big a liar as Davis, just different. Some listened, some did not, but now folks are seeing that I knew what I was talking about.

Anyway, from what I heard, the Bush people were not happy with the California Recall. It rocked the political establishment and showed that even sitting governors were vulnerable. That is not a precedent they want voters to follow. After all, someone might succeed at having one of their people recalled. Also, Schwarzenegger is rather liberal on certain 'Republican' positions: he favors stricter victim disarmament (gun control to the masses) and he is pro-choice.

People in California did not vote for the man -- they voted for the Terminator! And the real man will let them down. I predict he will serve but one term and leave a bad taste in people's mouths. My advice: if you live in California, and you can find a better place, leave. I did, and I have rarely regretted it.

Also, do not look for politicians to bring economic tranquility and salvation to you or anyone else. What politicians give, they have to steal from someone else. They produce nothing of tangible worth. They are parasites with no redeeming value.

I do thank Mr. Smith for this article, and I look forward to his future contributions.]

WILD FLOWER

By Hedy Vandeloo

Like a wild flower unfenced
I sow my own seeds
not those assigned
in sterile paper packages
printed with directions.

Landscapers refuse to
appreciate my wilderness.
They tend their ornamental plots
of cultivated beauties,
each coiffeured head
shaking with disdain at
my liberated nature.

But you,
my handsome trailblazer,

find untamed terrain exciting.
 Let me entice you to
 lay your supple body
 amid my abundant blossoms,
 inhaling the heady scents from
 my emancipated garden.

My petals will part,
 proposing pleasures when you
 kiss my floral offering.
 Without boundaries
 separating do's and don'ts
 the elements are mine
 to feed your ecstasy
 if you dare to venture
 through open fields of freedom
 with this wild flower.

Hedy Vandelloo
 6 Imperial Road
 London, ON N5X 2G6
 CANADA

LONG BLACK TRAIN

By Jeffery Lewis

1. Without a Trace

On March 8th I have a terrifying nightmare of rape.

In this dream I am living in an apartment somewhere out east, maybe Cambridge, MA. I am here with my daughter and she and I are staying up most of the night doing a very special sort of writing. The writing is on the deepest possible levels of being, down in what might be called the metaphysical root levels of the Garden of Eden. Writing at this level means the ability to script one's own life, future. It means that Mariah and I can script in whatever sort of story we want. It also means that we can write full being into our existences including this very ability to write life at this deep level which can then be seen and tinkered with in dreaming. I am aware I have been doing precisely this sort of writing ever since becoming a deep dreamer capable of working, willing at a garden level. There is no kind of writing that is more thrilling, exciting or fruitful. Such writing means we are the captains of our fates and souls.

At about 4:00 AM I begin to get tired and

start to fall asleep. I am not sure how this happens, it is more than a bit like hypnosis or some kind of sleeping gas has been sprayed secretly into the room to stop us from doing this sort of writing.

The next thing I know I am flat on my belly and someone is entering me sexually from behind. The blazing pain of this wakes me and I turn to fight back and see whom the rapist is. Immediately behind me is Anthony LaPaglia, the actor who plays the FBI agent in the TV show *Without a Trace*. (In this show LaPaglia and his crew of agents solve missing person cases.) Hugely loud rock (scripture) music accompanies this rape as if this was some kind of MK Ultra torture lab.

I wake from this dream very upset. I am upset at my vulnerability more than anything. Why is this happening? Why can't I stop it? What is this awful rape designed to accomplish? I can see some things. I can see that my daughter and I were doing something very great, original and true. We were writing our lives on the level of fate or the level of the gene, scripting a story into our being. And along comes this **rapist** and enters me, rapes me with . . . something. He enters me with rock music, with the rock song "I want to rock you all night long." Oh yes, I remember it. I remember it absolutely clearly. What might such a rape of our being on such a profound, deep level by **rock** music mean?

Because I have seen this sort of thing many times I know that "rock music" here is symbolic of rock music in the sense of scripture, the Bible as "The Rock" upon which the Christian Church stands, depends. Scripture then is a "rock music program" in the sense that the Bible is a script, a program for not only all of our lives, but all of history as well. It is the stated purpose of the Christian scripture to conquer and rule the world. Despite this militaristic purpose Christians claim they are conquering us "out of love."

So, if I read this rape this way, then my own ability to fate my own life is being raped by this force on a Garden of Eden level. This is where the war is really occurring—where it cannot be seen, except by a dreamer. If this

is correct then me seeing my rapist in the act, putting a face and identity upon the invisible entity incubus is the "sin" for which Adam and Eve are tossed out of the Garden. We may not see the rape that is occurring there at the deepest level of our being. Hence we are tossed out and told that the **only** way to be forgiven is to precisely follow the railroad tracks of scripture, Christ's example, which leads us away from where we need to go.

But, further, if I am correct in this reading of this rape, then this is a rape of the collective Garden of Eden as well. This means that the garden of the word, of creation is being raped, knocked up like Rosemary was in *Rosemary's Baby* by "Satan." Given the identity of my rapist I can deduce what sort of baby might suit LaPaglia's role on TV--a missing person, maybe many missing persons, and a whole planet of missing persons.

2. The Long Black Train

On March 10th I had the following interesting and disturbing dream.

I am in a large square in some city or other. Some kind of "real estate deal" has been made here delivering the center of this area to some group or other. To begin with I am right in the scene, moving about this square but then, for reasons not clear I am some considerable distance, maybe as much as a quarter of a mile, away, no longer a participant in it. I feel dislocated, alienated, and powerless in a way that is very troubling. I see a long black train coming down a gently sloping hill from the east into the square. Despite my distance I can see into the windows of the train. At first their appear to be the pointed tops of pine trees moving along through the cars toward the front, a horizon of such pine tips. Then it appears what I took to be pine tops are people moving to the left, toward the front of the train as it travels along. No, it is not people; it is the skyline of New York including the Trade Center Towers and the Empire State Building moving by somehow inside the train cars.

I feel removed, out of it, away from the center of things, a rather unwilling witness. The train is moving left toward a very large

black something at the center of this square in a city. There is something like the large, black draped cube of the Kaaba in the center of the grand Mosque in Mecca at the center of this square now. Perhaps the real estate deal allowed this darkness at the core of things to be put here. (There is a black stone of meteoric origin in the corner of the Kaaba. Legend has it the stone will turn white when mankind is perfectly obedient to God, no longer sinful. Pilgrims on the Hadj kiss this stone as part of their purification.) I have the feeling something is missing. Something very important is missing. There is a whole kind of writing or writer missing here. We cannot stop what is about to happen because this sort of writer or artist who can work on a deep level of reality is missing. I then see a second scene.

Now I am right down in this square very close to this black block at the center of it except it is in Spooner, Wisconsin, the town just south of me. Christ from Gibson's Passion is here carrying the cross down Railroad Street toward the darkness at the center of this square. He is the engine, the locomotive pulling or leading this train. As he passes pulling the train down into this darkness he says, more in general, than to me "it is fated."

On March 11th I feel inexplicable grief all day long. Also inexplicable, the song "The Rain in Spain falls Mainly on the Plain" from "My Fair Lady" is buzzing in my brain like a computer virus. The grief is inexplicable until I hear about the terrible terrorist bombings in Madrid, Spain, on the radio as I drive up to UW Superior where I am a graduate student in painting. "The rain in Spain" will remain unexplained until the following day when as many as 2,000,000 mourners fill the streets of Madrid to protest such terrorist activity in a heavy downpour. Seeing these very real explanations for my feelings does not comfort me.

Nor does it comfort me I completely understand this terrible "Passion" train. I understand its engine, I understand the tracks of religious scripture, Christian, Islamic and Jewish it moves along and worst of all I understand the sin at the heart of darkness for which the followers of these

religions must be forgiven.

The sin is the rape our being in the Garden in the first dream here. The rape in the Garden of Eden eliminates an entire kind of person, kind of human being capable of writing our existence at that level of being. When this kind of person, the kind of people we were created to be is annihilated, raped from behind by Big Religion then the scriptural programs of those religions may take over to run our lives like loco-motives.

At the core of this heart of darkness is a profound sin. That sin is rape on a creation level of being to create a world according to religious programming. This rape delivers the planet to "Satan," to a dark side Mr. Hyde, Anthony LaPaglia personality to fate events in our lives that fit the ends of scripture. Scriptures are machines designed to fulfill prophecies by fating our existence. This rape in our origin is the sin at the very core of Christianity that drives it down the long Passion Play of History, a rape trauma in a garden we cannot turn and face. Instead of facing this sin, this trauma in our past we run from it and anoint Christ to bear that sin, carry it away so we do not have to face what is really going on and change it.

And I know what train this is. It is the "long black train" from the awful gospel song Duke Skorich played on his radio show taking sinners to nowhere on March 9th or 10th. Well, it's to not nowhere it is taking us. It is taking us down tracks of guilt, of blame written into our lives again and again, this time by Gibson, like a terrible program leading us to this altar of sado-masochistic human sacrifice.

The monotheistic religions annihilate the original human beings who were capable of scripting, writing their own lives and fates. This annihilation of human being creates a permanent missing person state in the human heart we are then told can only be filled by Christ or Allah.

The rape in the first dream by "rock music" is what lies at the heart of the terror bombings in Madrid. Our true core of innocence and conscience must be raped like this for these events to even occur. We are ultimately powerless to stop these things despite our best intentions because we have

been displaced from the core of our being by the very religions responsible for the rape. We blame ourselves for sins that were committed upon us, not by us. The light, our light, not Christ's, needs to be taken to the heart of darkness at the core of this square, this real estate deal where the earth is delivered to rape by the Dark Side.

But, it would seem, because of the writing Mariah and I were doing, the center is **not missing**. It is not missing and it will hold despite the rough beast of the bombings. The long black train is heading, is fated in the **right** direction—toward the heart of darkness of this rape at the core of the Kaaba or the Dome of the Rock or St. Peter's where the truth about the original sin will be faced by the brave.

EVERYTHING

By Justice Thompson

Do you like my dolls, love
I keep them well dressed
and so very pretty
I keep them for you, love
I brush their hair
and we have tea
I need more of you, love
more of you loving me
My dolls have been talking
and they know everything

THE LOVE LETTERS NEVER SENT

By Nick Gurevich
E-Mail: nick.gurevich@sympatico.ca

I've never written a love letter before, simply because I never loved anybody before I've met you. How did I know that this was love? Once I heard that you know you are in love with someone if your heart suddenly stops when this person enters the room. And so it was with me - whenever I saw you my heart would stop. For a year I was totally obsessed with you, thinking all the time about you, talking all the time (in my head) with you, dreaming about you. It was the happiest moment of my life, my dream-life, when once you kissed me. I felt such a peace, contentment, warmth. It was like a kiss of an angel. Perhaps you are an

angel, and I am the only one who knows this.

*** Ten years have passed since then. I talked to you several times, mostly exchanging meaningless remarks. I saw you in passing every once in a while on the street. And that was all. But it was enough (or so it seemed to me). For my love is not greedy, it can survive on very little. To be in one room with you, to look at you, to talk to you - is enough. Perhaps it is age, perhaps realization that this is the most I can hope for. I can kiss you with my eyes and caress you with my voice. And I almost convinced myself that this is all I need.

*** You don't have to do anything to be loved by me - you just have to be. Of course, you can kill my love with one murderous sentence, one heart-stabbing expression of your eyes, as you almost did it one day when I, gathering all my courage after the year of delirious obsession, approached you for the first time and said "I have to talk to you," and you coldly replied "No, you don't." Something has died within me at that moment. For a long time after that I wanted to be alone, to mourn in solitude, not to be disturbed while I was sipping silence, leisurely, and taste my sadness by small, delicate bits.

*** When the Christians asked what is the greatest Paradisiacal bliss they say it is to behold for eternity the face of God. My love for you is my religion, you are my God. And my greatest bliss is to behold your beautiful face for as long as I live.

*** I don't try to make you love me. Love is a solo performance. You will know it when you love someone as I love you.

*** You are not the greatest love of my life. You are the only love of my life. All my life I've been storing up love. And now the time has come to be a big spender, a profligate.

*** I doubt you ever think of "me." Certainly not about "you and me." And if you do think of me it's probably about "me thinking of you." In any event, I am fully aware that you have more important things to think about than this love-stricken strange old man with a funny accent.

*** Do not ask me how or how much I love you. The true love, like pregnancy (sometimes they are connected), does not admit a degree. One cannot to be more pregnant or less pregnant, one's just pregnant. And so it is with love. One cannot love little or much, less or more. One just loves. And don't ask me to do something to prove that I love you. For love is not an action, it is a feeling. One can do many different things, for many different people, for many different reasons. But one can only love one person and for only one reason - love itself.

*** When I am with you, talking to you, looking at you, time stops. Everything around me becomes unreal, dream-like, slowly fading away. And the only thing that remains real is you, your voice, your body, your face - the face of an angel. And I just want to look at it, and look, and look...

*** I almost out-hamlet Hamlet in the art of vacillation - to send or not to send these letters to you was my question. Hundreds of times (no exaggeration) I said "yes," hundreds - "no." You once said to me: "You are such a wonderful writer." I am also such a wonderful coward, especially with you. I always afraid to commit some faux pas, to cross some invisible line, and I hope I haven't done it this time. But I want you to know what enormous efforts it cost me to act "normally" in your presence, that is, not to show too obviously how much, how desperately I love you. I am not sure how successful I am at this, for the truth be known that in your presence my brain tends to function at less than its full capacity (not that I mind it).

*** I don't say to you: love me as I am. I never cared how I look. But for you, if it pleases you, I would like to be beautiful, so that you may enjoy my beauty as much as I enjoy yours.

I never cared about fame. But for you, if it pleases you, I would like to be famous, so that I can share it with you.

I never cared about fortune. But for you, if it pleases you, I would like to be rich and to give to you all you ever wished to have.

I would like to be whatever you want,

whatever you enjoy, whatever make you happy. But I can't. Good-bye, my love, my first and last love.

*** "O, what a tangled web we weave, when we are trying to deceive." And nothing is more tangled than the web of self-deception, this eternal cross or blessing of man. Saying final good-bye to you in my last letter was a supreme act of this human folly. I can no more be separated from you than from myself, for by now (whether you like it or not) you are part of me. Whatever I do, think, read, talk, etc. you are a constant presence. When I am on the street, every woman walking toward me is you. Every time my telephone rings, it must be you. Every letter I receive must be from you. If I was a bird, you would be the air in which I fly. If I was a fish, you would be the ocean in which I swim. I can't take you out of me, and I don't want to. For if I did all which was left would be the emptiness I have nothing to fill with.

*** No matter how many "good by's" I've said to you already, and how many more I will say in the future, it's all in vain, never final. The hope never goes away, never dies. The months, the years will pass, but nothing will change. I would continue to say "good by," and would keep hoping.

*** To say (and to believe) that I can be satisfied with very little, almost with nothing, was another self-deception, the wishful thinking of the weak, the feeble, the humble, the undemanding...

Unlike other human wants, the true love is never satiated, the more it gets, the more it wants, hunger is not diminished, the desire is not dulled.

*** Once, you've said to me: "My mother writes the most exquisite poetry." And looking at you I thought: "You must be her most exquisite creation."

*** There is often something tyrannical about love, when it makes the object of love feel constrained in being him/herself, but instead forces them to conform to the lover's idea of what is "loveable." It is a kind of love that says to the beloved: "I will love you as long as you are what I imagine you to be. And if you are not I hope (and through

understand why. The concept of unconditional love is a very old one, sounds very noble and polite, and thus many want it as some sort of goal to aspire to. These people wonder why they go through life feeling frustrated?

I will wrap up this critique with my final criticism: that of equating lust with love. This happens to most people when they are younger, but it truly can hit at any age. People find themselves sexually attracted to one another, have a few trysts together, and wonder why they only seem to get along in bed. I am not one who believes that a certain amount of time needs to elapse before considering sex (I will say that going out several times and getting to really know each other before having sex is usually a good idea. Most people who have sex on the first date end up in a dead end relationship. Not always, but most), but I say be prudent, especially if you believe the relationship has potential to become serious and committed. Lust helps make romantic love more enjoyable, but lust is not love. It is a part of our 'animal' side, driven by hormones and pheromones. Yes, the women have been correct all these years: it has to do with chemistry. There is nothing wrong with lust, I enjoy it immensely. Love is when you also want to be with that person outside of the bedroom. You know, to share life experiences with, learn from, grow with, stand proudly beside, that sort of activity deals with love. Then, go ahead and rip each other's clothes off and enjoy some lust.

As I said, I welcome feedback from anyone else who would care to discuss love and/or topics ascribed to the emotion or related to it. We have all experienced it in some form at some point in our lives. Let us share those experiences and learn something.

THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF SECESSION

By Thomas H. Naylor

Few words are perceived to be more politically incorrect in America than the word, *secession*. Thanks mostly to Abraham Lincoln, secession is considered to

be a complete anathema by liberals and conservatives alike. Although most Americans believe the Civil War proved once and for all that secession is illegal and unconstitutional, nothing could be further from the truth.

In his book, *A Constitutional History of Secession* (2002), John Remington Graham traces the history of secession in America back to Britain's glorious revolution in 1689 when the Crown passed from James II to William and Mary without armed conflict and in defiance of the constitution of England.

"Whenever any form of government becomes destructive, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government," said Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence. Just as a group has the right to form, so too does it have a right to disband, to subdivide itself, or withdraw from a larger unit.

Thomas Jefferson and James Madison held that the U.S. Constitution was a compact of sovereign states, which had delegated very specific powers but not sovereignty to a central government—powers, which could be recalled at any time. By international law sovereignty cannot be surrendered by implication, only by an express act. Nowhere in the U.S. Constitution is there any express renunciation of sovereignty by the states.

In an article entitled "The Foundations and Meaning of Secession" which appeared in the *Stetson Law Review* (1986), Pepperdine University Law Professor H. Newcomb Morse provides convincing evidence that the American states do indeed have the right to secede and that the Confederate states did so legally.

First, three of the original thirteen states—Virginia, New York, and Rhode Island—ratified the U.S. Constitution only conditionally. Each of these states explicitly retained the right to secede. By accepting the right of these three states to leave the Union, has the United States not tacitly accepted the right of any state to leave?

Second, over the years numerous states have nullified acts of the central government

judged to be unconstitutional. These instances where national laws have been nullified give credence to the view that the compact forming the Union has already been breached and that states are morally and legally free to leave.

Third, and most importantly, the U.S. Constitution does not forbid a state from leaving the Union. According to the tenth amendment to the Constitution, anything that is not expressly prohibited by the Constitution is allowed. Therefore, all states have a Constitutional right to secede.

However, two new constitutional questions concerning secession emerged shortly after the Civil War ended. First, under military occupation and control, six former Confederate states were coerced into enacting new constitutions containing clauses prohibiting secession. But in the eyes of most legal scholars, agreements of this sort made under duress are voidable at the option of the aggrieved party. Furthermore, there is absolutely nothing to prevent these six states from amending their constitutions again.

During the same period of time and also under duress, the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution was ratified. Although this amendment does not explicitly forbid secession, some would argue that it does so implicitly. Suffice it to say, any secession movement aimed at restoring blacks to their pre-Civil War status would be barred by the fourteenth amendment.

But the fourteenth amendment is tainted not only by the military occupation of the Confederacy by the Union, but also by the highly questionable legality of the Union's invasion of the South in the first place.

According to the Declaration of Independence, we are endowed by our Creator with "certain unalienable rights" including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. If that is the case, then it is not much of a stretch to argue that the right of secession is also an unalienable right.

Ultimately, whether or not a state is allowed to secede is neither a legal question nor a constitutional question, but rather a matter of political will. How strong is the will of

the people in the departing state to be free and independent of the control of the world's only superpower? How far will the U.S. government be prepared to go in imposing its will on a breakaway republic? Only time will tell!

Long live the Second Vermont Republic!

Thomas H. Naylor
The Green Mountain Manifesto
202 Stockbridge Road
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REVIEW: *THE VERMONT MANIFESTO* THE SECOND VERMONT REPUBLIC

Reviewed by Ronald C. Tobin

THE VERMONT MANIFESTO – The Second Vermont Republic by Thomas H. Naylor (2003, Xlibris Corp., \$20.99 paperback, 128pp.)

Some may wonder why this book is subtitled "The Second Vermont Republic." Well, the American History taught in most mandatory youth indoctrination camps (some call them public schools) tends to leave a lot of stuff out, such as the fact that Vermont was a free and independent republic from 1777 (when they broke free of the control of New York) until 1791, when they unwisely chose to join the United States. Hence, Professor Naylor's effort is to bring about the establishment of the Second Vermont Republic. So, the book is named properly.

I have long been fond of secession movements, because when they are successful they lead to further decentralization of government power, ultimately laying the groundwork for the stateless society as government becomes less of a force in people's lives. According to Professor Naylor (a long-time contributing writer to THE THOUGHT), being part of the United States is dangerous and detrimental to a small state like Vermont. On this point I am in complete agreement with him. He has written many articles about this topic. Several of which

have appeared in these pages.

In his book, Professor Naylor makes his case for the independence of Vermont very well. He starts with a chapter explaining the very real costs – in personal liberty and financially – in sustaining the modern day American Empire. His next chapter covers the history of Vermont, how the state is different from many others, the people there, the small towns, their tolerance and their live and let live lifestyle. The professor makes a compelling case to move to Vermont if one wishes to live a less complicated life! The next chapter goes into detail justifying the reasons to have a Second Vermont Republic and what it will take to bring this about.

The Vermont Manifesto itself is only five pages long, but it is very well written and it says everything it needs to say. Would that more political writers would learn to practice brevity when writing such papers.

The book concludes with three appendices: Vermont Firsts (things that people in Vermont or said state were the first in the nation to do), The Green Mountain Party (a model party to lead Vermont out of the Union and establish a viable independence); and The New Atlantic Confederacy (a proposal to create a new state out of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and the Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland). Professor Naylor has certainly done his research on this subject.

While I doubt that Vermont will be the first state to secede once the Imperium starts to crumble in about ten years or so (I'm betting on Hawaii first), with the work of Professor Naylor I'm sure they will be in the first wave. Further, I think the U.S. government will be in such disarray at that point that they will not do anything to stop the secession. As went the old Soviet Union in 1991, so will the American Imperium follow.

It is my pleasure to give this book a rating of **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**. By reading it one will get a lot of perspective and learn about the nuts and bolts of secession. You will also learn much about Vermont and its people. Frankly, if the

Professor and the Green Mountain Party actually get Vermont out of the Union I will very seriously consider moving there myself!

Copies of this book can be ordered direct from Xlibris and are also available on Amazon.com. I definitely suggest that any serious reader pick up a copy of this book for yourself. You will not be disappointed, it is very thought provoking.

I thank Professor Naylor for sending me a copy of his fine book. I thank him also for the frequent articles he sends our way. Keep them coming!

REVISITING DIFFERENCES

By Michael H. Brownstein

One day the nod of her head
slipped to one side
like a left handed knot:
Her first Sylvia Plath moment.
She invented unclean spirits
in all of those she loved,
her eyes collecting the essence of anger,
or evil, as if they were moss agate
gathering color from the rise
and fall of the tide.
When she crossed the Chicago River,
she slowed behind us thinking to jump:
but what if someone saves me
or the water is too cold.

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HUMANIMALS

By Bryan Buckingham

Human minds are not animal minds, there is a qualitative difference. I often hear statements broad with condemnations of humanity for such things as developing technology, manipulating the environment, or using logic in lieu of following the heart or instincts. Other statements seek a leveling of animal and man. There is much damage caused by such false notions and it all stems from two blurred lines: one between humans and animals, the other between the conscious and the subconscious.

Humans are classified taxonomically under *Homo sapiens sapiens*—a branch of Mammals, Primates, Hominoids, Homos, and *Homo sapiens*; however, humans are distinct from other animals by their rational minds. (I use the word “*rational*” or “*rationality*” not mental ability, memory, or intelligence to specify the mind’s capacity for reason—which is to create and manipulate *symbolic conceptions*.) Definitely, humans are not superior in anything but this rationality. Animals have better senses of sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch: the dog’s sense of smell, the eagle’s sight, the bull’s strength. Animals also process various information plugged into their nervous system by these senses or by programming from birth. However, animals are only labeled with intelligence by this processing ability and not as having any true reasoning.

Animals appear to have language, social relations, and use tools, but this is personification. The sounds creatures generate as “language” only communicate as a hot coal communicates—a stimulus/response that implants a memory for that stimulus/response. A grunt only represents something to us, to an ape it simply *is* something. A yelp of pain is the same as pain itself, and hearing a yelp communicates symbolically in the human mind, but for an ape it is only a sign stimulus that releases the appropriate response. Animals *do not* have true language. They can comprehend only that the letter “A” is directly connected to an

apple by pattern recognition. A sound produced by speaking the name “*Matt*” is directly connected to a person. A mother, or a mate, is a pattern—not a concept. When a duckling follows its mother we say “what devotion,” when a bird chirps and a mother responds with food we say “what love,” yet these are only programmed instincts and learned reactions dictating to animals what is good or bad—what will promote survival and what will not. Food is a smell and color; a car is a moving pattern, not a concept that encompasses the meaning of a car by its performance, use, or history. Tool use most likely comes about by chance, is remembered, and passed on by imitative behavior, but it is an aberrant occurrence in its rarity (that fact in itself should bring into question how much reasoning is involved). Animals only react to sensory cues, living in the moment, with simple memories and reactionary anticipations. There is a vast chasm between pattern recognition, or perception, and conceptualization. It is precisely this chasm that gives us rational thought.

Dr. Premack, a prominent animal behaviorist, has seemingly shown high level animals have understanding of causality, intention, and some concepts; but these are only apparent understandings (a leaf turning over before it rains appears to know something—*aspirin* apparently knows why you took it). In the experiments of a chimpanzee moving boxes under bananas that are out of its immediate reach, this “reasoning” is only a linear, point-to-point manipulation of two-dimensional cardboard constructs of memory. These are specific actions brought about by some “decision,” yet it is more plausibly an action that is similar to moving two pictures together into a larger picture, like a simple puzzle completed by pattern recognition. To reason is to gain *meaningful* representations, holographic-like representations, by continually questioning and relating sensory inputs with your learned memories. You can then close your eyes and still hold the concepts of your world, still reason and create.

It is romantic to think of animals as beautifully harmonious with nature, free from the lies and corruptions of man; yet, it doesn’t take much investigation to find lies,

deception, and injustice among animals. Surviving the harshness of life demands such things, but animals cannot judge their acts. If a creature’s nest is destroyed, the creature goes off and makes another. If finding itself too near a bigger creature, it again runs off to build elsewhere. Man has no such simplicity. In the book *How We Think* John Dewey writes, “It is only by courtesy, indeed, that we can say that an unthinking animal experiences an object at all—so largely is anything that presents itself to us as an object made up by the qualities it possesses as a sign of other things.” Even in early evolution such simplicity couldn’t be sustained, for when a man knows his house has been destroyed he asks questions and creates answers to act on. He may run from danger but he questions why, and who, and what, and begins analyzing a web of social concepts, like injustice, as defined by the culture in which he was raised and his own mind’s rational. Dewey also writes, “While the power of thought frees us from servile subjection to instinct, appetite, and routine, it opens to us the possibility of failures to which the animal, limited to instinct, cannot sink.”

Humans do have hardwired nervous system reactions to stimulus without thought and this is his only animal instinct; however, not only does human conceptualization take over the control of these instincts (except for physiological things like sweating or the beating of the heart), the human mind encompasses all instinct into rationality by its process of conceptualization. Therefore, any instincts become inseparable from the mind: fight/flight, caring for young, self-preservation all become conditions validated by the mind. Competitiveness may be an instinct but the mind sets up what is to compete or that nothing competes. A reaction of startlement may evoke subconscious fear; caring or love may be felt; still, it is the human mind that gives definition and then chooses what is to be feared or loved.

It is well established that animals can, and do, operate by: complex instincts, learned reactions to specific patterns, adaptation, imprinting, and conditioning. It is a mighty leap to say more. At best, animals can put together some patterns and remember them,

but they lack the mental capacity for conceptualization. A young undeveloped human mind is similar to an animal's mind for the first few years, but soon surpasses as simple symbols and perceptions gain enough depth to become true conceptions (conceptions that become nearly inseparable from the rationality produced by thinking about them, and from language—the specialized symbolic tool of the rational mind; so integral is language it becomes the chicken to the egg of concepts and thought). If the nature of man is the same as other creatures, the span of human consciousness must be a torturous aberration of evolution: making us not “the naked ape” but the insane ape. If man's capacity to define evil is evil itself, then nothing can be done at all, with every move a sin, every thought a self-destructive contradiction—this is useless thinking (about useless thinking).

The human mind has amazing ability, it works on every sensory input level; however it would be chaotic for a person to perceive all this in their consciousness at once. Man is not in opposition to his mind, even when the mind puts up many contrary points or when thoughts are processed without the person being aware. A person in a simple conversation is fully active in seeing, hearing, smelling, etc., and all those inputs are being processed by the rational mind touching off memories, judgments, questions, etc., most of which, out of necessity, are flying under the radar and seem mystical when they jump into consciousness as sudden intuition or emotion. This is the subliminal mind, the unconscious mind, or as I prefer, the *subconscious* mind—the second layer of the consciousness, neither irrational nor mystical.

As an example of this layering: what happens when a person learns to type? First, their conscious mind slowly assigns keys to fingers and to memory. Then they practice, train, rehearse the motor movements until the eyes can look at a page and the fingers move quicker than thought (conscious thought). This is the rational mind running on subconscious thought, which does not have to analyze all the reactions for it has already been programmed on how to react by the conscious. The person may forget a key and

have to bring the conscious back into focus by telling themselves—here is the letter “O,” now move your ring finger to push it. Then they go back to reading from the page they are typing and may even have to remind their conscious mind to let go, to quit thinking about the keyboard, and to let it flow.

Musicians, painters, and other artists learn how to let it flow but also they attach expressive values to sounds; colors, and so forth. The subconscious mind is fluid and the conscious mind more deliberate but both are needed—a cellist “playing from the heart” is not in opposition to his rational mind. To play the cello from conscious technique, and not the subconscious, would not be music; nonetheless, to play from the heart without any consciously trained technique would be noise. In addition, inspiration and spontaneous creativity are nearly filtered out by the slower, more deliberate conscious mind, though that doesn't negate the conscious mind being involved in setting up parameters for the subconscious to explore, and being the final judge of what comes into awareness.

Following the same training process, athletes and martial artists attach their values to things such as quick reflexive reactions, honor, and loyalty while devaluing the hindering concepts of fear and pain. Bruce Lee writes, “[The fighter] has given himself up to an influence outside his everyday consciousness, which is not other than his own deeply buried unconsciousness, whose presence he was never hitherto aware of.” This is the metaphor of mindlessness, often misused as mystical, because it is not performed from conscious awareness. Lee also writes, “One can never be the master of his technical knowledge unless his psychic hindrances are removed and he can keep his mind in a state of emptiness (fluidity)...” All skills or arts are accomplished this way whether or not they are physical movements or involve creativity and emotion.

How many times does the conscious mind have to be aware of the fact that hearing people yell makes it upset or that eating warm food flavored with cinnamon makes it feel good. How many memories like old home movies can a person hold? Yet,

important judgments of these experiences stay lodged in the mind and form the foundations of all feeling or intuition (updated and revised as the mind continually grows). Many emotions are confused for instincts, but emotions are value judgments (or call it forgotten reasoning) that encompasses all instincts—such as pain begetting fear or sex begetting happiness. Words such as “*soul*,” “*heart*,” and “*feelings*,” are not fanciful things, indefinable faiths, or some mystical generator of sentimentalities—they are tangible, rational values perceived beneath the threshold of awareness, through the subconscious, programmed by the values of the conscious mind.

Human nature is then, to utilize all understanding, to create technologies, and to manipulate the environment. Even the highly romanticized primitive man did these things, and people never claim a spear for fishing is bad technology, so when does it become so? Is it when nylon is manufactured, maybe it's the construction of the boat, the burning of gas, or the using of a net that captures every fish in the sea? Many people would judge scooping up all the fish at once to be an unhealthy act but that is not the technology's fault. Primitive men strived as human beings and did what they could—possibly hunting animals to extinction and destroying environments by irrigation and “controlled” burns. Primitive life was certainly harsher, though in some simpler societies it was possible to live with more freedom and happiness than today; however, this is only a failure of modern values, and of a more crowded and complex world. The burden of modern man is in direct proportion to the problems his mind has created; we have evolved and are still striving, yet many wish to disavow ability at this crucial moment, when technology is moving faster than most people can adapt, and the world is becoming so connected that few conflicts will remain isolated.

Any prevalent irrationality is a hindrance, more dangerous than our ancestors believing that the sun went around the earth and that rainbows were mystical. Any misunderstanding of the human mind is a weakening of human life, and the problems are multiplying, as the human race is itself, at an enormous rate. Unless defective,

human reasoning is set up in the mind at birth as a potential, but this potential will be gained only to the degree it is trained to reason. Currently many parents and schools treat that potential with disdainful regard. Treating worth as unconditional and undefined devalues all worth. Treating emotion as a hard-wired instinct or mystical revelation devalues all emotion. Treating a pet as a child devalues the human child. Parents shove children off on educators that treat young minds as only blank slates to be filled with facts, sculpted, and molded—forming culturally inoffensive robots, productive to the values of someone or something else. This is not human learning. Religions and Arts often gouge the potential of the human mind with phantasms created by human myths and faith, dividing emotion, and intuition from the rational mind that has created them. This is not living human.

In Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*, John Galt says: "Accept the irrevocable fact that your life depends upon your mind. Admit that the whole of your struggle, your doubts, your fakes, your evasions, was a desperate quest for escape from the responsibility of a volitional consciousness—a quest for automatic knowledge, for instinctive action, for intuitive certainty—and while you called it a longing for the state of an angel, what you were seeking was the state of an animal. Accept, as your moral ideal, the task of becoming a man..."

"Do not say that you're afraid to trust your mind because you know so little. Are you safer in surrendering to mystics and discarding the little that you know? Live and act within the limit of your knowledge and keep expanding it to the limit of your life. Redeem your mind from the hockshops of authority. Accept the fact that you are not omniscient, but playing a zombie will not give you omniscience—that your mind is fallible, but becoming mindless will not make you infallible—that an error made on your own is safer than ten truths accepted on faith, because the first leaves you the means to correct it, but the second destroys your capacity to distinguish truth from error. In place of your dream of an omniscient automaton, accept the fact that any knowledge man acquires is acquired by his own will and effort, and that that is his distinction in the universe, that is his nature,

his morality, his glory."

Then again, what a romantic world it will be when the *humanimals* survive to reminisce about the humans from which they evolved.

(Many opinions above may seem arrogantly related as fact when scientists are still debating the issues, however the intention is only to articulate my perspective for the reader to consider.)

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[EDITOR'S COMMENTS: Well, those of you who wanted a serious, non-political essay should be very satisfied with Mr. Buckingham's work. I think he gives a lot to think about and ponder, so I invite readers to comment on and/or criticize this work as they see fit. Overall, I find Mr. Buckingham's case to be quite sound. What do the rest of you think?]

RESPONSE FROM LAWRENCE JARACH

By Lawrence Jarach
E-Mail: blackbadger23@juno.com

Dear Ron:

Wow. Not one, but two responses directed at me in a single issue of TT, neither one particularly relevant or interesting as responses go. Stumm's "Comments for [me]" are barely coherent. Anarchists should be even less interested in the goings-on of the United (Dam) Nations than single states (as I wrote in my initial comments about his previous musings on war). But then Stumm does admit that he'd "love to be an anarchist" if only "anarchy weren't such an impossible, utopian, pipe-dream." What a pity for anarchists everywhere that a specimen like Stumm won't be joining our club; with co-conspirators like him... I shudder to think. The argument that humans are "hard-wired" for aggression, forever using "organized lethal force against outsiders" is just so much Hobbesian blather. How convenient for Stumm and

other fake libertarian-minded folks that this ideological perspective comes complete with the so-called solution to such essential human woes: the State. Of course Hobbes was in favor of monarchy, but that's both orthographically and politically close to Stumm's preferred type of state—a minarchy (talk about utopian). Since "states are a given" and since humans (at least males) are genetically mandated toward homicidal dominance, Stumm can't bring himself to be an anarchist. That's fine with me; we're better off without people like him even as half-hearted supporters.

Gurevich has nearly out-done himself with his "Reply to [me]." Not content with using a fairy tale to justify colonialism (the original nonsense to which I responded in the previous issue), this time around Nick reviews and comments on an obscure 60-year old allegorical work of fiction (a more modern fairy tale) to justify his pro-statist views. We are supposed to feel and believe in his sympathy and support for the Zionist project because of our hatred of anti-semitism (as portrayed in said story), thereby becoming convinced of the justice—nay, necessity!—of the existence of the State of Israel. This sort of common sense argument is best left for children and mental defectives.

We are also treated to his (following Arthur Koestler's) idiosyncratic definition of what it means to be a Zionist. By Gurevich's definition and logic, there were no real Zionists before 1948 (maybe they were just Stummian pipe-dreamers). What about the non-statist promoters of minority Jewish settlement in Palestine, like Judah Magnes or Martin Buber? What about Ahad Ha'am, who thought that the political hegemony of Jews in Palestine would be disastrous for both Jews and Arabs? What about Ze'ev Jabotinsky, who knew that Arab resentment against Jewish settlement in Palestine would cause prolonged violence (but who looked forward to it, as befitted his reactionary worldview)? I guess they weren't Zionists until the United Nations (again! Won't they ever go away?) Partition and Ben-Gurion's Declaration of Statehood. Yet all these men are embraced by the Zionist mainstream, both within the state of Israel and internationally, as great Zionist theoreticians and activists. By this same logic, since there

is no place called the State of Anarchy, with its own stamps and currency, where anarchists can move and settle permanently, there are no real anarchists to be found anywhere.

Just as we're better off without Stumm as an anarchist, we'd be better off without Gurevich as a logician.

For Anarchy,
Lawrence Jarach
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Berkeley, CA 94701

[EDITOR'S COMMENTS: Well, I would not have characterized Mr. Gurevich's and Mr. Stumm's replies as not being particularly relevant or interesting, but then again such matters are in the eyes of the reader. While I would not go so far as to declare Jim Stumm to be a 'fake libertarian,' I will say, as I have said before, that I think he is completely out of touch. Witness his berating my comments in which I was saying that the mighty American Imperium is not a free country by any stretch of the imagination. How can anyone in their right mind disagree? By saying that things are worse elsewhere? I never claimed that was not true. Add to that his unflinching support for the War on Iraq and, well, one has reason to wonder just where Stumm is coming from these days.

As for Gurevich, I think that you and he have made your respective positions quite clear to all interested. It is time to move on, many other issues of more merit to discuss. I do thank you for this reply and giving us all something to think about.]

HARBINGER, MOD

this is for the food critic
arising from the skillet
screaming exploding
"creepy feeling" nod

my black girlfriend & I
sitting by the window
and enjoying
modern jargon

the smell of lighter fluid
a faint cloud in the kitchen
would the fish
taste thus?

"talk to me about it"
she sighs
not against something
for but something

her [cactus bra]
two disjointed
closed subdisks
removed

getting a closer look
that day
up in the
Hollywood Hills

the six names
written on
the chalkboard.

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WHAT WISDOM LACKS...(PART II) THE CONTINUING SAGA OF SYLVIA THE VAMPIRE

By Ronald C. Tobin
E-Mail: guildmaster@worldnet.att.net

Hello once again, brave souls! Sylvia here, along with my daughter Jackie and a few friends here at the Motherhouse on Nob Hill. Some residents of this great city call this area Snob Hill, and they do have some justification. I must say, though, since the dot com bubble has burst, many of the so-called yuppies have gone broke and are leaving town. Well, that can happen when you do not invest with an eye to the future.

Enough of that CPA rubbish. It is the early morning of January 4th, a day that I will finally have my vengeance against the man who destroyed my life and my dreams, Thomas Wisdom. Granted, I recovered, and now I do enjoy being a vampire, but as I have said before I did not want the dark gift then. I still had a 'regular' life to live.

Strange how things have worked out, though. I mean, had Tom just killed me outright or had just extracted a pint and fucked me that night, I likely would not be here. That sounds silly, of course if he had killed me outright in 1969 the whole point

would be moot. I mean, so many people died of overdoses in the late 1960s in the cities like San Francisco I would have been another statistic. And, well, had Tom just taken a pint that night, no real harm done. I very likely never would have run into another vampire during my life. I would have been there for Jackie growing up, but then chances are I would have lost her to that stomach cancer a couple months back. Perhaps it could have been stopped early, no one here has that answer.

It's funny, but here we all are, sitting and talking in the spacious front parlor of the Motherhouse, just discussing normal issues. No one is speaking of the upcoming fight, and I think it needs to be addressed. I want my mind put at ease. I want to feel as confident as Jackie does. I want to burn with a passion like Terry does. I want to know that Tom is the one who will go down in the fight and that he will not longer press upon my thoughts and disturb my slumber. Perhaps I want too much?

Presently Patricia Ann Trent walks in with this strikingly handsome male Ruby vampire, who radiated enough power and poise that I guessed he was at least 1000 years old. Jackie looked at him and started mentally undressing him. "Shame on you, little girl," I thought to her. Jackie just looked at me and grinned.

"My friends," Patricia Ann said, "I have the singular honor of introducing Helmut Von Kielsruhe, visiting us from Germany where he has spent the vast majority of his thousand years in the darkness." The epitome of Old World manners, Von Kielsruhe bowed and acknowledged each of us in turn.

"This is basically a pleasure trip for me," Helmut stated. "Decided it was time to really see the world away from Europe. It is proving to be quite the education." Looking over at Jackie and me, he continued, "I came here to San Francisco at this time at the urging of Lady Maurana to witness this unusual protocol fight, which I am presuming will start in roughly twenty-two hours?"

Checking my watch, noting it was indeed 2 AM, I replied, "That is correct, good sir.

All of the necessary preliminaries and notifications have been made. Thomas Wisdom refused to suicide to apologize for having brought me across against my will, for making it impossible for me to raise my child, and for recklessly conducting a transformation on his own. As such, the trial by combat goes forward."

Helmut smiled softly and replied, "Your politeness shows fine manners, young lady, but please, just call me Helmut. That goes for everyone here, every vampire in this city for that matter." He pulled a couple vials of blood out of a tiny case in his jacket and handed one to Jackie and one to me. "Lady Maurana charged me specifically with making sure I handed these to you directly. Each vial contains 250 milliliters of blood from our recently departed 'leader,' Kristano Pa Anovas. She suggests you drink them just before you go down to The Crypt for the duel with Wisdom. Should give you both a power boost."

I simply politely murmured my thanks, being rather in awe of the gift, but Jackie, ever the bold one, asked Helmut, "Pray, why would she give us such a gift? Is this allowed by the protocols? I want a clean fight with Wisdom. I don't want anyone thinking we cheated. I want to defeat him fair and square, and I know we can."

Jackie's brashness brought out some low giggles from those in attendance, but Helmut took her very seriously and responded thusly, "Knowing that Aurea is your mother in darkness, I would say that your confidence in your abilities are completely justified. Absolutely so if you were in fact who we think you were several thousand years ago. However, yes, the gift of blood violates nothing, if some vampire wants to make a gift to Wisdom that is within their rights."

"But who would be so bloody stupid to do that?" Charles asked bluntly. "That guy is so irritating. He'll probably show up for the fight wearing a Dashiki shirt under a Nehru jacket with love beads! Probably hand out flowers to everyone, and say weird 60's stuff. Does he even HAVE any friends? Vampire or mortal?"

Helmut nodded politely and replied, "I am in

no position to answer anything about Mr. Wisdom. I do know that Maurana and Sybille and a whole bunch of other vampires want him wiped from the face of the Earth. What he did was just incredibly wrong. I doubt the fight will last more than ten minutes, unless you play with him, and I don't recommend that. Good way to let your guard down, which is a great way to simply get yourself destroyed."

"That's hardly enough time to work up a sweat, ten minutes," Jackie replied. She just radiated confidence and power, power beyond her status. Yes, her body may well say 'newborn,' but her mannerisms, style, confidence, they all say 'elder.' I am in awe of my true daughter, and that amuses Jackie.

We stayed and brainstormed and discussed and at times just chatted downstairs until about a half-hour before sunrise. I suggested to Jackie that some rest would likely be a good idea, and she agreed. Terri said she would meet us here shortly after sunset to finalize battle strategy, a notion that I thought made a great deal of sense. Must needs have a plan of attack, even though any general will tell you that a plan tends to change rapidly once the enemy is engaged, and Wisdom is certainly the enemy. If he can destroy us, he will.

As I settled myself in my cozy four-poster bed for my daily slumber, I heard the whisper of the blackout shades covering the windows of the great house. This whole place is solar-proof, as are the bed canopies and even the topsheet is a special weave that will protect us in an emergency. Ultimately, I have a large chest at the foot of my bed that I could seal myself into to protect myself from daylight. This was much better than what I did back when I was an independent in Los Angeles. There, I would often as not sleep in a closet, in a well-sealed basement, even in a car deep down in an underground parking garage. Ah, yes, the good old days.

As I drifted off into the incredibly deep slumber of the undead, I sensed Tom thinking about me. "Pleasant dreams, Syl," he thought with a snicker. "Be seeing you and your brat newborn kid later. I'll bathe in your blood. I'll eat your daughter's heart and make you watch. Oh, yeah, and I'll kick that totally uncool Sapphire bitch's ass!"

With my last spark of consciousness, I laughed and thought back, "Dream on, Tom. You are going down."

SAN FRANCISCO, Sunset, 4 January 2002: Thomas Wisdom awakens with the sunset, feeling refreshed and ready to smash some heads. Also thirsty, figures he'll off some homeless guy before the fight. "No one misses them uncool dudes, man," he says to himself. As speculated, he puts on his best Dashiki shirt, several strands of love beads, a Nehru jacket, and puts a few flowers in his hair. "I am just the coolest vampire in the world. Totally groovy."

Terry Tilburton, renegade Sapphire befriended by the Emerald and Ruby Orders, had been up for a couple of hours, sparring with Charles. "You are a very competent fighter, my dear. Lots of street sense and a controlled sense of chaotic flux. I know that sounds weird, but it is apt as a description of your style. It may appear you are acting chaotically, but there is method to everything that you do. Keep your temper under control and you will be fine."

Terry nodded, pleased at the compliment and mindful of the warning. "I will do my utmost best, Charles," she replied, "I very nearly lost it on the beach last night."

Charles nodded and said, "We all came close, Terry. Wisdom has no idea how close he came to just being destroyed where he stood. No one would have blamed us, though I do get the impression that Sylvia and Jackie would have been sorely disappointed. I give them a lot of respect, you know. It takes a lot of guts to do what they are about to do. It is also wise that they accepted your offer of aid. I know Jackie is ultra-confident and very powerful, but she is a newborn just the same. Psychically powerful but she will have to be careful with her body. It takes a year for the body to fully transform, it does not matter who brings you across, how old they were, or whether or not you were a vampire in a previous incarnation."

Terry nodded and looked at her watch. "I best be going over to the Motherhouse. Promised Jackie and Sylvia that I would be there shortly after sunset to discuss strategy.

Thanks for everything, Charles." She then walked over and gave him a big hug and then a long, passionate kiss. The love the two felt for each other showed passionately in their eyes.

"I think I heard a mortal in Arizona years ago use a word that really says how I feel about you, Terry," Charles stated.

"What word would that be, love?" Terry asked, smiling broadly.

"Twitterpated," Charles replied. "It means an all over marvelous feeling from your head to your toes. I like it."

"It does seem apt," Terry said, then she kissed him again. "I'll see you after the fight."

Sylvia here once again, my friends. I slept fitfully after those first few hours of oblivion. I am already down to three hours of that. I wonder if Jackie gets that at all. Well, if she doesn't, then she must not need it. Frankly, she is not even as thirsty as I am. If I don't get at least four pints a week the blood craving will drive me nuts. Not Jackie, oh no. Aurea had to tell her point blank that she has to drink four to five pints a week so that her body transforms properly. The drawback of being an 'elder' in a newborn body, I suppose. Must ask Francesca DeWitt what she goes through, having been a vampire before for several thousand years and right now she has less years in the darkness than I do. That has to be really weird.

Enough of this. I can hear Jackie talking excitedly with Aurea and Paulina Van Trent, and not about the impending fight to the death just hours away. They are talking about, of all things, shoes. I quickly get dressed and join them in the small alcove, a place filled with comfortable chairs surrounding a small table. As usual, Jackie gave me a hug. This time, Aurea did as well. Paulina nodded politely.

"Anyway, after the battle I want to get myself a pair of stiletto pumps with a three inch heel," Jackie said to Aurea. "I think those would look so great on me when we

go out dancing and club prowling,"

"You do have great legs, dear," Aurea said. "And among the great advantages of being a vampire is that you don't have to worry about weakening your hamstrings and screwing up your feet."

"That is so," Paulina opined, "but they do make an awful clacking sound. Very hard to be stealthy in them. Have to rely more on the illusions, and there are those mortals who can see through them. Give me a pair of comfortable, low heel shoes any day."

Suffice it to say I was amazed that, with a death battle approaching, anyone could just sit calmly and talk about such a mundane topic as shoes! Jackie saw the scowl on my face, smiled and said, "It's not that we are not taking the fight seriously, Mom. It is just that we have truly done everything we can do to prepare, save to brainstorm some strategy when Terry gets here. There is little else to do besides present ourselves at The Crypt well before midnight, send Wisdom into the great oblivion, and then really start enjoying being vampires!"

"I just wish I had your confidence, Jackie," I said softly. "I feel so divided, my mind tells me that we will prevail and it will be all over with fairly soon. I need this closure and, beneath all that brashness and bluster, I am sure that you need this closure too."

"Actually, I think the entire Bay Area vampire community needs this closure," Aurea stated. Looking at me, she continued, "I know that people back then were shocked when you just left the City and headed to Los Angeles. Folks figured you would want to settle scores with Tom right then and there. There were people just dying to have a crack at him. You did not have to go independent and then get threatened by the roving goon squads after Victor was annihilated."

I let out a big sigh, then said, "in hindsight I can see that what I did choose to do was not really the best option. However, given the state of mind I was in, little else made sense. I did stay with Tom for a couple years, and he did not introduce me to many other vampires. Those that he did have me meet were at least as warped as he was, just

different. I did not want the company of vampires. When I left San Francisco for good in 1971, I swore just to be an independent predator and bide my time until I felt ready to try and settle the score with Tom. Frankly, that lifestyle worked reasonably well for me for the better part of thirty years. Victor's destruction, and now this absurd 9/11 mortal rubbish, has changed things. Now, well, I see advantages with being closely aligned with the Order, and I am pleased with how things are going now."

At that point Terry walked into the room and sat down. "Hope that I did not miss anything important," she said with a smile.

"Naw, we were just talking about shoes and Mom was reminiscing about why she went independent after leaving Tom," Jackie replied. "Guess we should be forming a battle strategy."

"Well, this is what we know about Tom Wisdom's pedigree," Paulina said as she pulled a laptop computer out of her briefcase. Data filled the screen as she punched a few keys and brought up various records. "He was born on 14 August 1854 in New York City. He and his family relocated to San Francisco in 1867. Even as a mortal he was a scoundrel and a low life, cheated at cards and was banned from several local casinos. In July of 1880 he met up with then 285 year old Ruby Vampire Albert Rains who had, at that point, been a vampire for 252 years. He transformed Tom at his request and adhered to all points of that protocol."

"I guess that means we can't blame Tom's bad manners on his father in darkness," Jackie said. This got a chuckle from all assembled, including yours truly.

"Well, what this basically means is that Tom falls into the standard category for the powers one would expect a Ruby to possess after 120 years away from the sun. His faults are legion, though: he is deceitful to a fault, he has an ego so huge no one else can approach it, he desperately wants to recreate his heyday of the 1960s when he really was the 'king' of Golden Gate Park, and he is not the least bit sorry for breaking the rules and bringing you across against your will,

Sylvia. A friend of mine, long since slaughtered by a vampire hunter, told me that he thought the whole issue was hilarious. 'When she begged me to kill her during the transformation purge, man, that was just too funny,' Wisdom allegedly said."

A small sob escaped me at that statement. "I did ask him to kill me during the transformation purge. It was right when the milk started pouring from my breasts and I realized that I would no longer be able to care for my child that I had no desire to go on. He just laughed and said 'I already killed you once tonight, baby. Would be truly uncool to do it twice.' What an absolute asshole that guy is."

We wrapped up the briefing and then Jackie, Terry, and me left the Motherhouse and started brainstorming about tactics. I must admit I was somewhat shocked at how vicious Jackie and Terry wanted to be. They wanted to take their time and tear Tom to pieces, make him suffer a lot before dispatching him into the great beyond. I argued for a quick dispatch so that we would not have to listen to him prattle on endlessly about how great he was, how I should be grateful to him for the precious gift that he gave me, and so on. In the end, we agreed to play it by ear and pay attention.

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Time just flies by when momentous events are about to take place. I am very nervous. Jackie, on the other hand, is very calm and collected. She is masking her vast innate powers so that she appears to Tom as nothing more than a simple newborn. As for Terry, well she looked fierce. She even put on some body paint to look even meaner, which I understand is an old psychological warfare gambit that many Sapphires will use in a battle situation.

Just before we arrived at The Crypt, club now all nice and cleaned up and ready to reopen in about a week, Jackie and I gulped down the blood gift from Maurana. Terry gulped down a similar vial of Aurea's blood. The security people were all over the place, none but the combatants and the five hooded observers (whose names and faces were unknown to us) would be allowed inside while the fight took place. Indeed, Order Security had been completely overhauled in the aftermath of Victor's demise. The door guard recognized us and waved us through.

The interior of The Crypt was suitably gloomy. The Goths would just love this place once again when it reopened. All the damage had been taken care of. Over the stage and extending well into the dance floor area our dueling arena was set up. Various objects and weapons were scattered about it, which really brought the reality of all this home to me. "This is really happening," I said under my breath. We are really fighting Tom to the death tonight."

Jackie just looked at me and raised an eyebrow. "A gift to you, Mom," she said. "After tonight, the nightmare ends. I think we should cut Terry in for a third of the take when we liquidate Wisdom's assets."

That made me laugh. "Of course, dear, provided assets is one of those things that Wisdom does not lack." Jackie and Terry laughed at that one.

Probably more pithy comments would have been made about what Wisdom lacks had he not arrived at that point, right on time at a quarter of Midnight. Sure enough, he really was wearing a Dashiki shirt, love beads, and one of those truly awful Nehru jackets. He tried to give one of the hooded observers a flower, but said vampire refused it. "You

cats must be pigs, man, because only pigs don't like flowers," Wisdom muttered.

The Master of the Fight, also hooded, told us to come down into the arena. As the accused breaker of the protocols, Wisdom occupied the center spot in the arena. I chose stage left, Jackie took stage right, and Terry took the outside wall, so we were arranged in a triangle against Wisdom.

At five minutes before Midnight, the outer doors to the club were bolted shut. The Master then asked if any of us had anything we wanted to say for the record before the fight was to commence. Jackie and Terry declined, I declined, but Wisdom did not, which of course surprised absolutely no one.

"Look, I just want to say this is totally uncool. I mean, if Syl did not enjoy being a vampire, why is she still here thirty-three years after I so graciously gave her the dark gift. I made sure her true daughter was cared for. And this is the thanks I get? Man, some folks just don't know when they have it good. Now, you want to rid the world of Wisdom? Well, baby girl, kiss your true daughter, your scum Sapphire friend, and yourself goodbye. I'll eat your hearts before this is all said and done."

Presently the clock chimed Midnight. The Master said, "this is a fight to the death. No quarter is to be asked for or will be granted. Let the combat decide which party is in the right on this issue." He bowed and left the field. A gong sounded and, fangs bared, we all went at it.

They speak of time dilation during fights where one's existence is on the line. Seconds seem like minutes. I do see the truth of that. As I suspected, Wisdom is rushing towards me, totally ignoring Jackie and Terry at the moment. He leaped to pounce on me, but I bounced out of the way and then a well thrown knife from Terry sliced open his right side and a well projected thought pattern from Jackie had literally set his hair on fire. Fire is the one thing vampires fear greatly. Unlike other injuries, it can take weeks or months to heal.

Tom fell to the ground in a heap, howling in rage and pain. "Madness!" he shouted. "How does a newborn know how to handle

fire attacks competently?" He put the fire in his hair out, and took a good look at Jackie. "Fucking hell – a returned elder!" And that was the last statement Tom would ever utter.

Terry and I watched in amazement as Jackie simply used psychic energy and tore Wisdom's arms and legs off and set them ablaze, tore off his penis and set it blaze, all the time Tom laid there, screaming incoherently, utterly unable to move. She even cauterized the wounds with flame so that they would not start regenerating.

That done, Jackie turned to me and said, "Go ahead and break his breastbone and wrench out his heart and eat it. Then, let's have Terry cut his head off. Sound fair?"

I did not say a word. I just lunged at Tom and smashed his breastbone and took out his still beating heart. Then, I took a giant bite out of it. Tom lurched once, then finally fell silent. Terry swiftly chopped off Tom's head with a finely crafted machete. After which the gong sounded again, signaling that the fight was over. Total actual time of the duel: eight minutes.

The Master of the Fight handed me a torch and I burned what was left of my 'creator,' Tom Wisdom. "I guess cool don't rule no more, Tommy," I whispered. Jackie and Terry just nodded.

Presently the doors to the club were opened and a throng of vampires and affiliated mortals rushed in, cheering loudly, chanting "Wisdom has left the planet! Wisdom ain't groovy no more! What Wisdom lacks is a body and a mind!" It was a bit overwhelming. I was still absorbing the fact that we had just managed to destroy the man who destroyed my old life thirty-three years ago. I was awash with conflicting emotions. Not so with Jackie, oh no. She was just so proud of herself, and frankly she had every right to be. The fight would have been far more difficult without her. I just hugged her and whispered, "Thanks, honey." Then I hugged Terry as well.

The revelry at the club lasted until the hour prior to dawn. As to dividing up Wisdom's possessions, once the fight had ended Paulina Van Trent had sent people to his place and she has promised a complete list

by the end of the week. Doubt it will amount to all that much, but we shall see.

So, my dears, that is the end of the story of Tom Wisdom. I know I will sleep better this morning knowing that he is no longer here to heckle me. The breach has been sealed. Perhaps now I can really love again. I know I will smile more often, laugh more freely. I am ready for the adventure now.

Until the next time, my friends, pleasant dreams and, don't lack what Wisdom lacks now – a heart, a mind, a body...

WHERE I ONCE WAS...

By Jonakan Quess

You protect me like a princess
My silver knight...
You lay by my side & hold me safe
while giving me kind kisses of sweetness
you place my worrying face in your hands
and whisper words of poetry to sooth my fear

Your lips still speak through me
I close my eyes...
And my heart holds your songs so dear
that I'm left with the nothing of watching
you and your song as you say good bye
leaving me everywhere but here

COSMOLOGY AND THE LAW OF PARSIMONY

By Sam Aurelius Milam III
1510 North 22nd Drive
Show Low, Arizona 85901

Thursday, April 13, 1995
Revised Friday, November 22, 1996

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caveat lector

In the Beginning

Presumably, the universe began with a bang¹ and will end with a whimper². The presumed expansion of the universe points back to this explosive beginning. Entropy, the incurable cosmic disease, portends the time when there won't be any more energy gradients by which any thermodynamic process can operate. Since, presumably, all creatures in the universe are heat-engines, members of a regimen that arose in the steep energy gradients of the beginning, it follows that all life looks forward to the eventual energy death of the universe.

This cosmology has a certain anthropomorphic charm, but lacks the elegance of simplicity and the satisfaction of common sense. Also, there are various observed phenomena which suggest that it might be incomplete, if not actually in error.

- The spectrum of light from distant stars has shifted toward lower frequencies. The further away we are from the light source, the more pronounced is the observed red shift. We know there's a red shift, because we can see it. The accepted explanation of this red shift is that it is a Doppler effect, analogous to the changes in perceived pitch of a tone according to whether the source of the tone and the listener are approaching one another, or receding from one another. There are, of course other possible explanations for the red shift.

- A consequence of the Doppler explanation of the red shift is the presumption that all of the matter in the universe is flying apart, and that the more distant it is from us the faster it is moving away from us. This suggests the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe. However, recent calculations of the age of the universe, using data obtained from the Hubble telescope,³ suggest the age of the universe to be about 8-12 billion years. Sadly for the Big Bang theory, a typical estimate of the age for a star is 15 billion years, which makes many stars appear to be older than the universe. How these stars managed to

¹ Conventional cosmology

² *The Hollow Men* [1925], Thomas Stearns Eliot [1886-1965]

³ These calculations were done by Wendy Freedman, of the Carnegie Observatories in Pasadena. They were reported by Paul Hoffman, of Discover Magazine, on the MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour on April 11, 1995.

survive the cataclysmic beginning of the universe is only one of the various problems which arise from this discrepancy.

- There is also the puzzling problem of the missing mass.⁴ That is, 90% of the mass expected by theoreticians to exist in the universe cannot be found. I don't know why they expected so much mass, but they previously speculated that it was tied up in the form of dark bodies, dwarf stars, or perhaps nebulae, which were merely difficult to observe. Recent research using the Hubble telescope has not revealed these dark accumulations of matter. Apparently, they do not exist.

- Supernovae can radiate, for a few days, with more power than an entire galaxy. No satisfactory explanation for such power is readily available.

- What keeps all matter in the universe from eventually ending up in a black hole?

A consideration of these kinds of questions tends to foster the suspicion that the theoreticians might be wrong about a few things.

Assume for a Moment

I've been pondering these kinds of things since the early '60s, when I was in high school. I've continued to ponder them to the present day, and along the way I've developed several opinions regarding the universe. Presented in this essay are some of those opinions. They're based on intuition, hunches, and even a little formal education which, hopefully, didn't result in too much brain damage while I was in college.

I believe conventional cosmology begins from erroneous assumptions.

- There isn't any reason to assume that the red shift is a Doppler effect. There are other things that can explain a red shift.

- If there isn't a Doppler effect, then there isn't any reason to assume that the universe is expanding.
- If the universe isn't expanding, then there isn't any reason to assume that it had a beginning.

- There isn't any reason to assume that the

processes that we observe in the universe are the only processes by which the universe operates. Observable processes are more likely to be discovered, but not necessarily more likely to exist.

- If we assume that the universe didn't have a beginning, and if we assume that there are unobserved processes in the universe, then there might well be unobserved and unsuspected processes by which the universe will continue to last forever.

- Present cosmology is way too complicated.

- Present cosmology places an excessive reliance on complex mathematics, which has been inappropriately elevated to the status of proof. Mathematics doesn't prove anything. It only describes things.⁵

Present cosmology is a classical example of the answers only serving to further complicate the questions and confuse the questioners. Complex and obscure theories such as extra dimensions, curved or warped space, relativistic effects of gravity, and expanding universes are necessary to explain observed phenomena because of the need to accommodate erroneous assumptions.

Ockham's Razor

To understand the universe, we ought start with the universe itself, and not with rigorous equations and complex theories. Understanding proceeds from observation, imagination, and intuition. It can be formalized mathematically afterward, if that is even desirable, by people with the talents and mentality best suited to that job.

The first thing that is needed is a different set of assumptions. They must allow other, and simpler, explanations of the observed phenomena. Such assumptions might provide a very different view of the universe, with very different conclusions. Here is such a set of assumptions.

- The red shift is exactly what it appears to be: the light has decreased in frequency as it has traveled. The further it has traveled the more frequency has decreased.

- The geometry of space is Euclidean, without warps, curves, discontinuities, or other peculiar phenomena.

- Gravity doesn't distort space. It only deflects the direction of travel of matter.

- The universe never began and it will never end. It is eternal.

- The universe doesn't have physical limits of extent, that is, boundaries. It is infinite in three linear, mutually perpendicular directions.

These assumptions are inherently simpler than those presently accepted, and lead to a much simpler and saner universe.

Yin and Yang

Gravity is one of the two fundamental, opposite, and parallel processes by which the universe operates and by which it is maintained forever. However, the way that this happens isn't obvious and has never been directly observed. I originally deduced the existence of the process as an explanation for the red shift. However, the explanation also fits neatly into the simple and sane cosmology that I advocate.

As photons travel, they lose energy along the way. A photon cannot lose kinetic energy in the sense that a flying pebble or planet might. The only kind of energy a photon can lose and remain a photon is the energy that we perceive as its light frequency. This loss of energy therefore results in a reduction in frequency, which we see as the red shift. These energy loss events are spontaneous, like radioactive decay. They have an extremely low probability of occurrence. However, given a potentially infinite number of objective years of travel time, the energy loss events can and do occur. I don't claim to understand the mechanism. I'm happy to leave that as an exercise for the physicists.

These energy loss events are characterized by the transformation of energy into an extremely small quantity of matter. Each time such an event occurs, the energy of a photon is reduced and primal matter is deposited in space. The particle of primal matter is obviously quite small, and corresponds to the lost energy represented by the reduction in frequency of the light.

⁴ This was also reported by Paul Hoffman on the same segment of the MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour.

⁵ See my essay *There's An Arrow In The Logic -or- Who Says Pie Are Square?*

As the red shift occurs over vast distances of intergalactic space, primal matter is strewn thinly along the photon's path, replenishing the eternal universe.

When photons deposit particles of primal matter throughout the universe, gravity is the force that is inherent in these particles. It is the force that brings them together into pebbles, planets, stars, and galaxies. The deposition of these particles by photons and their accumulation by gravity is the process by which the consequences of entropy are reversed, so that the energy death of the universe never occurs.

Entropy is the other of the two fundamental, opposite, and parallel processes by which the universe operates and by which it is maintained forever. Within stars, accumulated matter is converted to energy and dispersed throughout the universe.

The two processes of entropy and gravity are all that is needed for an eternal universe, with neither beginning nor end. Given unlimited time, all matter will eventually fall into a star. Given unlimited time all light will eventually be precipitated as primal matter. There are, however, a few interesting sidelights to this process.

The Black Sky At Night

I have asserted that the universe is Euclidean and infinite. Given a simple, three-dimensional Euclidean universe of infinite extent, the night sky ought to be white, not black. This is because regardless of which direction you look, there ought to be a star in that direction if you just look far enough. There are at least two things that can explain the black night sky that we observe, and both of them are consequences of my interpretation of the red shift.

First, there might be something between you and the star toward which you are looking. The further you look, the more of it there might be in the way. Look far enough, and you will see mostly the shaded part of whatever is in the way. What is in the way is tiny particles of primal matter. It isn't surprising that they might hide the distant universe if you consider that, according to that estimate that I mentioned earlier, we're talking about 90% of the matter in the

universe.

Second, the further light travels, the more primal matter it deposits and the further its frequency is reduced. Eventually, its frequency is reduced to the point where the next particle of primal matter reduced the light frequency to zero, and the photon disappears.

These two phenomena define the visual "horizon" of the universe, beyond which we cannot see. Within this range, we see the bodies and material that reside within the universe. Beyond this "horizon" the universe continues forever, but we cannot see it. However far our descendants may travel, they will never approach this "horizon." It is eternally unattainable. Any observer will always be at the exact center of the observable universe.

Black Holes

What keeps all matter in the universe from eventually falling into a black hole? After all, the inability of energy to escape from a black hole prevents the dispersal of energy. Entropy is thus prevented from functioning, interrupting the eternal process of the universe. There must be some way for energy to get back out, or (given infinite time) the universe will eventually be devoid of all matter except for one black hole. It's obvious that we need to consider black holes.

What would the universe look like to a black hole? This question can be answered intuitively by considering gravity.

Gravity is a conservative force. Therefore, every scrap or particle of anything that erupts from the "surface" of the body within a black hole falls back to that surface with exactly the same energy that it had when it erupted. Thus, looking up, a black hole would "see" the universe as a perfect reflector. This leads to an interesting intuitive model of a black hole, viewed as an idealized process.

Consider a black hole to consist of a spherical reflector facing inward with a "kernel" at its exact center. As an idealization, regard the kernel as having a diameter in the conventional sense, and the

reflector as having an effective radius at some distance above the surface of the kernel. Of course, the kernel might not have a real surface, and the reflector is only a convenient way of thinking about the effect of the gravity field around the black hole, but just bear with me.

Assume, for the sake of simplicity, that we can consider the material in the black hole, whether it is matter or energy, to be just material. This material can then occupy one of only two regions. It can reside within the kernel, or it can exist in the region between the surface of the kernel and the surface of the reflector.

In fact, material will be continually erupting from the surface of the kernel. This is true because the kernel will be quite hot. Whether or not there is any nuclear process at work is irrelevant. No energy can escape from the black hole, so all the energy that it had when it became a black hole will still be there, plus all the energy accumulated from captured debris, some of which will be stars or possibly galaxies. The thing will be hot.

Material that erupts from the surface will exist for a time in the region between the kernel and the reflector. It will go up, reflect from the reflector, and return to the kernel. This process will be quite dynamic, with material constantly travelling up and down.

Density near the center of the black hole will be high. This is the region that I view in my intuitive model as (approximately) a kernel. Density near the reflector will be low. There will be a density gradient between the two extremes. The overall density will depend on the effective diameter of the black hole, as determined by the dynamic interaction of the kernel and the reflector, and the total mass of the black hole. The total mass will be nearly constant, but will increase with time as debris falls past the reflector from outside.

Incidentally, this addition of material from outside the reflector means that the reflector will not, after all, appear to the black hole as a perfect reflector. It will appear as a better than perfect reflector, because it will radiate back at the kernel more material than it receives from the kernel. That is, it will be both a perfect reflector and a source. However, I digress.

Given sufficient time, and we have infinite time at our disposal, a random fluctuation might result in more material going up than down at some instant. A slight decrease in the overall density of the black hole will result. This is because the surplus of material going up will increase the effective radius of the total material contained within the black hole without changing the total mass. The slight decrease in overall density will cause a minute decrease in the steepness of the gravitational field gradient. This will cause the effective radius of the reflector to increase, allowing for more material to reside for longer above the kernel. It's reasonable to speculate that this little surplus in material going up might be followed by a surplus in material going down. If a greater than normal amount of material impacted the kernel at a moment in time, the effect would be to increase the effective density of the black hole. This would increase the steepness of the gravitational field gradient and pull the reflector in.

Given enough time, a permanent oscillation might result from such random variations. Each time there is an excess of material moving out, the reflector will retreat further from the kernel. Each time there is an excess of material moving in, the reflector will collapse toward the kernel. This oscillation might continue for eons, and will be invisible from outside the black hole until one of two things happens.

Maybe the reflector will move so far from the kernel and allow so much of the material in the black hole to momentarily reside above the surface of the kernel, that the gravitational gradient will be unable to contain it. Then the reflector will effectively shatter. Maybe the reflector will move so close to the surface of the kernel that it will momentarily dive below the surface. Either situation will release all or part of the contents of the black hole into the universe, in the form of a supernova. This is how a supernova can outshine an entire galaxy. This is also how the total material of the universe doesn't eventually end up trapped in a black hole.

Eternal Reformation

These explanations are, of course, entirely intuitive. I don't regard that as a deficiency. I don't see any reason to assume that understanding must be based on complex theory, devious assumptions, or excruciating mathematical acrobatics. That approach results more in job security and ego boost for cliquish specialists than it does in understanding. The last thing this world needs is a Pontiff of Science. I believe instead that the universe is fundamentally

understandable and entirely accessible to all of us. Any theory too complex for ordinary people to understand is a flawed theory. Simplicity in science, as in other things, is one of the Great Virtues.

THE 'GREAT' BREAST DEBATE!

By Ronald C. Tobin
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Well, here in the puritanical American Imperium, one of the great bread and circuses rituals, if not THE greatest of such, is the Super Bowl game. This game features the alleged championship teams from the AFC and the NFC of American football (not to be confused with what the rest of the world calls football, that is known in the Empire as soccer), a game that millions wager on and millions more watch on television. Well, every Super Bowl has an extravagant half time show. This year, one of the headliners was Janet Jackson (sister of Michael Jackson) and she performed a duet with Justin Timberlake. During this song, Timberlake was to remove part of Janet's blouse over her right breast, which was supposed to remain covered by a lacy red bra. That is what we are told the intention was, anyway.

What really happened depends on whom you believe. What the audience saw (I did not see this until the day after on the Internet, as I try not to watch football on TV, especially the Super Bowl) was Timberlake tear off Jackson's blouse over her right breast, and the red bra also came off, thus revealing said breast in its entirety, save for the fact that Jackson was wearing a nipple shield. Now, Jackson insists this was nothing more than a wardrobe malfunction. Many people, myself included, think this alleged malfunction was in fact intentional, but I do not think that Timberlake was in on it. He looked shocked and baffled by the whole incident.

Be that as it may, if this happened in any other Western nation little would have been said about it, but this is the Imperium, baby, and Puritanism still rules supreme. People contacted the FCC, claiming to have been

scandalized by the incident and insisting that the Imperial Police State take action to guard the public morality against such indecency. So now the FCC is trying to crack down on all broadcasting, radio and TV, and broadcasters are running scared. The FCC is trying to get Congress to pass new laws allowing them to levy harsher fines for public indecency on the airwaves. They are even going after so-called shock jocks like Howard Stern. I have never liked Stern, but he and I are on the same side as regards this issue.

Friends, this assault on open expression and free speech on the airwaves must be stopped, and the best way to do that (short of abolishing the government itself, a fine idea as I see it) is to abolish the FCC. People should be able to broadcast whatever they wish for whatever reason they care to. Don't like it? Then don't listen or don't watch! The 'children' need to be protected? Then pay attention to what your children are listening to and watching. Accept responsibility for yourself. We all know the value in that. It is high time that the population at large did the same. Puritanical intolerance should have been ended a long time ago, but in fact it remains alive and well here in the Imperium.

CLOSING COMMENTS

By Ronald C. Tobin, Editor & Publisher

I had hoped to have this issue to the printer on or about April 15th. Well, it is April 21st and it will be at the printer on the 22nd and mailed out this weekend, so we are finally having an issue go out during the second month on the masthead anyway. My goal is to get the May/June issue out well before Memorial Day (and that issue will have several Small Press Reviews, my apologies once again to **Psionic Plastic Joy** among others) and that will position me to get the July/August issue out in late June, which would then put us back on schedule! That will be a marvelous day.

I am going to be visiting Southern California with my lady Shelley from May 15th thru the 22nd. Was able to get a super low air fare into Orange County (\$67 round trip taxes included) and it is high time Shelley met some of my friends. Should be a fun experience, I may well write something about it.

So, keep sending in material for consideration, and thanks for all your support!