

*The Knarley Knews* -- Issue 134  
Published in June, 2009

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**Art Credits**

Artist	Page(s)
Sheryl Birkhead	7
Brad Foster	Cover
Alexis Gilliland	24
Terry Jeeves	3, 18
Joe Mayhew	6, 22, 23
Scott Patri	15
William Rotsler	11, 23

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1. All contributions may include a pseudonym (e.g. Knarley, Sydrous, Shit-for-Brains) at the contributor's whim.
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4. It is the editors' policy not to unduly censor or restrict the ideals of free speech. (We like a good argument as much as the next guy.) However, we reserve the right to make minor content and format changes to fit your piece in or to add appropriately denoted editorial comments.
5. Contributions are currently acceptable using the following computer formats.  
PC: Virtually any format  
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The editorial board is:

Henry L. "Knarley" Welch -- Editor  
Letha R. "Mom" Welch -- Layout Editor

All comments/requests should be sent to:

*The Knarley Knews*  
18345 Skyline Blvd.  
Los Gatos, CA 95033 USA  
(408)395-3739  
knarley@welchcastle.com OR  
<http://tkk.welchcastle.com/>



**Next Issue Deadline: August 10, 2009**

# Editorial

(In which Knarley gets to spume!)

Welcome to the mid-summer issue of *The Knarley Knews*. I'm not feeling particularly chatty so this will be a rather short editorial.

I'd like to thank everyone for their convention suggestions over the last year. Sooner or later we'll start attending conventions again, but it doesn't seem to be working out for us based on time, budget, and inertia. We've been putting a lot of time into trying to find a house to buy - which eats up a lot of our weekends. The inventory in our price range is a bit thin and the quality, school district, and commute issues are quite variable. We'd like to be able to take advantage of the low market and the low interest rates, but we aren't going to purchase the first house that looks like it may work. There is also the issue of the down payment, which may not be problematic as it looks like we won't be selling our Wisconsin home this summer, and this keeps our equity tied up.

For possibly the first time I managed to celebrate the World Wide Party properly on the 21st. I always have the greatest intentions, and then forget. This year I finally have a Blackberry device and I was able to program a reminder with an alarm so that I was able to, promptly at 2100 local time, toast the east, north, south, and west as required by the ritual. Special thanks go out to Dale Speirs for routinely reminding me of this event.

It is hard for me to comprehend that I've been in California now for over a year. The time has gone by so fast and the lack of clearly defined seasons has my midwestern rhythms completely out of whack. We are already in the brown season again and it isn't likely to rain again until September or October. To me this seems very alien. I suppose that in a few years the idea of snow and winter will seem wrong as well.

Our nine-year-old cat, Cheetah, finally got put down earlier this month. I've written many times about him and his litter mate and their digestive problems. Cheetah's litter mate, Freaky was put down about two years ago after he litterly wasted away to nothing because he could no longer metabolize his food. Cheetah held on longer, but routinely barfed, almost on a daily basis. Letha came out one morning and found his largely unresponsive. We knew his time was close as he was all fur and bones, but it was rather a shock. According to the vet, he suffered a stroke and was blind and barely alive by the time she managed to collect the kids from school and get Cheetah to the vet. The children were able to say goodbye.



We had him cremated and put in an urn because the children did not want to bury him on the rental property.

The local county park finally changed its dog rules. A few years ago people complained that dogs were environmental hazards on trails due to their poop and pee. (I don't see how this compares to other animals, e.g. Canadian Geese, which can completely crap all over a field with no one to clean up after them. Well, anyway, the county park has finally realized that responsible dog owners, armed with poop bags, are quite capable of mitigating the hazards and now many of the trails are now open to dogs on a leash. This makes it easier for us to take walks and to bring Skippy along.

I still haven't taken the Patent Bar Exam. The reasoning is a bit complicated, but boils down to my wanting to take the exam right after my final studying push, which will take 60 or more hours. It seems to be a lot of hurry up and wait. You can't take the exam until the Patent Office approves your application. This requires proof of sufficient hard science education (e.g. a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering) and that requires an official transcript. So that has to be ordered. By now you should get the picture. I've finally jumped through all those hoops and I now have a three month window, from June 18th to September 18th to take the exam. Now for the dreadfully dull studying and practice exams. As I've said for years "it is just another damn test." I just wish it wasn't one I have to take so much time out of my life to take.

My OPT-IN plan is off to a slow start, but it is growing. The electronic roster is up to six, with a number outside the U.S., which really cuts down on my mailing costs. This is encouraged, but not required. As long as you keep meeting my contact requirements (once every six months) then you will continue to get issues as long as I keep doing them. Thanks.

# The Tao of Happiness

Alexis Gilliland

*The following essay was inspired by Joshua Wolf Shenk's article "What Makes Us Happy" in the June 2009 issue of The Atlantic.*

Morrie the critic took a sip of green tea. "Happiness is like health," he said pensively. "Each being a state of which you are made aware by its absence. Or you could define happiness as psychological health."

I filled my own cup and stirred in sugar. "Well maybe, maybe not. We humans evolved to be healthy, the sickly and unfit dying out before they could reproduce. Are you saying we also evolved to be happy? A strong case could be made that children cause unhappiness, with more anecdotal evidence that you could shake a stick at."

"You do have a point, Max, a definite point," he replied at last. "Relying on Nietzsche, children could be a case of what doesn't kill me makes me stronger."

"So since children are necessary for evolution, and inimical to happiness, how can you argue that we humans are evolving towards happiness?"

"Well, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is in the Declaration of Independence," he offered, citing an irrelevant authority.

I took a sip of tea. "Yes, but so what? Can you argue that we are evolving in any of those directions?"

"A case could be made in that those parents whose children made them less unhappy would be likely to have more children, I suppose. Therefore, as a survival mechanism, children might be evolving in the direction of making their parents happy."

"That's what grandchildren are for, Morrie."

"Hey, you can't do only one thing, Max. Even if you are right that children are a net source of unhappiness, they also produce some happiness, and that is what gets remembered."

"Well, maybe, maybe not? Okay, a point for you. What about that connection between health and happiness you were talking about, eh?"

He ate a piece of southern sushi, seaweed and rice wrapped around pickled okra and barbecued pork. "Health and psychological health both evolved by overcoming challenges. Consider, the mammalian immune system – that mainstay of human health, evolved over millions of years in the unsanitary conditions of the real world. Our immune system – any immune systems, requires a series of biologic challenges in order to develop properly. Alas, in our modern hyper-sanitary conditions overflowing with germicides, bactericides, mouth washes, and chlorinated water, we have minimized those challenges so that the child's autoimmune system often fails to develop properly. As a result of this culturally induced fear

of germs the adult may suffer from a variety of autoimmune diseases, such as asthma, arthritis, and so on."

"And you are going where with this?"

He shrugged his eyebrows. "Compared to the immune system, the human mind is far more recent, so it is hardly surprising that it hasn't got all the bugs worked out yet. Depression and epilepsy, for example, not to mention paranoia, hallucinations, and megalomania, but to be psychologically healthy the individual needs to have coped with psychological challenges."

"Which is why God invented high school?"

"Surely you jest," said Morrie. "God invented our long maturation period, and made it climax with our peak sexual drive for reasons which must have seemed like a good idea at the time. Only the times they up and changed, and adapting to our civilization requires a much longer maturation period than was needed when we were simply hunter-gatherers."

"Pardon my rhetorical flourish," I conceded. "Who did invent high school, then?"

"School boards, of course. Mark Twain said that God made idiots for practice, and then He made school boards. In fairness, I expect that high schools evolved over time to till the demand for better educated workers."

"That was before everybody went to college."

He sighed. "Growing up is one challenge, getting laid is quite another, and way too many people confuse the one with the other."

"A lot of anecdotal evidence supports that idea, too," I agreed.

"Yes, yes, we both could name any number of smart, talented people who never grew up. You know the Grant study?"

"Those 268 Harvard men from the 1940s who were studied, interviewed, and examined repeatedly and in depth until they all died?"

"They aren't all dead yet, but after 72 years of being examined they're getting there, and yes, that's the study. What they found was the seven attributes of a well and happy man."

I spread my hands. "Which were?"

"Mature adaptations: humor, altruism – what I would call generosity of spirit, anticipation, or looking ahead, and impulse control, described as suppression and sublimation."

"Is that the seven, Morrie?"

"No, no." He took a sip of tea. "Mature adaptations only counts as one. The others are education, a stable marriage, not smoking, not abusing alcohol, some exercise, and a healthy weight."

"Very scientific, perhaps, but maybe a bit of a fudge to get seven. How to these seven attributes compare with the seven deadly sins?"

He sat back in his chair. "The wisdom of the ancients wasn't always bogus, I suppose. Can you recall them, offhand?"

"Back in the day we had to memorize them for Sunday school: Anger, Envy, Gluttony, Greed, Lust, Pride, and Sloth." I took a bit of northern sushi, seaweed and rice wrapped around bean paste, bacon, and pickled onion. "I was very annoyed to lose a half point on Anger which it should have been Wrath."

"Well, we do have an elite sample, so I suppose that selected Harvard men might be less sinful than the general population. Clearly gluttony is at odds with a healthy weight, but I don't think there's any one to one correspondence with the rest of them."

"Sloth would mean you exercise less than you should," I suggested.

"And it might also keep you from getting your damned doctor's degree," he agreed. "While anger, lust, and envy all work against a stable marriage, but so will greed and pride when they lead you to neglect you wife for your career." He paused for a moment. "Smoking doesn't fit with any of them, it's just a habit that's adverse to you health. Abusing alcohol, now, that could be caused by depression, or just about anything."

"Do you think religion makes people happy?"

Morrie put wassabi and pickled ginger on a piece of sushi, ate it in two bites washing it down with a swallow of tea. "For some people, yes, maybe even for some Harvard men. In his novel *The Slave* Isaac Bashevis Singer wrote of his protagonist: 'But now at least he understood his religion: its essence was the relationship between man and his fellows.' Religious teaching places emphasis on mature adaptations, especially for your co-religionists, which a lot of people might never figure out on their own. On the other hand ..."

"On the other hand?"

"Dostoyevsky wrote: 'If God does not exist, then everything is permitted,' which suggests that religion relies on its theological underpinning. The omniscient God who knows your deeds and knows your thoughts, and passes judgment on your miserable life is the necessary enforcer of your good behavior. If you don't believe, you might still be happy if you score four or more of those seven attributes, but religion won't be pushing you in any direction, right?"

"If you don't believe, it won't be pushing you in any direction, right?"

"Alas, yes. Without religion – and ours has the look of an increasingly, secular age, the ego and superego have a much harder time reigning in the id."

"So for the general happiness, we need a secular ... what? A secular religion is contradiction in terms."

Morrie thought about that for a while. "A secular ethics," he said at last. "It should repackage the old religious ethics so that the secular population will pick up on it, putting that good old wine in a new and enticing secular bottle."

"You mean, do this because Darwin says it will improve your chances of reproductive success? What if they don't want reproductive success?"

"You're never going to be getting everybody, Max, and besides, it would be phrases something like: this set of ethics approximates humanity's evolutionary optimum, with reproductive success hidden in the fine print. For the kids, you can tell them that secular ethics is acting cool, and most of them will buy it."

"What kids?"

"The ones who don't buy into religion, Max. As you say, a secular church may be a contradiction in terms, but a non-theistic church that does not rely on an omnipotent, omniscient, and just God to keep the faithful in line would fit with Isaac Bashevis Singer's definition of religion very nicely."

"The essence of Darwinist religion is going to be the relationship of man with his fellows?"

"Except for their theology, all religions are essentially the same, Max, the idea being to encourage people to behave well to each other, at least within the group. Altruism encouraged by social control and enforced by punishment. If it catches on, a good secular humanist in a Darwinist religion will act a lot like a good Christian."

I excused myself, and when I returned to the table I asked him in a meandering sort of way if he really thought religion could make people happy.

"It can," Morrie allowed. "Especially if you define happiness in terms of religious fulfillment."

"How do you define happiness?" I asked.

He thought about that for a bit. "Happiness is your psychic reward for successfully meeting a challenge, any sort of challenge. Which is why people have always had a problem imagining heaven where there are no challenges allowed."

"Standing around basking in the glory of God 24/7 isn't much of a challenge, agree. Some of the early Christian heavens had special balconies, sort of like big old TV screens where you could look down on your enemies suffering in hell."

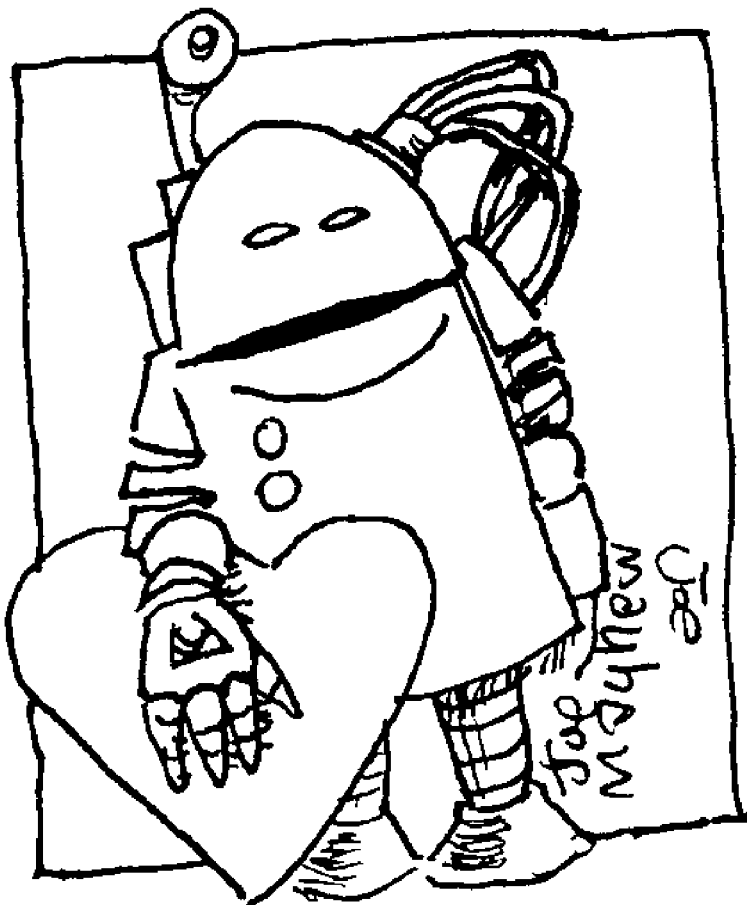
"Schadenfreude, to be sure, but no challenge."

"In Valhalla, the Norse heaven, the heroes ate the big breakfast, chose sides, and went out and fought all day, then lo and behold, all the killed and wounded were healed at night. The next day they did it all over again."

"Lots of exercise, but no challenge."

"And in Fiddler's Green, the good sailors were in this great tavern where it was always an hour before they had to catch the tide."

"Good food and drink, lively music, and beautiful barmaids, but the challenge of sailing has been indefinitely postponed."



"Morrie," I sighed. "Might it be that you have defined happiness in anti-religious terms?"

"Eh?" he shrugged. "I don't think so. Eternal anything gets boring after a while, which is heaven's fault and none of my own."

"Listening to music I like makes me happy," I said. "Reading a good book, eating a good meal with friends – you included, lots of things make me happy. Mostly they are the felicities of every day life providing a welcome contrast to the usual grind and have nothing to do with overcoming some stupid challenge."

"In your case, Max, maybe getting through the daily grind might be a challenge, okay?"

I looked at him. "Oh? And has someone just defined 'challenge' down to the point where it doesn't mean anything?" He slowly drank his green tea and said nothing, which I took to be a concession, so I changed the subject.; "What does the Grant study say about having friends, anyway?"

"Friends are good," Morrie said at last. "Having a stable marriage is the biggie, but having friends may be seen as an indicator that the individual has been using mature adaptations in dealing with the world."

"So having friends is a result and not the cause of being happy?"

"There would be an equilibrium, I think. You're happy so you have friends, and your friends feed that happiness." He

paused and rubbed his chin. "On the other hand a paranoid or megalomaniac tends not to have friends, and being depressed a lot tends to lose the ones you do have."

"Fine and dandy, Morrie, but when you get right down to it, what does the Grant study tell you about happiness?"

"Even if you graduate from Harvard, and the psychiatric department certifies you as well-adjusted, there's no guarantee that you won't screw up some how. Kennedy, who was in the study, was assassinated. Lung cancer from cigarettes, obesity from overeating, drink can kill you all sorts of ways. Over the 72-year course of the study, there were only three individuals, out of 268, who were always among the top ten. Always happy people turned out to be one percent of a population that should have been as happy as clams at high tide."

"And the average guys, what about them, eh?"

"There was another study, the Glueck study, which had been looking at juvenile delinquents and had tracked a control group of non-delinquents starting back in 1939. In the 1970s the Grant people went after that control group. The 29 who went to college – about 6 percent, were comparable to the Harvard men. The rest lost about a decade of life due to less education, obesity, smoking, and alcohol abuse."

"So they were less healthy. Does that mean that they were also less happy?"

"The 29 who went to college ..."

I interrupted him. "Things that aren't good for you can make you happy, Morrie. Drinking with your friends, smoking, eating – fine dining if you prefer, they all make you happy even if you get cirrhosis of the liver, lung cancer, and seriously fat."

"You left out fornication, Max and making a lot of money. Mae West said: 'I've been rich, and I've been poor, and believe me rich is better.'"

"Old and rich may be better than old and poor, but what good is it if you can't take it with you?"

"People love you because you have to leave it behind."

"Well, yes, a point for you. Besides, making money may have been the only pleasure the Calvinist's didn't forbid, but were saying that to be happy you need to be a rich, old, lean Harvard graduate who stayed married to the same wife for 60 or 70 years?"

"You left out non-smoking and sober." He paused. "Maybe not. Some people – even some Harvard men, are just naturally happy, which would help them stay healthy. Maybe the human race is evolving towards happiness?"

"Do you think so?"

"Not really," he shook his head. "No. Maybe being happy helps you live a long and healthy life, but it doesn't have a whole hell of a lot to do with your reproductive success. So if unhappiness is a genetic adaptation, it isn't spreading worth a damn."

"What a pity," I said, as we paid the check and left.

# All My Uncles are Men Except for Uncle Minnie

(c) by Jim Sullivan

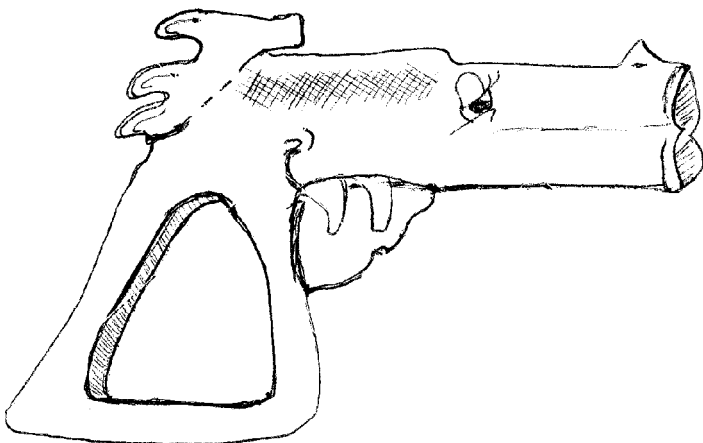
My dad's only sister, Minerva K. Tutwilliger, was raised with ten brothers, all older, on a cattle ranch in Western Montana. Not surprisingly, those children grew up masculine. When they married and had children, the cousins had uncles galore. That included our beloved Uncle Minnie. She/he had asked us to use that form of address, so we did.

Uncle Minnie dressed like an uncle: to begin with, a union suit, over it, men's denim trousers, flannel shirt, galluses, sweat socks, boots, broad-brimmed hat, mackinaw coat, leather work gloves, and the like.

This somewhat unusual relative, who grew to be 6'4" and a muscular 240 pounds, sniffs snuff, chaws tobacco and spits its juice into or onto whatever is handiest: ground, floor sidewalk, or spittoon. Uncle Minnie cusses and swears like a soused sailor, boxes and wrestles, passes gas in mixed company and in public without a trace of embarrassment, blows her/his nose without using a hankie, tells ribald jokes, smokes cigars and pipe, plays high stakes poker, races horses, cars, and motorcycles, competes in foot races, drinks whiskey and vodka straight, hunts, fishes, gets haircuts at the barbershop, and uses the men's john.

We cousins like Uncle Minnie more than the other uncles because she/he always played baseball, football, and basketball with us kids. Uncle Minnie also like to toss us up in the air and catch us just before we hit the ground. Of course, she/he does that with the firemen, police officers, and lumberjacks around here, too.

This uncle of ours is a male, through and through, in all that matters to us. But she/he does have one drawback – once a month, Uncle Minnie has a period. This really ticks her off and cramps her style. During that time, she/he secretly crochets, knits, and cross-stitches. Once over the condition, Uncle Minnie has a considerable body of needle work to show for the time spend. But she/he never shows it to anyone.



Instead, it's burned so no one will find it and get the wrong idea. Family members, however, have caught Uncle Minnie torching the handicrafts.

Over the years, we kids have tried to analyze this fascinating female relative. Each time we did, of course, some younger cousin would suggest that, just maybe, Uncle Minnie was a flaming butch lesbian. But we older cousins knew this wasn't true. Why? Because she/he obviously liked men too much. And I mean – too much! Uncle Minnie was always trying to seduce one hired man or another. She/he almost accomplished that goal more than once. But each time, she/he wasn't able to unbuckle the poor guy's chaps before others in the family had strolled to the hayloft to frolic therein.

The plain truth is, Uncle Minnie could sometimes be downright shameless when it came to pursuing men. When she/he began chasing the fellows, it seemed almost immoral. Then we kids would have to hide our heads, through we frequently peeked. Any poor, unsuspecting, unattached, and unrelated male, wearing chaps was prime prey for Uncle Minnie.

One time, we nephews and nieces accidentally found Uncle Minnie in the back of the trail drive chuckwagon. She/he was naked with Cookie, the male cook. I don't rightly know exactly what they thought they were doing. But surrounding them was a huge cloud of flour dust. And they both had white lard smeared all over their bare bodies. Perhaps they were getting ready to go swimming in that mountain lake that's always so darn cold. Whatever the case, we told the ranch crew all the details of what we'd seen. From then on, that group of workers refused to eat any of Cookie's prepared foods.

Uncle Minnie didn't seem bothered by the whole affair. In fact, she/he just laughed out loud any time anyone mentioned anything about Cooke's larded butt.

Not long after, the new minister, the Right Reverend Raymond T Thurston, III, of the local Church of the Wrangler Lord tried to get Uncle Minnie to changer her/his ways, mainly the duds. In fact, the man of the cloth began giving our uncle religious instruction on how to ward off this devilish streak of manliness. The next thing any of us in the family knew, Uncle Minnie had up and married that preacher.

A year has now passed. And I'm happy to report, marriage hasn't changed Uncle Minnie one least bit. She/he still dresses like a man. But I'm afraid wedded bliss has altered the reverend. He now dresses to the nines, but only in women's frocks, jumpers, skirts, and blouses.

Mom always said that birds of a feather flock together. And thanks to that old adage, I not only have an Uncle Minnie but also an Aunt Raymond.

# Remnants of the World's Columbian Exposition 2

By Steven Silver

□TKK: *Yet another remnant from the 1893 World Columbian Exposition in Chicago.*□

## **World's Congress Auxiliary Building 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL**

Seven miles north of the Palace of Fine Arts stands the World's Congress Auxiliary Building. This building was originally built in 1893 and was designed by the Boston firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge.

The building was designed for meetings, lectures, and presentations. It was in this building that on July 12, 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner presented "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," the paper which introduced his concept of the Turner Thesis that claimed that the American psyche was defined by the frontier which bordered the civilized parts of the country to the west, allowing for a seeming constant westward expansion.

The building also hosted the World's Parliament of Religions, which ran from September 11 to 27, 1893. This congress is now considered to be the start of interfaith dialogue. Mary Eddy Baker spoke about Christian Science and Henry Jessup introduced Bahá'í to North America (one of the seven Bahá'í houses of worship is located just north of Chicago in Wilmette). A speech given by Vivekananda also introduced Hindu philosophy to many westerners. One of the organizers of the event was John Henry Barrows, who saw the parliament as a means of liberalizing Christianity.

According to Mark Twain, in *Following the Equator*, the average man in India knew of Chicago because of the Parliament of Religions and believed it meant that Chicago was a Holy City, of course, Twain has been known, on occasion, to exaggerate.

Following the World's Columbian Exposition, during which parliaments and congresses were held in the building to discuss technology, science, agriculture, and many other topics, the building was turned over to house the Art Institute of Chicago. The Art Institute of Chicago was founded as the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts in 1879. Three years later, they changed their name, but their rapid growth meant that they outgrew two different buildings in the course of the 1880s. When plans were laid for the World's Congress Auxiliary Building, the intent was always that it could house the Art Institute of Chicago following the fair. Additions have been added to the building throughout the course of the twentieth century to house more exhibits, classrooms, or, in one case, the entire trading room of the old Chicago Stock Exchange, originally built in 1894 and designed by Louis Sullivan.

Guarding the west entrance of the building are two bronze lions, sculpted by Edward L. Kemys, who gave them the un-

wieldy names "Stands in an attitude of defiance" and "On the prowl." The statues date back to the World's Fair.

As with the buildings of the White City, the World's Congress Auxiliary Building was designed in the *beaux-arts* style. It currently contains more than 270 galleries and has more than half a million square feet under its roof.

Although the Art Institute houses numerous permanent exhibits, it is best known for its collection of impressionist art. Unfortunately, my artistic tastes tend not to run in that direction. I prefer the hyperrealism of Hans Holbein or the surrealism of a Salvador Dali. Fortunately, there is plenty to look at when I am dragged there with my family. I leave them to the impressionists and I go off in search of the Medieval artwork, the George F. Harding Collection of Arms and Armor, and so on.

When I was growing up, there was a boardgame called Masterpiece, published by Parker Brothers, which was an art trading game. One of the cool things was that rather than recreate famous pieces of art from around the world, the various cards were all from the Art Institute (although there was also a version where all the art was from the National Gallery).

Some of the famous paintings currently in the collection of the Art Institute include Vincent van Gogh's *Self-portrait*, Gustave Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day*, Georges-Pierre Seurat's *Sunday Afternoon on the Island of Le Grand Jatte*, Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*, and Grant Wood's *American Gothic*. Apparently, in storage and not on display, the museum has Ivan Albright's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, used in the 1945 film of the same title, but it is not currently on display.

Although the Art Institute of Chicago is known most broadly as an art museum, it also houses the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The school enrolls more than 2,000 undergrads and a further 600 graduate students. In the past, these students have included SF illustrator J. Allen St. John, Grant Wood, Herblock, Walt Disney, and Georgia O'Keefe.

The World's Congress Auxiliary Building has undergone several expansions since its original use, and is currently undergoing another expansion. While many times when great buildings are expanded there is some attempt to maintain the stylistic integrity of the building, in this particular case, the various expansions are done in a variety of different styles... to help display the various architectural schools. The newest expansion is being done in a very contemporary style. From most angles, however, a single architectural style will dominate so the building does not look like the hodge-podge it is.

□TKK: *To be continued...*□



# INTERLOCUTIONS

Lloyd Penney  
1706-24 Eva Rd.  
Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2  
Canada  
penneys@allstream.net  
May 17, 2009

Dear Knarley:

I'm going to get an early start on *Knews* 133...it's a long weekend here, and the time is there. Why not get it done, and to you earlier than usual.

Got my taxes done early...too early, it seems. I had to fight with the Canada Revenue Agency over the phone, but their second reassessment of my taxes asked for too much, and I spotted their error. I convinced them of it, and now I must wait for another reassessment. I may pay a few more bucks, but at least not the several hundred dollars in additional taxes they wanted. Next time, I'll be right on time.

I hope **Terry Jeeves** will read this...we hope that you are well and comfortable, and please know that we're thinking of you.

Hey, **John**...you know I wanted to play an instrument, too, when I was a kid. I thought guitar or drums, or even sax looked good...I told my parents what I wanted, and they went out and bought me what they wanted...an accordion. One year of lessons, and that desire for music went right out the window. Why do parents do that? Also, I have a giant backlog of fanzines to file, about four Banker's Boxes, plus a fifth one being readied.

**Dave Szurek**, by the looks of his letter, should be out there on the street, making sure the poor are well fed. Put your money where your mouth is, **Dave**. I guess we'll never see you on this side of the border. I do donate to charities like the Salvation Army and the United Way, who can operate good programmes that can help those on the street, and help them up. A quarter or two for the panhandler on the street really does nothing.

My loc...the jobhunt continues, and my EI is coming in. But still, there's some fun to be had, and there are local conventions, plus some voicework coming in. Thanks, **Jeff**...did I confuse the FAAn and Aurora Awards? I must have been tired when I wrote that.

I should get another Tale from the Convention! to you for next issue...I am ripping through a ton o' zines so I can attend a convention next weekend without feeling guilty for letting them pile up, and they do. Many thanks for this issue, keep them coming electronically to save on extra postage to Canada, and see you next time.

Yours,  
Lloyd Penney

☐**CKK**: *About half my zines are filed, but hardly none over the past four or five years. Currently all of them are in boxes from the move. I expect that it will take most of a weekend to get them back in order, assuming I even have the magazine files to do them all. Years ago I tried putting them in file cabinets, but this didn't work as they would curl over. The magazine files and a good bookcase are a much better option.*☐

Joseph Nicholas  
15 Jansons Road  
Tottenham  
London N15 4JU  
United Kingdom  
josephn@globalnet.co.uk  
18 May 2009 20:55:42 +0100

Dear Henry and Letha

Thanks very much for the most recent three issues of *The Knarley Knews* (130-132). Many apologies for the tardiness of this response: I've been rather busy of late, particularly at work with the forthcoming FVO mission to the UK on feed hygiene and official feed controls.

And while you say "The what?," I shall explain. The Food and Veterinary Office is an agency of the European Commission, which is established to audit Member States' compliance with the EU's food, feed and animal health laws, which are and have been for many years) harmonised through measures agreed in negotiations in Brussels to ensure a level playing field for the Single Market – i.e., to ensure that products offered for sale in any one Member State can also be placed on sale in another without falling foul of tariff or other barriers which would hinder their free sale. (And a jolly good thing that is, too – why shouldn't I be able to buy speciality French cheeses if I want to, even though speciality British cheese producers might prefer that I bought their products – and without the Single Market provisions might force me to do so because of quota or other controls on imports of French cheeses.) Audit visits by the FVO typically last two to three weeks, and are preceded by a humungous questionnaire from their HQ in Dublin which asks for all kinds of evidence and documentation with respect to the legislation which transposes EU measures into national law, the guidance given to food/feed manufacturers and enforcement officials, numbers of inspection visits made and breaches found, blah-de-blah...it might sound straightforward, but when I say that the questionnaire is humungous, I mean it: I went through the one we received and calculated that the FVO auditors had asked for 92 separate pieces of information. (Far g'nel!, as Australians might put it.) And we had two weeks to assemble all the answers, some of which required contributions from other UK Government departments, the devolved administra-

tions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, enforcement authorities and the feed industry....

....and no matter how rigid the deadline you give them to get their bits to you, you can guarantee that some of them will miss it by a kiloparsec or so. (Which is doubtless why we set the deadline so early.) But it does mean that, for much of the past fortnight, I have been doing practically nothing else at work but cobble together the disparate contributions into one seamless (and ever-lengthening) document (51 pages plus a 42-page annex, and we're still not there), chasing up the outstanding answers, making sure that we have all the URLs in the right place – looking at the result, and at the sheer amount of physical paper that would be required if the thing were printed out and the attachments had to be provided as separate documents rather than embedded links, you wonder how on earth people coped with FVO audit missions before the development of e-mail and the internet. How many millions of trees would have had to be murdered to satisfy the auditors' thirst for this knowledge? And the irony is, of course, that the auditors will print off hard copies of the questionnaire and its annexes, and all the linked documents, to bring with them on their mission. All I can say is that I hope they have a van large enough – and with a suspension strong enough – to cope with the weight.

When I haven't been busy at work, we've been busy in the garden and on the allotment. It's turned a bit gloomy in the past few days (although the Met Office long-range forecast suggests that this summer will be drier and warmer than the last two), although over Easter and the May Day holiday it was very pleasant and sunny, and among other things we got stuck into the renewing and enlarging of the garden pond. This is something we've been meaning to do for some years – it had a pinhole leak somewhere in the upper liner which required that it be regularly topped up – but the eventual catalyst for action was the apparent death of this year's crop of tadpoles: the spawn was laid successfully, they hatched successfully...and then disappeared, either consumed en masse by something lurking in the depths or (more likely) killed off by the (lack) of water quality, which had probably been progressively deteriorating for some time but finally tipped over the edge. So we swung into action: removed the plants, lifted the coping stones, cut out the old liner, heaved out the rubble that had been dumped behind the pond in the hope that \*something\* would grow over it, dug the hole deeper and wider to build up the front bank...and then had to wait for a day before for the last of the water to drain fully away. (London clay, you know. Solid stuff.)

Then it was trowel on a layer of sand, put down a thick layer of old newspaper on top of that, put back the old liner as another protective layer, spread the protective layers supplied with the new liner, lay the new liner on top of them and smooth out the folds – and fill with water. An amazingly quick process, but then we've had lots of practice: counting the original allotment pond and the redigging and relining of that, this is actually the fourth pond we've constructed. (Of course, it helps if you have an existing hole to start with.) We've since laid new coping stones, constructed staging

behind it for pots of various sizes, replanted the front bank with alpiners and other creeping plants, and seen at least one frog return to the pond. (We had a high old time persuading them to go elsewhere while we were emptying out the old pond – no matter how often we lifted them out and put them down in other parts of the garden, they'd be leaping back in as soon as your back was turned, because of course water – however muddy – is much safer. How much less safe muddy water might be when they would also have to contend with spades and feet is perhaps best left to a frog's imagination.) The landscaping around it looks a bit bare at present – particularly where we've ripped out the dark green ivy which had been left to invade from next door for some years and had choked off everything else that might have grown up the fence behind the pond – but in a couple of years it should all have settled in nicely.

And then there's holidays away. We went to Provence for a few days in late April; we're going up to Hadrian's Wall with some friends for the late spring bank holiday at the end of next week; we'll be spending the first week of July in a rented caravan (US; trailer home) in Swanage in the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset, one of my favourite parts of the UK, not expecting to do anything very much – scenic walks, renting bicycles to get further afield to Durdle Door, Old Harry Rocks, Studland Bay, sketching and painting (Judith) and trying to catch up on some reading (me). After that...the Loire Valley in autumn? The Dordogne, or Languedoc? All attractive regions of France, and all only a short journey away by Eurostar and TGV.

After all that, I can't think of much to say about the actual contents of these three issues – I read them, I enjoyed most of them (**Alexander Slate's** "The Ethics of Money" is just not to my taste – it's a very \*American\* subject, which I'm sure is of interest to fiscal conservatives both there and in the UK, but it goes right past me: money is a measure of exchange value, not a thing in itself), but I'm struggling to find something specific to say in response. (Although there's always **Joseph Major**, being as gnomic and as non-sequitur as usual. "It might help Joseph Nicholas to realise that his opponents believe what they believe, not what he needs them to believe" sounds very gnomic, but does nothing to explain why he thinks his previous remarks about not being Jewish had anything to do with the general intolerance of US neocons to other and points of view. But then it's difficult to take **Major** seriously – in our first printed encounter, doubtless shaken to the core by an argument which could not be fitted into his political frame of reference, he could only respond to my mild criticisms of post-Cold War US foreign policy by labeling me a Soviet spy. Hilarity ensued.) **Terry Jeeves's** memoirs of the lost world of the post-war era perhaps mean more to those who lived through them, although I wonder what impression they make on your American readers, where they must seem strange indeed – Britain, post-WW2, was almost as shattered as the Germany it had defeated, and although benefiting just as much as the other nations of Western Europe was also saddled with paying back the debts it had incurred from the USA in fighting the war...which meant that austerity, or certainly

the feeling of austerity, continued well into the 1950s, with people still talking about “the spirit of the Blitz,” of making do and mending rather than buying new, of scraping by on not very much and not expecting much...it wasn’t really until the 1960s that the UK began to emerge from the long shadow of the war, and for much of the time appropriated its ideas and inspiration from what had been happening in the USA. (Although of course our pop and rock music was much better.) Myself (I was born in the last days of 1953), I grew up in a family where my mother had worked on the land during WW2, as part of the female “Land Army” that replaced the farm labourers who’d been conscripted to fight in North Africa and the Far East, and where my father had just missed out on flying in combat missions because the war had ended a month before he graduated from university with a degree in aeronautical engineering – which meant that I internalised, from an early age, what WW2 had meant for ordinary people and thus what austerity was all about. (We practised it throughout my childhood, because for my parents it was second nature.) But, as I say, I can’t imagine what anyone who doesn’t have that sort of background must make of **Jeeves’s** memoirs – they must appear as quaint tales of long ago, and alien to people alive today as (say) great-grandmother’s recollection of her time as a little girl in India, watching her father and uncles helping to maintain the Empire. Truly a lost world. (Although not, just as with the imperial period, one that you’d want to see return.)

I liked **Al Bouchard’s** primer on how to make a film for next to nothing. Truly, the age of guerilla film-making is not dead as long as there breathes such a person.

But I’d better stop. Firstly, I’ve gone on for long enough; and, secondly, we’re off to Hadrian’s Wall in a couple of days time (it’s a long holiday weekend in the UK this coming weekend) and there’s lot to do (and to clear up) before we go. Best regards to you all!

Joseph

□**TKK:** *It is no wonder that many take issue with governmental bureaucracy. Garden ponds are a never ending saga of work and repair. We had two in Wisconsin using sheet plastic liners and while it didn’t appear to leak I could never deal with overspray and spillover from the waterfall we put in. My next pond, if I ever do one, will have a molded liner.*□

Ned Brooks  
4817 Dean Ln.  
Lilburn, GA 30047-4720  
nedbrooks@sprynet.com  
18 May 2009

Hi Knarl - Thanks for the zine. I must admit I never heard of Scott “Honcho” Patri, but his cover does remind me of things done by mimeo in the 60s – except for the solid black, which was hard to get with a mimeo without making a mess. I remember Phil Harrell doing it with a Roneo and getting the ink all over himself. But the cover (by Tim Dumont) looked good.

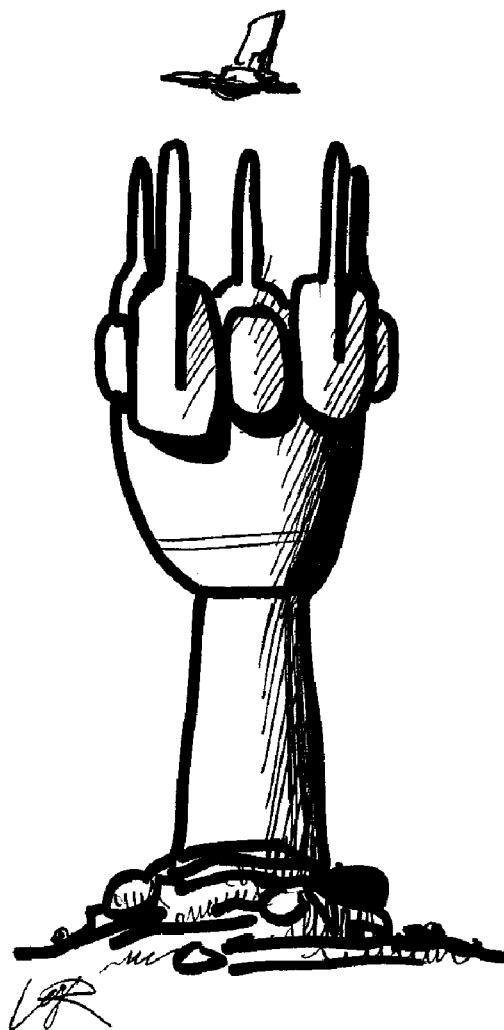
I had little trouble doing taxes this year with TurboTax – but my situation is a lot simpler than yours.

I know the **Terry Jeeves** memoirs appeared elsewhere, but just where (other than in his own *Erg*) eludes my aging brainpan. Collecting them into one file is a good idea. They could be put into PDF and hosted at fanac.org or Bill Burns’ efanzone site.

An inability to smell (sometimes a blessing!) could be neurological, but then why the runny nose? I have always tended to have a runny nose, mostly seasonal allergies I think, but seem to detect odors well enough. I’ve read that much of the pleasure of food is in the odor rather than just the taste buds on the tongue.

Fascinating account of the Museum of Science & Industry in Chicago. I’ve never been any closer to Chicago than O’Hare. I had no idea anyone had ever dug a fake coal mine for an exhibit. Years ago I bought for \$1 a huge bound volume called *The Library of Fiction, Mechanics, and War* – this turns out to be the issues of *Technical World Magazine* with the colorful pulp-type covers and all the colophons removed (but the ads left in). The volume I have is from 1914, and I see by Google that it was published in Chicago.

Best,  
Ned



□TKK: *Scott was a better known fanzine fan a few years back with all his "Trekkie-bashing" art. The cover was an old piece that has been gathering dust in my files for years. I was terrified of the coal mine tour as a child. I have no idea why, and when I visited again as an adult there were no residual fears or traumas □ no doubt years of caving would cure me of dark and strange places.*□

Gene Stewart  
1710 Dianne Ave.  
Bellevue, NE 68005  
stews9@cox.net  
19 May 2009

**Patri**'s cover is a terrifying photograph straight out of one of Marty Cantor's worst nightmares. Yeow.

Your editorial was kind of picaresque. Some interesting wandering.

**Sue**'s discussion of the San Diego Wild Animal Park reminds me that, when I toured there, I took a picture of those very giraffes and when I got home discovered a UFO in the background. No kidding. Probably an airplane, or perhaps a flying toddler expelled from the ski-lift tour, but it's an oddly shaped fleck in the middle distance of the sky and I've no idea what it is.

Oh, **Sue**? You should come tour the Henry Doorly Zoo here in Omaha. It's world-class now, too. Mutual of Omaha and Marlin Perkins notwithstanding.

If only all patriotic lyrics had **Jim Sullivan** to explain them, I'd be better able to keep my ale down between choruses.

**Purcell**'s foray into folk brings back my own memories of my brief roll into rock. Could never get the others to practice so it soon dissolved, that group. It was fun, though.

**Steven Silver**'s recounts H. H. Holmes territory vividly and well. Nice article. Looking forward to part deux.

#### INTERLOCUTIONS:

**Alexander Slate**: While I was not blaming corporatism per se for sociopathic behavior of criminals, I was stating it encouraged such behavior and provides a welcome, nurturing atmosphere for such behavior if allowed to run rampant without checks and balances.

Ben & Jerry's and Patagonia are often cited as "good" corporations. This usually means they treat workers well and are generally ethical in their business dealings. What I would point out is, while one can find companies operating on a humane set of principles, they for the exception testing the rule.

It is also often dependent upon what type of company we're referring to. I would say an ice-cream maker or sporting goods supplier / retailer is qualitatively different from, say, an insurance company or a Wall Street trading company. Or a banker. (Pardon my language.)

**John Purcell**: Like you, I much prefer stories that play with genre conventions. It is precisely those one will find most

difficult to get past genre editors, publishers, and even readers in general.

**Joseph T. Major**: The lawsuit written about satirically in *Bleak House* was based on a real one that did indeed go on longer.

And yes, **Joe**, I did indeed understand the context of "competing for beer money" and in fact was holding unspoken reference to Lem's very point, in order to bring in democracy without stirring up the rednecks. As to the fundamental trashiness of American SF, you betcha. Precisely the fucking point of it. Ask Kilgore Trout.

**Alexis Gilliland**: Mass market paperbacks are not only not dead as a proverbial Dickensian cheroot but are the one physical book form most likely to survive no matter what, for reasons outlined by Asimov ages ago. They are cheap, portable, require no external power source, easily distributed, and disposable. Not even our determination to obliterate all trees is an obstacle since any vegetable fiber can be used to produce paper, rice and corn being good examples, hemp being the best.

This Luddite panic over the looming change of fiction delivery systems from primarily hard copy to mostly electronic is needless. Everything is fine. Kindle-style readers will catch on until the next phase comes along – nano-implants? – and yet, in third world countries and among the poor, mass market paperbacks will continue to educate, entertain, and propagandize as they've always done.

It's just that the majority will shift to the new delivery systems, that's all.

I also think paper fan zines will continue even if it comes down to having to make our own paper. It's part art-form anyhow, definitely part craft, and all passion. If someone wants to pub that ish, they'll find a way. Hell, remember the old gel mimeo blur issues? Or the Gestetner issues? Think of the hellish effort, yet those zines were produced.

**Jim Stumm**: Obama may not yet be a tool of Big Money but give him time. He's only just arrived on the Big Money scene.

**Lloyd Penney**: I'm not pissed off at all, I was taking a rhetorical stance in order to write a column.

Do you honestly think SF is "liberal"? Wow. Try reading some sometime. Sure, it will often use some wildly-liberal-seeming-idea- at-the-time-of-writing as an eyebrow raiser or to give the story that futurish feel, but when you analyze what's being accomplished in the stories, it's almost always crypto-fascist like RAH or timidly conformist corporate apologetics.

(am I being provocative enough here, Henry? \*w\*)

And yes, **Lloyd**, bitterness is unbecoming. You should stop to realize that, if my column hit a nerve, you may be one of the Genre-Bound, but that doesn't mean I'm not a fan myself. Nor does it mean I haven't had great times at conventions and find socializing with other fen pleasant and interesting and welcoming as an experience.

Chillax, dude. All is well. But face it, fandom's a self-imposed limitation by being culture bound. Don't believe me, try publishing a book that is not sufficiently genre for the publisher and watch how it's excluded by *Locus*, not promoted as promised, and torpedoed at bookseller conventions, etc.

**Jeffery Allan Boman:** "A Cure for Style" is an ironic title, and piece, and makes precisely the point you cite, that without difference voices, everything becomes banal.

You'll enjoy my follow-up column: "Literalism for the Ironic, a Metaphorical Adventure."

A good time was had by one.

Oh, and I think the Marsport Con has been moved back to Luna again, pending cleanup of the radioactive spill.

--Gene Stewart  
OLD 815

□**TKK:** *I'm not certain I buy into your mimeo analogy for the future of fanzines. At one time mimeo may have been the best or only thing going. I'm not certain you can say that any more, at least categorically, for paper fanzines. I'm trying to embrace the new without abandoning the old with my OPCT-M policy.*□

Alexis Gilliland  
4030 8th St. South  
Arlington, VA 22204  
May 19, 2009

Dear Henry and Letha,

Thank you for *TKK* #133 with the **Scott Patri** cover, which I am sure annoyed **Rodney Leighton**, Teddy Harvia, and assorted others, myself included. Asking **Brad Foster** for a cover should not be too much of an imposition, or it you felt that it might have been, you could have enlarged **Brad Foster's** cartoon on page 23 and framed it with the title and issue number. On the back cover, we see that **Terry Jeeves** has anticipated one of the straws General Motors is currently clutching at, namely their collaboration with the Segway people to produce an enclosed Segway runabout. Which should be easy to park, if not take up to your apartment in the elevator.

I enjoyed **Sue Welch's** piece, which was well written and entertaining. Back in 1976 (if memory serves) we had been to the San Diego Wild Animal Park.; The "we" being me, my first wife, Dolly, and Charles our son, then on summer vacation from grade school. We had a good time, riding a coach around some of the trails with a guide pointing out the fauna of interest, but what lingers in memory is that Charles unwisely tried to pet a Wallaroo, a small Aussie marsupial, which bit him. Nothing serious, a one band-aid bite that didn't even need to have the band-aid replaced, but it made our trip to the zoo an adventure.

**Gene Stewart** addresses the problem of ending a story, which is a problem for a lot of authors. One problem is that the logic of the story sometimes diverges from what the reader wants and maybe expects, an example being "The

Cold Equations," a powerful story, but one widely disliked. Another problems is the need fro the eding to be logical but also a surprise. Often the author is tired of the stupid story as the end approaches and merely wishes to finish it off, so that the ending is marred by haste and inattention.

If **Jim Sullivan** is going to do a Feghoot (as he does in "Patriotic Lyrics") he should at least give a tip of the hat to Grendel Briarton, who sent Ferdinand Feghoot through space and time to create all sorts of contorted puns.

In InterLOCutions, **Jim Stumm**, the Libertarian, dismisses ethics as an outmoded, medieval approach to human behavior, full of vague and dubious generalities. Well no, actually, if we approach ethics from an evolutionary standpoint, what we see is that ethics tends to be hardwired into the human psyche, the result of beaucoup generations of inter-group competition. An ethical group, one which supports its members and discourages freeloading, will, in the long run out compete less ethical groups by virtue of a higher survival rate among stressed individuals, and as a group by coping better with catastrophes such as wars, plagues, and famine. For example, the early Christians out competed the established Pagan culture in the Roman Empire to the extent that Emperor Constantine made it the Imperial religion. A weakness of Libertarianism is that it regards children to be in competition with their parents for the parental resources, which might explain the observed fact that there are very few nubile women in the movement. What these women come to understand (if you ask the question, it's not hard) is that the splendidly endowed Libertarian male, despite being smart, handsome, and affluent, would make a poor husband and a bad father because of his reluctance to spend any of that affluence on his family.

One of the essential functions of any church is to promote ethical behavior among its followers. A function which is not without problems, as John Wesley, founder of Methodism understood, saying: "I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue for long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality. And these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches." That should do for now.

Best wishes,  
Alexis

□**TKK:** *I've used many Brad Foster covers over the years, as well as those by others. But I chose to dust off the old Patri piece as a change of pace. You, yourself, are more than welcome to do a cover for me.*□ *Freeloading is not an exact term. One thing our current economic model is suppressing is the idea of research and development without the need to have bearing on the next quarterly profits. Many forget that much of today's standard of living is based upon open-ended research by NASA, Bell Labs, etc. As businesses get lean and mean and focus on the short-term they are sacrificing important elements of their long-term survival strategy.*□

Joseph T. Major  
1409 Christy Avenue  
Louisville, KY 40204-2040  
jtmajor@iglou.com  
May 22, 2009

Dear Knarley & Letha:

And now the knews . . . **Terry Jeeves** was from the “Greatest Generation”. They wanted to spare their children the hardships they endured while growing up. Said children raised their children the way they themselves had been raised, starting from how they were raised. And this is why children have no immune systems and get expelled from school for bringing eyebrow trimmers.

Sue’s Sites: Really, you have to come see the Kentucky Horse Park. Looking at the miniature horse next to the shire will make you appreciate breeding variability.

Remnants of the World’s Columbian Exposition: Chicago will be bidding for the WorldCon in 2012, it seems, and everyone should go visit the splendid museums there. We ran into Jack Chalker at the Field Museum on the day the latest ChiCon ended. We’d already been to the Museum of History & Science, before the con.

Small error: U-505 was not the only German submarine captured during the war. The British captured U-570 on August 27, 1941. <http://www.uboot.net/boats/u570.htm>

InterLOCutions: **Alex Slate**: Ah, but those who insist on imposing their will on others will proudly inform you that they are self-actualized. And with the highest motives, too. It’s like the California bully:

I hated growing up in California.

“Hi, I’m Scott. I’m a fully self-aware and self-actualized bully.

“I act primarily out of a need to feel in control, and I take pleasure at the suffering of others.

“Also, my home life lacks parental warmth, and my culture is steeped in violence as a means of resolving problems. Any questions?

“Great, let’s start with something simple, then.

“Eat one of your socks.”

Robert T. Balder, PartiallyClips “Bully” (2006): <http://www.partiallyclips.com>

**Sheryl Birkhead**: The postage rate went up from 42¢ to 44¢ just before I had to mail out my family newsletter. If it hadn’t been for Forever Stamps, I would have been out about \$10 extra.

Reply to me: You say, “I have only seen Kansas in the dark and during the winter so I cannot compare it to Arizona.” You had about as thorough a view of it as we did.

**Alexis Gilliland**: Henry Ford tried to compete by price with the Model T, driving the price down as low as possible to produce a basic driving system. The economy expanded to where people could buy a more complex system.

This showed the problems and advantages of his business model. The Ford Motor Company was privately held (the other two stockholders were Clara and Edsel) and did not go into debt (Henry had some positively paranoid views about banks), so there was no outside influence. This was, as you can guess, both good and bad; he didn’t have to worry about what the investors wanted to do, but no one was there to warn him.

**Jerry Kaufman**: There was a WSFS, Inc. (World Science Fiction Society – if you look over the WorldCon’s constitution you’ll see that the “World Science Fiction Society” is the official name) in the fifties, for a few years. It was incorporated to provide a financial shield for the WorldCon, and disincorporated because a number of fans opposed the idea, for various reasons. There is a standing resolution of the WorldCon to set up a new WSFS, Inc., passed in 1978, but no action has been taken on it for several years.

**R-Laurraine Tutihasi**: No, the rattlesnake was an advertised attraction of the petting zoo. The folks in Kansas need some stimulation for their senses.

**Dave Szurek**: Tell me about being “overqualified”. The Austin Peay graduates’ office could only find computer operator jobs. All of which I was “overqualified” for. I have not bothered communicating with them since then, even though my brother is now a professor at Austin Peay. (The perky graduate office staffer who was absolutely convinced that I so wanted to meet my fellow Peay grads here in Louisville for dinner and then go to the Peay game was utterly uncomprehending.)

**Lloyd Penney**: Yes, I understand that many parts of Detroit are looking like sets for episodes of “Life After People”. And naturally, we will be stopping off there on our way to Montréal.

Namarie,  
Joseph T Major

□**TKK**: *There is no doubt that the running of world cons would be smoother with a central corporation and staff, but there would no consensus on who and how to do this so it never goes anywhere. Isn’t the whole point of an alumni program to attend a sporting event? That is certainly the model and schools without high-powered athletic programs are at a huge fund raising disadvantage.*□

Jim Stumm  
PO Box 29  
Buffalo, NY 14223  
May 26, 2009

**John Purcell**: The initial reaction to new human reproduction techniques by those not involved in it is very often feeling that it isn’t right. I remember when in-vitro fertilization was new, how people did rant against creating “test tube babies.” Now it’s so common that no one pays any attention to it anymore. That’s the likely reaction to any new repro technique, opposition at first, but as the years pass, people get used to it, and it comes to be seen as the new normal.

I'm reading *Sex in the Future, the Reproductive Revolution and how it will Change Us*, by Robin Baker. Each chapter begins with a short story, science fiction I suppose, showing people using some particular reproductive technique that is not yet available. Then the rest of the chapter discusses what has been done so far in that area, on-going research, and where it's leading. We've only seen the beginning of the changes that are coming in human reproduction.

**Alexander Slate:** I assume "philosophical intersection" means issues we agree on. There are certainly such issues common to libertarians and conservatives who agree on economic freedom issues, although liberals seem to be abandoning such principles in some of their nanny state campaigns such as against smoking and fatty foods. But the only commonality with fundamentalists that I can think of is that we both approve of home schooling, though for different reasons.

In the Republican Party there's a libertarian faction struggling against a fundamentalist faction of the "soul" of the Party. Fundamentalists are our opponents, no our allies. But both factions seem to be outnumbered by RINOs, Republicans in Name Only, who have abandoned traditional Republican values of limited government, frugality, and balanced budgets in favor of Democratic-light.

**TKK:** Public education is not a necessary function of government. Private enterprise is perfectly competent to provide schools, and government schools are not in any way better. In fact, they're worse. If public schools and school taxes were abolished, parents could use the money they don't pay for

school taxes for tuition. If we think some parents are too poor to pay for their children's schooling, the government could give them school vouchers. Since we deem some people too poor to afford food, the government gives them food stamps. We don't think the government has to operate food stores just because some poor people are poor. It's the same with schools.

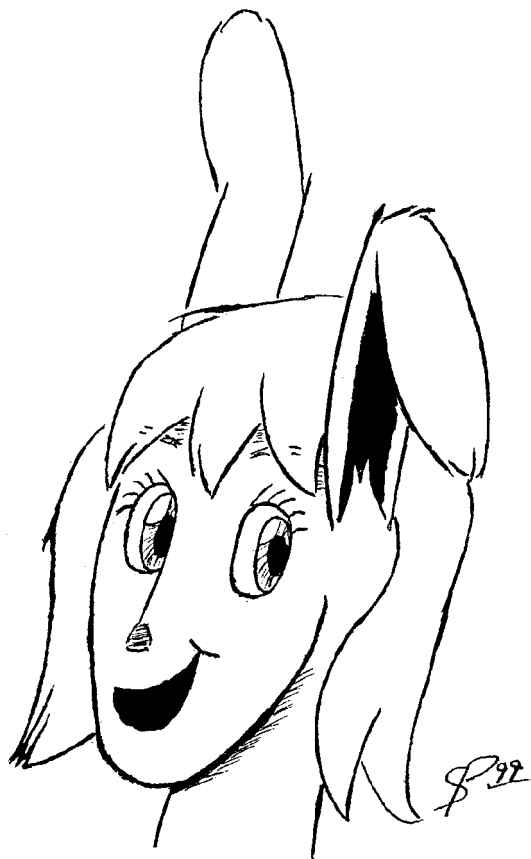
**Alexis Gilliland:** Actually I consider a low level of taxation to be a necessary evil. We need a minimal government to provide mainly national defense, police, and courts so that the country doesn't sink into gang warfare as in Somalia. And such a government needs a compulsory tax in order to survive. But the income tax is the worst tax because of the way it's administered with its intrusiveness and all the forms to fill out.

I generally approve of users' fees, but it's better if there are 2 or more suppliers, otherwise, the one monopoly supplier can levy fees that are far above its costs, make no effort to reduce costs, and use some of the money it collects to finance unrelated activities. Around here, old political warhorses are rewarded by the Party with high-paying, little work jobs on the Water Board. Their salaries come from higher water and sewer fees that users are forced to pay.

Turning off the water if you don't pay the bill won't be the end of it. The government won't let you continue to live in a house without piped in water. They'll declare the house unfit for human habitation and force you to move out.

Something like that happened to a couple friends of mine many years ago. They moved into a small house in the country where all the utilities had been turned off, and were living there rent-free with the permission of the owner. This was across the road from the NY State University in Amherst. Suzanne used to fill her water jugs somewhere on campus. Ben made a woodburning stove out of a 55 gallon drum and that's what they used for heating and cooking. They set up a privy in what had been a chicken coop out back. I knew they'd get kicked out as soon as the government found out about their arrangement. But hey got away with it for over a year, longer than I expected. But eventually some county inspector came around and forced them to move out. The government enforces its own views on whether a building is or isn't fit for human habitation regardless of the views of residents or owners.

We're accustomed to toll roads and bridges here, although some people do keep insisting that tolls should be removed. They want the service but don't want to pay for it. The NY State Thruway was built before the national Interstate Highway System, financed by bonds that were paid off with revenues from tolls. We also have the Peace Bridge here over the Niagara River connecting NY and Ontario that is financed by tolls. It's run by a commission whose members are appointed by the governments of NY and Ontario. The Bridge is their only asset and tolls their only revenue. So they don't rely on any government appropriation.



By contrast, we have the state tax on gasoline that is supposed to pay for maintenance of roads and bridges throughout the state. AAA constantly complains that state politicians dip into this money and use it to pay for unrelated activities while infrastructure is neglected. Something similar happens with the Federal gas tax, some of which is diverted to subsidize rapid transit systems that drivers don't use. So this is a non-user fee that those who don't use the service are forced to pay.

Nuance is right. It isn't the case that Zimbabwe is too harsh, Somalia is too soft, and the USA, somewhere in the middle. The US Government is too much on the Zimbabwe side and moving more in that direction all the time. Much less government would be better, though not going all the way to the anarchy of Somalia.

TKK: I image the beggars already know about all the shelters and soup kitchens in the area. They don't need you to tell them what they already know. What they want from you is cash.

Jim Stumm

□TKK: *I think public education is a necessary government function in the sense that everyone needs to get an education. If it is done with vouchers, that is fine, but I am very skeptical of quite a number of the inner-city private schools that are merely a sham to take voucher money. Public schools are far from ideal, but they give more people an opportunity for education than a completely private system. I don't know where the ideal balance is here, but private voucher schools provide too much of an incentive to scam the system, whereas the same is not true of food. A grocery store chain isn't dealing with the same massive amount of dollars per transaction and ability to hide bad food behind closed doors. The NY State Thruway mainly exists these days to pay for the toll collectors. Efforts in the 80s to convert to a freeway were blocked in large part by the toll collectors union.*□

Trinlay Khadro  
trinlay63@wi.rr.com  
27 May 2009

Thanks for the zine. Odd as it may seem, I actually prefer a paper copy for reading in bed or in or while traveling. Even though I have a laptop, I often find myself reading mail in the bathtub.

Good luck with both the prospective house sale and the house hunt.

My feeling has been that "Carry on Jeeves" has a much wider audience than fandom, and would make a nice small book. (Even if as Print On Demand, which seems to be becoming a more and more viable option.) It's a valuable first hand account of a Serviceman in WWII. Even if some of it seems to be standing around waiting for something to happen...that's the reality of that experience and that era. I'm dismayed that my family threw away the letters my Great Uncle wrote home (to his sister, my grandmother & his parents) during

the war. Great Uncle was put to work, often as a translator taking down accounts/testimony from the inhabitants of the concentration camps in Europe. (He was multilingual.) I have no idea how much of what he included in his letters home, but there **are** agencies out there archiving the letters.

Since moving to Milwaukee proper, (corner of Glendale actually) I haven't seen much wildlife. However, occasionally at night the cats will be at a window, or beside me in bed and either see or hear something that makes them scared. By the time I get up and look out the window, whatever it was is gone.

I have a postage sized yard now, and have been turning the neglected yards into garden space and planting things that will reduce the need to mow. Apparently, Mrs. Schneider (the former owner) had planted several perennials, that were just being mowed by her assistants the last few years of her life. I find that there is some nice pre-existing tulips, peony, phlox, etc. I've planted some creeping flowering ground covers, dianthus, more phox, more peonies, lily of the valley, catnip, hosta, lilac, blueberry, blackberry, raspberry, strawberry, vegetables. Hopefully, much of it will spread out over the hilly parts at least, to reduce the need for mowing to zero or nearly zero.

I think that Skippy was able to get at the turkey egg **at all** is a sign that it probably isn't viable...Momma & Poppa wild turkeys are nothing to mess with.

I hope Kira is going to be fine, all that testing is no fun. (Just ask KT ) I've found that as I've become older, or perhaps as part of the fibro, I have become hyper sensitive to some smells.

One of several reasons I had to leave the apartment complex. (The noise and the trek to the laundry room including two flights of stairs was just too much.)

Megumi is doing much better, with the special diet, she has put the weight back on. While she's still a slim cat to Seimei's slightly pudginess. She's also got her personality back and is currently play wrestling her brother, and chasing him all over.

I've sort of been blogging: <http://www.trinlayk.blogspot.com> but not very regularly. I'm also on facebook (Hi Kira!) and twitter (trinlayk) and still busy making plushies to sell at convention art shows, and at <http://www.trinlayk.etsy.com>

KT, her friend Theo and I all went to Oddcon with Leah Fisher, and had a great time. Georgie Snobrich was the Artist GOH, she's done their artwork since Oddcon #1. At the Dead Cow Meeting, someone said "Does any other con have such great artwork and tshirts on such a consistent basis?" and the reply was "We've got Gods own artwork, don't we!"

My plushies did quite nicely in the art show at Oddcon, despite having not done so well at other cons earlier in the year. I'm waiting to hear back how they did at Wiscon, having mailed in my entry. Without a co-driver it is difficult for me to even get to Madison for a weekend. If I've been doing well I can get us **there**, but then become exhausted and can't



manage the drive back. I'm hoping to have things ready for Convergence, as well as several other cons.

If you are on a con-committee and think the art show might benefit from my work, let me know about your con!

This spring has been slow coming, and it's been rough fibro wise. I don't have the worst flare up, but it's bad enough that I have a few days every week where I just can't be productive at all.

Which I'm finding aggravating because there is so much I **need** to get done. Keeping social via local fandom (Tuesday night Anime at Todd's, Friday night games & Scifi viewing at Lytheria, Monthly Milwapa gatherings) are keeping me sane. (well relatively)

I'm not sure where I put my last copy of *TKK*, or I'd reread the Maslow article and try to come up with some kind of comment. However, sometimes happiness/sanity don't arise from the sort of things that are generally considered sources of happiness. I've seen so many people absolutely miserable, in a job where they have respect, adequate pay rate, house in the country, etc.... but the thought of going to work in the morning (and coming home from that job) is a source of pain. In my case, even if the job was fine, and the pay/benefits were fine, I never learned how to play the politics games that were so popular with everyone else in that workplace. The constant gossip and backstabbing were terrifying, and we're talking Customer Service Phone Reps here...not Captains of Industry.

Despite illness, disability, limitations, tight economics, difficulties, troubles, I think I'm happier than I've **ever** been. Go figure.

When KT took Summer School (a public speaking course which was required and unbearable with a full sized class) she found it to be an easier class, not because of the work, but because the smaller class size make it possible to actually interact with the teacher and classmates on a more human level. It doesn't seem like that would be a reason for Connor and Kyle to require a summer course.

Currently, she **rules** her D&D group, and she's actually running the Sunday afternoon game. Lee has been trying to coax her and her friends to start a game with **him**. (also offering some of his Magic Card collection.) She's got a part time job as "Gal Friday" with Tom Klein, filing, doing data entry, editing things like written materials for clients and text for his website.

**Joseph Major:** re Ben & Jerry – isn't there a point though where the accumulation of wealth becomes sort of, well...silly? What can Donald Trump do with **more** money coming in to his personal account? Is there a point at which an income level is obscene? For example, CEO has so much money that all he can do with it is make **more** money, and the people at the entry level of the businesses he runs, can't cover rent or enough food for the month, and are getting rent assistance, food-stamps and medicaid through the state.

CPSIA: Oh dear...well it just sucks. It's holding tiny micro-businesses to the same standards as the mega-corporations... for products that cannot contain these chemicals in any substantial amount, can't cover the cost of testing/labeling one-of-a-kind items made by artisans making **one** item at a time. The CPSC can't even come up with a labeling standard, or answer questions about how to adequately permanently label one of a kind, or small items which are not molded or do not provide a printable surface. (specifies, cannot be hang-tag, cannot be ribbon tag, cannot be sticker...) There are **no** approved labs that will take work from the cottage industry workers, because they aren't set up (and there are no provisions) for testing One-of-a-kind artisan items. There's more on my blog actually. ( <http://www.trinlayk.blogspot.com> ) as well as extensive discussion on ETSY forums, and the net.

Many small businesses making artisan or one of a kind items directed to consumers 12 and under have just closed up rather than continue to try to comply. I'm continuing since my market has always been, for the most part, full grown fannish people. Of the hundreds of items I've made and sold, only about 6 of my end users have been under the age of 12.

**R-Laurraine Tutihasi:** Thanks for the happy thoughts: I've tried no gluten diet, I got more sick in different ways. Doctor also has had me trying various things. She tested my Vitamin D level, so I'm now out of the danger zone with **that**, and continue to take Vitamin D capsules. (When the results of the Vitamin D test came back, she called asking "How did you get to my office?" she was glad to hear that a friend had brought me. I should **not** have been driving!)

I'm walking in the neighborhood to try to build up stamina. On good days I can get around the block. Gardening some helps too, if nothing I'm also getting some inspiration. I'm not an aggressive weeder though.

Megumi is doing great. She's still on the skinny side, but now merely slim as opposed to kinda scrawny. This last vet visit her kidney and liver scores were "the best she's ever had." So I'm very happy!

**Jim Stumm:** Unfortunately, I've encountered Sociopaths, where the limit on their behavior is "am I likely to be able to get away with it?" Affects on others and society have **no** meaning to someone like that. So while "Every person, even a criminal, has some kind of personal ethics..." this is only true of relatively psychologically normal people.

Re: "invisible hand" a seller may provide a product or service for profit, but there if there isn't a market for that good or service, it's still not going to sell. There's profit in the product only because there is a need/desire for the product. (Even if that need/desire is unknown until buyer sees the product.)

**Jeffrey Allan Bowman:** I've found that I really **really** enjoy, not only short films, but student and "low budget" films. It's something about the method of cramming in the story telling, or doing something odd/experimental with very little tech, time or \$\$\$\$.

It doesn't mean I enjoy the big, effect filled things **less**, only differently.

☐TKK: *Skippy routinely chases the turkeys out of the yard. Even though they remain in the area ☐ I hear them all the time ☐ I'm a bit surprised they effectively left the nest unguarded. I'm glad to hear that you are happy ☐ that state shouldn't be under-rated.*☐

Milt Stevens

miltstevens@earthlink.net

May 30, 2009,

Dear Henry and Letha,

In *The Knarley Knews* #133, reading the editorial started me wondering as to your location in the Bay Area. The description of your neighborhood sounded awfully rural. When I was spending time in the Bay Area in the late sixties I had a fair notion of where things were. Los Gatos sounded familiar, but I didn't really place it. Checking a map revealed that Los Gatos is south of San Jose. That looks like it ought to be a fair distance from the maddening crowd.

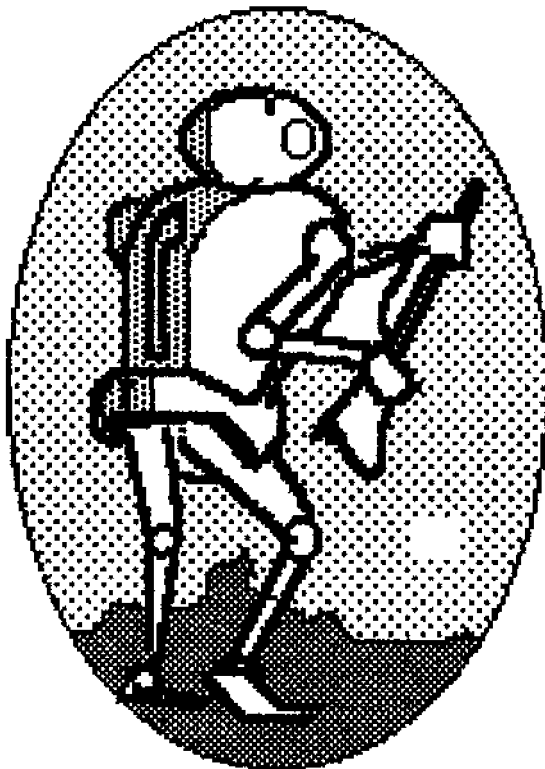
Taxes. In recent years, I've managed to do my taxes in February. It usually takes until the end of January to get all the paperwork. By April, I've pretty much forgotten the whole thing. It may be one of those post traumatic stress thingies.

"Patriotic Lyrics" deserves a couple of oops for the last line. I wasn't really expecting that. I didn't know that "The Star Spangled Banner" hadn't officially become the national anthem until 1931. I guess I'd never really thought about it. I must have been assuming that countries have flags and national anthems issued to them at their inception. I never thought about Congress having such a power. Now that they have made such a declaration, what do you suppose they might do about it? Would they activate the national guard if we rose up in chorus and sang something else?

Now I'm thinking about our Congress declaring gods. They might decide they want to declare Elvis Presley or John Wayne a god. They couldn't demand that we worship them, because that would be establishing a state religion. I wonder if declaring someone a god might be considered a bill of attainder. Being a god does have limitations. For instance, you can't create a stone so large you can't lift it. You never know when you might want to do something like that.

**John Purcell** says he is a child of rock and roll. This seems to be one of my days for thinking of strange implications. I'm now wondering what strange form of philosophical or artistic fornication would lead to someone being a child of rock and roll. I suppose if your mother passed out at a rock concert and woke up pregnant you might be thought of as a child of rock and roll in one sense or another. However, one would suspect that another element was involved. In my case, I'm a child of WWII draft fears. I was born 11 months after Pearl Harbor. My parents were also involved.

Yours truly,  
Milt Stevens



☐TKK: *Not only are we in Los Gatos, one of the more distant suburbs, but we are also about 7 miles outside of the town proper up in the Santa Cruz mountains. The place we rented has 10 very hilly acres and only two neighbors that we ever hear and only one that we can see. Quite a distance from the teeming populace. Declaring someone a god would likely trigger an Establishment Clause lawsuit. It isn't necessary to establish a state religion to become too intertwined with religion to cause a constitutional problem.*☐

Eric Lindsay  
544 Carlyle Gdns Beck Dr. N.  
Condon, Qld 4815  
Australia  
fijagh2009@ericlindsay.com  
3 Jun 2009

Hi Henry,

I guess income tax month is a time of dread in the USA. I hate the amount of work filling in a tax return occupies here. The forms now run something like 12 pages, but since items are not identified, you need the 150 or so pages of manual (mostly tedious explanations) to work out which figure goes where. No wonder most people do not do their own return. I am stubborn, and continue to do so. However I also continue to avoid actually paying any taxes directly as a result.

My official residential address is not changing, as far as our government knows. Until I know what the capital gains consequences are, I see no need to tell any government anything. They rarely want to tell me anything I want to hear, so this may as well be mutual.

Regarding patents, in my blog I just got through advocating North Korea test their nukes on Marshall, Texas. Perhaps a

little over the top as a response to software patents ... but only a little.

Patriotic Lyrics was really silly.

I thought the idea of education was at least partly to ensure people fitted well into a square peg within a job.

Why does **Joseph Major** want to try to force electronic fanzines into formats like portrait or landscape? You have no idea whether I will be reading on my 27 inch monitor, or my three inch iPhone. Nor do you know whether I need 8 point type or 24 point type. Stop trying to reinvent the magazine, and embrace the idea that different media need different approaches.

The first 50 or so issues of my old fanzine *Gegenschein* were never in a format that could be easily converted to electronic formats. They were typed on genuine typewriters, mostly. I do not think OCR is good enough to cope with bad mimeo, even now.

Well, enough of that. We are awaiting the taxi so we can fly to Adelaide for the Australian NatCon.

Regards,  
Eric Lindsay

□**CKK**: *Marshall, Texas isn't the reason we have crappy software patents in the U.S. You can blame that on the Patent Office. Marshall, and nearby Tyler, have developed a great cottage industry for patent infringement plaintiffs. The playfield is slowly equalizing to other districts throughout the country. Fast double-sided scanners and OCR have come a long way in the last few years. Haven't tried it on a badly faded mimeo, but have had reasonable success with LOCs produced on manual typewriters.*□

Alexander Slate  
2014 Columbia Pike #14  
Arlington, VA 22204  
arslate@verizon.net  
6 Jun 2009

Dear Knarley and Letha,

Thanks for issue 133.

**Jim Sullivan's** "Patriotic Lyrics": Ouch!

Thanks to **Steven Silver** for his "Remnants of the World's Columbian Exposition". It's interesting to know that some of the building put up for these affairs are still around. Though I'm sure that some of the buildings are put up slap-dash and not made to last, some probably are. This article arrived shortly before a trip I had to make to Long Island to bury my mother just a few weeks ago.

We had to fly into Laguardia and drive by the old site of the New York World Fair (1964) [I never got to attend since we moved from New York to Germany in 1963 – we were there until 1966]. There are still 3 structures left at the old site from the fair (although it may only be two). The unisphere – the globe, the observatory towers (used as the 'spaceship' in *Men In Black* – although they look much smaller in real life than

they do in the movie) and a round, open structure which may or may not actually be part of the observatory towers. There are actually a number of other structures from the site in existence that have been moved to various locations around the world, including Disneyland.

It also brought to mind some structures in Philadelphia from the 1876 Centennial Exhibition that I remember from my days in Philly. There are evidently two left. Memorial Hall which has been a museum for a lot of the time since, and is evidently reopening soon as another museum and the Ohio pavilion house. A third structure, the Horticultural Hall was destroyed in 1955 shortly after being severely damaged by a hurricane.

While writing this I also remembered the Terre Des Hommes (or Man and His World) site which I visited in 1969. This was the 1967 Montreal World's Fair Site. Then most of structures were still there – many still used to house different exhibits from the original sponsoring country, though the US pavilion (the Jolly Green Giant's golf ball) had changed uses and was now the biosphere (the US still had a pavilion in a different building). According to the web, there are still a few structures still there.

And then there is San Antonio's HemisFair site (the 1968 World's Fair). A number of structures are still there including the Tower of the America's, the (now expanded) convention center and a number of old Victorian style houses which actually pre-date the fair.

Well, I think that's all the old's world fair sites that I have visited. No I take that back there are also still structures existing from the 1889 World's Fair in Paris including the iconic Eiffel Tower.

On to the locs:

**Sheryl Birkhead**: Only you can determine what is best for your charitable contributions. There are no rights or wrongs in terms of choosing a single or multiple organizations to devote to. If the amount you spend on charity is to be a set amount and include the costs of getting the money to the charity, then I personally give to one or two organizations to maximize the good being done with my money. But if the cost of postage is not included, then it really wouldn't matter in terms of an ethical choice.**JT Major**: "Bobo economy"? Was this meant to be Bohemian/Bourgeois (BO/BO), a mis-stype of boho (a relatively common short-form of bohemian) or bobo as in a clown?

Money is certainly not a corrupting influence in and of itself. Nor is even the love of money (or at least the comforts that can be gained with money) corrupting in and of itself. Money is simply a mechanism by which trade is accomplished without having to always move potentially bulky goods. While some might say that we should do away with money completely, I am not one of them. Nor should anyone feel guilty about wishing to have the money necessary to feed and clothe themselves and their loved ones. In fact, wishing to have a few extra shekels in order to have a little "luxury" here and there isn't something one should feel guilty about. However,

stealing the bread from the hungry when you do have enough yourself is ‘an ethical crime’ (please note the quotes). Polluting the air and water because you want to avoid costs and make an extra 0.2% profit for your shareholders is ‘an ethical crime’. However, polluting the water and air without knowing it (purposefully – one can be willfully ignorant) in the pursuit of profit isn’t a crime, its just a shame.

**Alexis:** Alexis, no I was not taking the position that a corporation has a choice of making money. What I am trying to say is that I don’t necessarily see any reason for corporations to believe that they have to control the entire market. Nor should the sole and overriding goal of corporations be to continually increase profits to the decrement of all other considerations. But while I am at it, let me bring up the example of Battelle. Battelle is a very successful company, but it is not a profitable one. Why? Because Battelle is a non-profit corporation.

Another example of what I was trying to get around to regarding corporations. There is a grocery store chain in Texas called HEB. HEB is a pretty good grocery, pretty successful and I believe it is a fairly profitable company. Yet, HEB also believes in giving back to the community. If you need a donation for local charity, HEB is good about providing these. HEB also makes sure that the San Antonio food bank gets a lot of produce for distribution that it is unable to sell because of blemishes, but is still perfectly usable and edible, in addition to cutting the food bank a good sized check every year. In addition, HEB offers up at least one mid to top-line employee each year to work with the local United Way campaign on a temporary, but near full-time basis. This type of example is part of what I am trying to get to.

Technically, what you describe really aren’t taxes, but service fees. Let’s discuss roads – it would be possible to look at all of the roads within a state, come up with the cost for maintenance (less federal highways), look at the number of vehicles registered within the state, do the math and charge car owners and trucking companies the fee and thus not need to collect separate taxes for roads. However, there are many people who don’t own a car, yet still receive many benefits from the roads (the goods and services they buy from different stores are all serviced and supplied via the roads) – they would not be paying for this benefit. Similarly, people whose vehicles are not registered in the particular state would be receiving the benefit for free.

An alternative solution, turn it all into toll roads. At one time in this country if I understand my history correctly, everything that basically served as a highway (not counting water routes) were tolled-turnpikes, many of them actually privately owned. Yet there is a benefit to everyone to not having to pay a toll in terms of not encountering traffic congestion at the toll sites. Just look at the traffic congestion around major toll plazas any time of day and particularly at rush hour. I would hate to consider how much worse DC rush hour traffic would be if everyone had to pay a toll at the bridges.

Oh, yes, there are other alternatives as well. How much of the price of a gallon of gas is actually state and local taxes? I don’t think I need to take this line of thought any further.

Taxes serve a purpose. There is a cost for having them, similarly there are costs for not having them.

**Milt Stevens:** You raise a very good point about the “root of all evil” phrase. However, maybe it would be more correct to say that the phrase is really incomplete rather than not true.

**Dave Szurek:** Thanks for your comments about the series. You are right that it is way too easy to get led into tangents and thus never address points that are originally meant to be made. It is one of my biggest problems in writing these articles. However, I’m pretty comfortable addressing almost any line of reasoning (which isn’t necessarily the same as being able to successfully articulate my thoughts on them). If there is any particular thing you would like to see discussed let me know and I’ll be happy to attempt and lead the discussion (arslate@verizon.net).

**Jeffrey Allan Boman:** While from time to time I do purposely study the Torah, I am far from being a Torah scholar. The particular quote, however, was found by normal google search researching for the article, as opposed to being some bit of my Torah knowledge that I dusted off for the article.

Okay, now on to the truly difficult portion – **Jim Stumm:**

OK, maybe my statement about free will was a bit strong. I will concede the point that free will may be an illusion. **However, Jim,** your own statement, “Regardless, we should treat others as though they have free will” is the key. Without free will, none of this, nothing we do, really matters, because we are all slaves to processes out of our control. So, why bother?

I will also concede that biology does at the very least influence actions. Yet I am also convinced that the biological processes can also be ‘directed’ or ‘influenced’. Let me pose the following. Studies seem to show that thinking can influence physical activity. That visualizing the proper way to do something can positively affect the chances of our actually doing a particular activity. Now if we have no free will, then we aren’t choosing to visualize anything, it is simply a matter of brain chemistry that causes the visualization and therefore what we have is a bunch of circular logic – that is something physical not under our control influenced something else physical not under our control. More – even the most hopelessly addicted can break the cycle of addiction. It’s not easy, and the biological activity associated with the addiction works against breaking it, and the after effects and biological ‘cravings’ that remain make the fight against the addiction a constant and long term (if not actually eternal) battle. Yet it can be done, and is done!

The study of ethics ... hmm. Actually, Knarley gave a pretty good answer to your assertion regarding general versus situational ethics. But, as usual I am going to expand on that.

Now, this is to some degree semantics, and I have said it before... but what people believe to be right isn’t ethics, it’s morality. Morality is what you feel, what you believe. Ethics is too a great degree, by its very nature, situational. It deals with what you do; with how you treat a particular situation. Killing someone is morally wrong (the biblical prohibition

in the Decalogue is against murder actually, not killing), but may be ethically right. Someone is heading for a group of children carrying a sword, yelling like a madman (apparently obviously to kill them). You have a gun. My own ethics say it is permissible to kill the one man (or woman) to save the children.

Let's go with a less "obvious" example. Morally, it is wrong to steal. Two orphans on their own are traveling through the countryside, they are starving. At a prosperous farmhouse they stop and ask to be fed in return for doing some work around the farm. They are driven away with curses. They had seen some bread cooling on a window sill. Is it wrong for them to then go back and take the bread? I can see justification for both yes and no answers, but my own gut leans to the no.

Now, suppose it is two middle to upper-class teens driving through the countryside. They see a loaf of bread (or a pie) cooling on the windowsill of a small farmhouse. Is it right for them to take the bread? The answer is no.

Now, **Jim** says "Every person, even a criminal has some kind of personal ethics..." This is true, and those two teens may not think it is wrong to take the pie or bread. But I have said it's wrong. How can I do that? Well **Jim** also says a couple of things...

"Ethical discourse seems to build castles in the air with no foundation, full of vague and dubious generalities with very little solid truth. You say that you're not trying to prove that charity is a universal moral imperative. What then? If you're only describing your personal preference, you seem to be too much concerned with how other people behave." He continues, "I have long wondered how one might determine what is the right thing to do, not in particular cases, but in general. What is the basis, the fundamental rule? Ethicists don't tackle this question, I suspect because they have no answer."

I can do what I do because **Jim Stumm**'s assertions that I just quoted are not correct. There are lines of thought into meta-ethics, or the general rules of ethics. Aristotle's Golden Mean, Kant's Categorical Imperative, and the Utilitarian ethics of Bentham and Mill. Simply put, Aristotle says that the right course of action is always the middle way between the extremes of possibility. Kant says to always act as if your action would always be the general rule. And Utilitarianism believes the right way is that which provides the greatest good for the greatest number.

I am not trying to show charity as a moral imperative, because I am not dealing with morality. But neither am I simply describing my "preference." I generally give my understanding of what is ethically right according to my interpretation of ethics. (Though I do occasionally give what might sound to be a counter-argument.) My own ethical beliefs stem from Utilitarianism, but modify the basic premise to not just providing the greatest good for the greatest number but also attempting to minimize any damage and so that it affects the fewest number of people.

There is a Hebrew phrase "tikkun olam," in English "repairing the world." This of course, sounds like the premise is that the world is a place that is broken that needs to be repaired. And that statement has some theological basis. As I remember there is a Chasidic or Kabbalistic statement that the universe can be likened to a pot and that the pot was perfect. That is, the universe was perfect. But man is an imperfect being, and this world is an imperfect place; how do we know this? Because there is cruelty and injustice and evil. But God and God's universe is all good, so how could this be? God had to break the pot in order to create the universe and our world as it is, so we would have the opportunity to strive towards godliness. Therefore, it is our duty to "repair the world."

So, why did I bring that up? Because utilitarianism would seem to indicate that what matters is the large scale action; things that affect many people. But (keeping with broken pot metaphor) to repair the pot fully, we need to glue back in the tiniest of shards, not just the large chunks. Therefore, ethical actions also concern things such as stopping to help up someone who has tripped, or even stopping to smell the roses.

We continue to discuss ethics, because people often do not really think. People do often let instinct, or habit, or precedence, or the really great smell of that apple pie on the window sill guide their actions. Yet, we are, at our best, capable of so much more. So, it is incumbent upon us (OK, me at least) to continue discussing and teaching; acting as Socrates did, as a gadfly to the little corner of society that I can reach. Yes, incentives are more effective at modifying behavior. But I pose these questions. Should that be so? Should we not be as the angels?

Changing topics sort of... **Jim Stumm** says he has no interest in punishing someone for breaking a law, but is interested in protecting society. But that is what punishment is all about in one form or another. It is either meant to separate the malefactor from society or to reform behavior so that these "bad" actions don't happen again, or both. Depriving someone of life and/or liberty is how we define punishment in the "criminal" justice system. I think for certain types of people and certain types of actions that hitting them in the pocketbook is a more effective form of "punishment" or coercion to protect society from similar actions, and that is why many malefactors are sued by the government, as opposed to being brought to criminal trial.

Well that's gonna do it for this issue – at least until I think of something else.

Until next time, best...  
Alex

☐**CKK**: *I always find that pictures often don't do justice to real objects. In most cases things are more impressive in person, e.g. Niagara Fall, but it is interesting to hear that the "space-ship" isn't one of them. The ethical basis for criminal law in its simplest dichotomy is either in a retributionist (punishment) or utilitarian (rehabilitation) model.*☐

Robert Lichtman  
11037 Broadway Terrace  
Oakland, CA 94611-1948  
robertlichtman@yahoo.com  
27 Jun 2009

Hi, Henry--

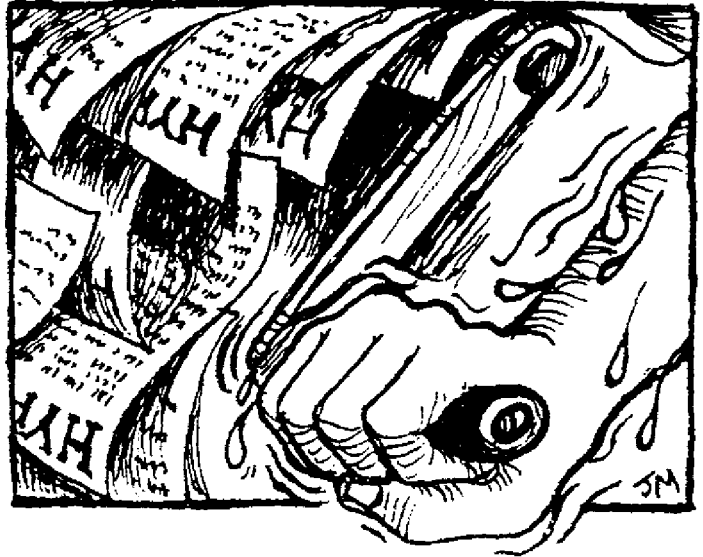
I'd like to make a belated comment on **Chris Garcia's** article in #132 – and in particular, where he writes, “I think the zines of today are better than those of the past.” In what follows he appears to be making the case that this is in large part because of today's mostly superior means of reproducing fanzines. He admits that there *was* good writing in the past, but then says it “holds up well, but visually, it might not be as easily accepted by modern eyes.”

What are “modern eyes”? Writing is either good or it isn't, and to me it doesn't matter if it's in faded ditto, blotchy mimeography, or pristine laser printing. Conversely, good production values won't do a thing to transform bad and/or uninteresting writing into something that matches its presentation.

He writes, “I'm not convinced that given the abilities of today, FanEds of the day would have done much more.” Well, I would have killed for color laser printing in 1963; but I don't think that in itself it would have made my fanzines better. They were pretty good in black mimeo on white bond....

Best wishes,  
Robert

□TKK: *This is an interesting distinction. I think that lack of visual appeal often factors into pre-judgment. I know you shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but there is only one first impression. A fanzine that lacks visual appeal or some care to production values is less likely to get the kind of scrutiny necessary to know whether the writing is of greater or lesser quality. Faded ditto can be hard to read and consequently may not be read. It may be a diamond in the rough, but . . .* □



## Springtime in Texas

by Todd Bushlow

Springtime in Texas, and probably many other parts of the country, typically signals the arrival of carnivals, stock shows, and hail storms. I definitely prefer the arrival of the first. See, I think that a carnival is somewhat like a time travel device. Once one passes beyond the threshold, one can quickly lose ten, twenty, thirty, or possibly even forty mental years age in an instant. Often, that's a good thing. Smelling the bizarre yet tantalizing aroma of cotton candy and funnel cakes can cast a powerful spell, bringing thoughts of a simpler time or maybe a rush of feel-good serotonin to the brain. What fun screaming at the top of one's lungs, zooming down a kiddie coaster or caught in the clutches of a monster at the scare-o-rama. And let's not forget slamming down a large cola in seconds flat. Ah yes, sugar, adrenaline, and caffeine, the holy hat trick.

Springtime carnivals also seem to have a dark side too. Instead of eliciting pleasant memories of a time gone by, standing in front of a house of mirrors for me is more likely to cause the shivers, or possibly even a mild panic attack. Ever walk on the other side of the road to avoid a creepy house or individual? Ever feel like someone is walking on your grave?

But they couldn't be because you're not dead yet. That's me and the house of mirrors (and possibly my wife too). See back in the early '70s around age seven or so, both of us freaked out major monkeys in maniacal mirror mansions some 500 miles apart. Yet today, a four year old child chirps up saying, let's go in there Mommy Daddy. Yes, there! Didn't you mean the roller coaster dear child? No Daddy, there! (now imagine a tiny finger pointing directly at The House). With much trepidation, the three of us pay the ferryman and enter the transparent travesty. Thankfully a friendly soul advises us to watch for the reflections! Grasping to that mental key like a life preserver, the three of us quickly zoom through the hall in a flash. Hand out in front, moving left and right, never backwards. What a blast. No mental breakdowns, no crying out for Mommy or Daddy, and the four year old did fine too!

Springtime in Texas is also apparently a time of learning. So go out there and take your kid, grandkid, or maybe someone else's kid (with permission of course) to the carnival. You'll have a blast and maybe even slay some long simmering demons. And best of all, the cost of tickets are on par with what psychotherapists charge these days. Happy trails....



“The usual” generally refers to either a letter of comment (LOC), a contribution, or trading with your fanzine or generally any friendly means of communication.

*Alexiad Vol. 8 No. 3* by Lisa and Joseph T. Major; 1409 Christy Ave.; Louisville, KY 40204-2040; bi-monthly; \$2 or the usual. A nice fanzine with lots of book reviews and a solid letter column.

*Banana Wings #38* by Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer; 59 Shirley Road; Croydon, Surrey CR0 7ES; UK; fishlifter@googlemail.com; irregular; the usual. A nice fanzine with lots of traditionally fannish content.

*Ethel the Aardvark #142* by rotating editors; PO Box 212; World Trade Centre; Melbourne, VIC 8005; Australia; ethelaardvark@yahoo.com.au; bi-monthly; AU\$30/year or the usual. This is the official zine of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club and covers club news and SF related material in Australia.

*Feline Mewsings #36*; [COA] 2081 W. Overlook St.; PO Box 5323; Oracle, AZ 85263; <http://homepage.mac.com/laurraine/Felinemewsings/>; Laurraine@mac.com; irregular; \$3 or the usual. A nice personalzine normally distributed as part of FAPA.

*Living Free 143* by Jim Stumm; Hiler Branch, Box 29-KK; Buffalo, NY 14223; irregular; \$2. An interesting zine dedicated to living independently. .

*Lofgeornost 95* by Fred Lerner; 81 Worcester Ave; White River Junction, VT 05001; fred.lerner@dartmouth.edu; irregular; the usual. This is Fred’s FAPA zine.

#### We also heard from:

Warren Buff, Megan Bouchard, Todd Bushlow, John Hertz, Hope Liebowitz, KRin Pender-Gunn (advertising “Silly Illos Again” - \$10 for 300 Ian Gunn Cartoons – PO Box 567; Blackburn, Vic 3130; Australia; kringunny@hotmail.com), Randy Robbins; Alexander Slate, Joy V. Smith, Sue Welch

## Fanzines Received in Trade

*MaryMark Press* by Mark Sonnenfeld; 45-08 Old Millstone Dr.; East Windsor, NJ 08520; irregular; the usual. Various strange publications with experimental writing styles.

*Narcolepsy Press Review 2009*; Randy Robbins; PO Box 17131; Anaheim, CA 92817-7131; narcolepsypresszine@hotmail.com; irregular; \$3 or the usual. Short capsule reviews of zines from many genres.

*Opuntia 67.1E & 67.1F* by Dale Speirs; Box 6830; Calgary, Alberta; Canada T2P 2E7; irregular; \$3 or the usual. Commentary on Steampunk, alternative history, investing in gold, and the essays of Leacock.

*Vanamonde No. 783-87* by John Hertz; 236 S Coronado St No 409; Los Angeles, CA 90057; This is John’s APA-L zine with interesting tidbits.

*Visions of Paradise #138-40* by Bob Sabella; 24 Cedar Manor Ct; Budd Lake, NJ 07828-1023; BSabella@optonline.net; monthly; the usual. A nice collection of issues. The montly publication rate has made for a more flexible fanzine.

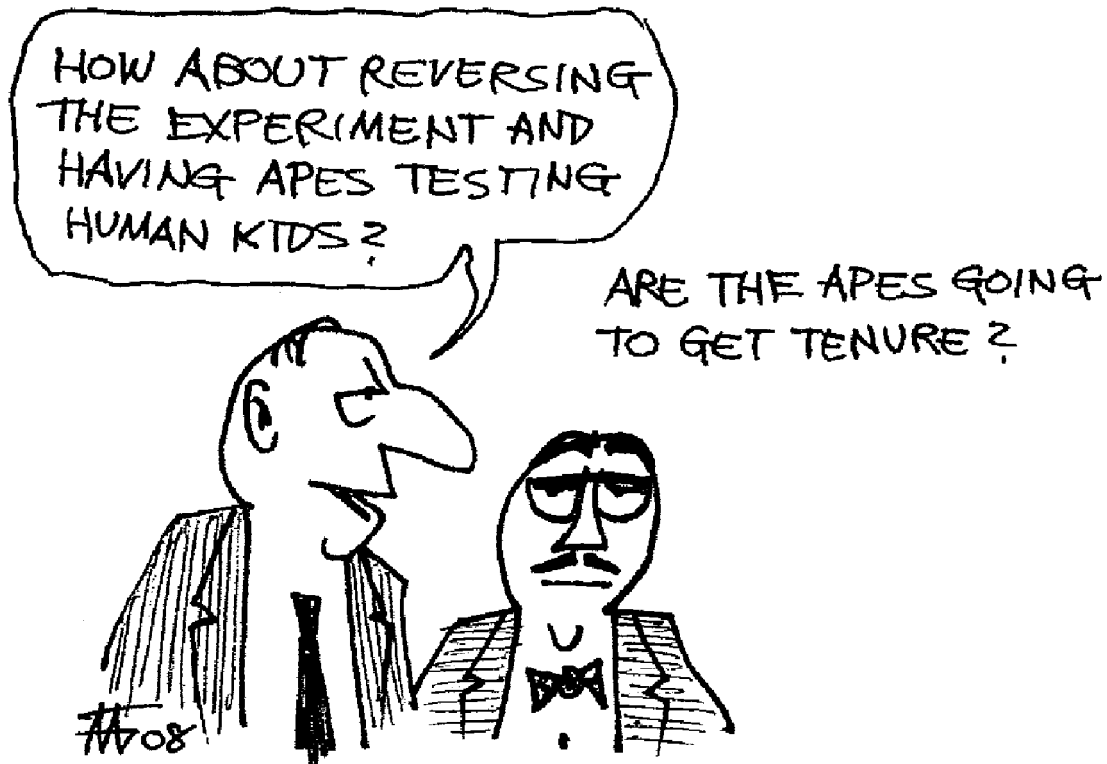


## Knarley's Planned Con Attendance

Please inspire me here.

Mars in 2095 (Worldcon 153) Marsport, Mars

Labor Day, 2095



**You Got this Issue Because ...**

\_\_\_\_\_ I found your name on the machine the goes bing.

\_\_\_\_\_ After due consideration I turned down the California Bar's request to be a bar exam grader. I'm still suspicious of what they are purporting to measure with the exam.

\_\_\_\_\_ You are going to write me some interesting articles.

\_\_\_\_\_ We trade

\_\_\_\_\_ You sent me a contribution. Thanks.

\_\_\_\_\_ You sent me a letter of **complaint** comment.

You have \_\_\_\_\_ issues left before you are designated a black hole and dropped from the mailing list.