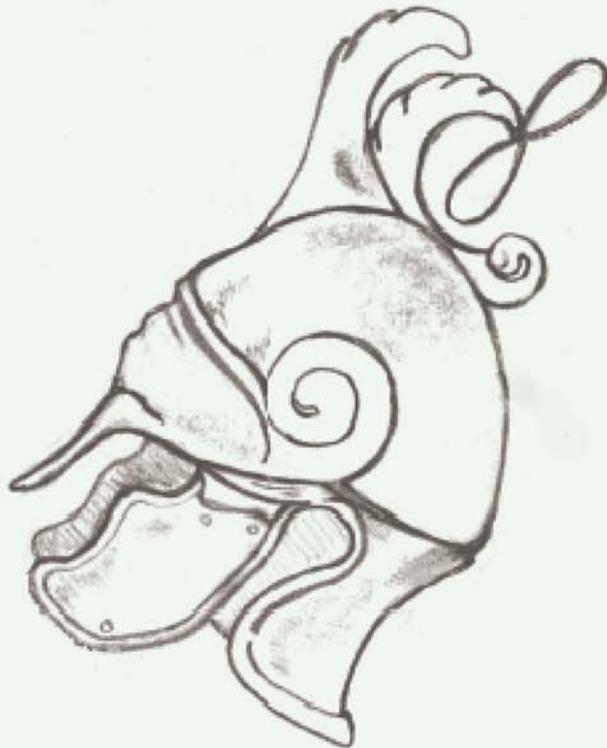


the

Knarley Knave

Issue no138



The Knarley Knews -- Issue 138

Published in March, 2011

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Artist	Page(s)
Sheryl Birkhead	Cover
Brad Foster	14
Alexis Gilliland	18
Terry Jeeves	6
Joe Mayhew	10, 17
William Rotsler	7, 12

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1. All contributions may include a pseudonym (e.g. Knarley, Sydrous, Shit-for-Brains) at the contributor's whim.
2. To get this fanzine you are required semi-yearly to initiate contact with the editors (black-holish behavior is not rewarded). This could be a postcard, phone call, your fanzine, or contribution of your choice. The editors, of course, prefer a contribution so they don't have to write so much. This notwithstanding, you may purchase copies for \$3.00 each.
3. Advertising is free provided that the ads are of interest to the editors and that it is for a non-profit organization.
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.
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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
15290 Upper Ellen Rd.
Los Gatos, CA 95033 USA
(408)335-3632
knarley@welchcastle.com OR
<http://tkk.welchcastle.com/>



Next Issue Deadline: April 30, 2011

Editorial

(In which Knarley gets to spume!)

Another publishing cycle in the life of *TKK* is coming to its natural conclusion – another issue. I'm trying to figure out where the time went as it is now the middle of March and I'm about two weeks behind of where I'd like to be. I should have found the time to get this issue out in time for distribution at Corflu, but things got very busy that week for reasons that will be discussed later. In the meantime, please enjoy this issue and send in plenty of LoCs.

So many things have happened since the last issue that it is hard to know where to begin. I suppose I should indicate that work has picked up significantly since last fall. We have a couple of patent cases that I'm heavily involved in as well as some patent prosecution before the patent office, but cannot provide too many details. (It is the nature of the attorney-client relationship that I'm not allowed to say much, to anyone, as part of client confidentiality. Rather than risk disciplinary proceedings before the state, I can only speak in the vaguest of generalities.) An interesting change since this time a year ago is the significant increase in responsibility that I'm being given. Some of this is of a supervisory nature and others having to do with the greater trust being given to the work I do. It is a pleasing evolution. As long as I'm keeping busy and have sufficient challenge, I'm likely to be a happy and healthy employee.

The big news, though, over the past few months is that Letha's mother has moved up the hill to live with us. Well, that isn't technically correct. Letha's mother purchased a large travel trailer that will eventually be moved onto a parking pad behind the house. This was all supposed to happen in mid-February and is the primary reason why I didn't get *TKK* done then. We had a lot of site preparation to do to make room for the trailer. We had to move our portable garage (10x20), move the wood pile, move a brick and roof tile pile, and take down a large tree and a number of smaller trees. All this so that a contractor could come in, level the parking pad, and bring in base rock and gravel. The contractor was scheduled in the week prior to Corflu and all the other work had to get done. It was quite a lot of activity and we even ended up postponing a tentative birthday party for myself the weekend of the Super Bowl. In fact, we were so busy that we did not get around to sitting down for the Super Bowl until about 8pm pacific time – well after the game was over. Normally I'd have little interest in the game, but my two favorite teams played this year and it was an interesting game to watch. As for the commercials, I think we've all been jaded to expect the spectacular, and it is hard for the advertisers to top each other from year to year.

We managed to get everything done for the contractor and he did a fairly good job. We had a problem with one of the back corners of the parking area where it appears the prior

owner had dug some kind of drainage for his trailer from when he first moved up here. The ground was basically soup under that area and we had to install a French drain (a rock and gravel bed with a perforated pipe to drain the liquid) that cleared things up right away. Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to move the trailer. It rains regularly here throughout the winter and as long as the ground is wet, it will be difficult to move the trailer in as it has to be backed up hill to get to the parking area. It looks like we will have to wait for an extended spell of drier weather before the trailer can be brought in.

Despite this, Letha's mother has moved up here anyway. We've made room for her in the house, but fortunately for everyone this will only be temporary. One of the motivating factors for all of this was that Letha needed some surgery that requires a two-week significant convalescence. (i.e. no driving) Having Letha's mother here was a virtual necessity to deal with all the comings and goings of the children. The surgery went well and Letha is recovering nicely. I took the two days off that Letha was in the hospital. The interesting note of trivia associated with this is that it is the first time that I can ever recall taking sick leave. Once, back in the nineties I cancelled a meeting and one class due to a migraine, but I worked the rest of the day. This doesn't mean that I don't get ill, I just work through it. This includes the time I got the flu during the summer and taught my classes anyway. Yes, I'm probably the Typhoid Mary of my office, but I generally feel better if I get up and do something than lie around in bed all day.

As a birthday gift to myself I decided to attend Corflu. It was about what I expected with large numbers of like-minded people sitting around and talking what seemed like more weighty topics at the time of the conversation. What I particularly enjoy about fanzine conventions is the ability to finally put faces on the many names that I've corresponded with or seen in print over the years. Corflu is particularly good for this with British fanzine fans, who attend in large numbers. It was an enjoyable weekend and I even managed to get Letha to come down for dinner on Saturday night. The two of us joined Art Widner, Murray Moore, and Mary Ellen Moore (apologies if I have Murray's wife's name wrong) at a local Mongolian BBQ. It was a pleasant evening and a pleasant weekend.

My other big time sink over the past month has been getting my taxes done and filed. Last year I ended up owing over \$13k for reasons I'd rather not get into. Needless to say, despite heavy withholding during the second half of last year, I was eager to see such bad news again this year. I took me

Continued on page 6

Towards a New Theory of Capitalism: The Ethics of Free Market Capitalism Part 2

by Alexander R. Slate

The Wealth of Nations was first published in 1776. The world at that time was empty compared to today, with a population somewhere around 10-12% of what it is today. Power was primarily provided by water, wind or, muscle (either animal or person). Heat was provided by the burning of wood (or dung in various places around the world). The world was just about to head into the first industrial revolution. It seemed to be a world of unlimited resources.

It was also a world where the causes of illness were just being discovered, and where the term “pollution” had probably not even been coined. And though mankind’s effect on the landscape was there to be seen; it was viewed in either one of two ways. It was either not recognized, or ignored because there was “more where that came from.” The world was a place for man to tame.

I don’t have figures, but the majority of the world’s population was probably involved in the “production” of food. The “production” of food includes agriculture (i.e. farming), herding, hunting, and gathering. This was probably true even in Europe, though the percentages were probably lower than elsewhere.

But all that is the past; what are the current trends in capitalism? What does it mean to subscribe to capitalism as an economic system?

There are as many facets to capitalism as there are any other economic, political, religious or philosophical theory. For the purposes of this article, to define the baseline state, we are going to concentrate on capitalism in the industrialized world and what I, at least, view as the dominant understanding of capitalism. However, it may also be necessary to potentially exaggerate to include the libertarian view of capitalism, which hovers at the edge of capitalist orthodoxy – if it does not actually occupy it.

In some sense, the “orthodox” view of capitalism has returned to a hyper-Adam Smith understanding. That capitalism requires no restraints, and indeed should have none. This goes by the name of “self-organization theory” or “the Austrian School theory”. It is often paired up with a theory espoused by Milton Friedman; that freedom of competitive capitalism is required for political freedom.

In this view of capitalism the profit motive is all. Now this, in and of itself is not bad. It is natural. The whole point of a business is to make a profit. A non-profit business is, in fact, an oxymoron. They are non-profit organizations, even if they may look like and be run in a manner very much like a business. The best example I know of one of these is Battelle.

But so far, everything I have put down is either definition, framing, or even may be considered praise or justification. Why then, do I feel the need for a new theory of capitalism? Why does free market capitalism need reforming? The answer is that free-market capitalism is used as the excuse permitting the ruining of the environment and allowing growing unemployment and even to a great degree the boom-bust cycle of economics since WWI.

The real problem isn’t capitalism as a theory; it is capitalism as it is practiced. It is the combination of greed and shortsightedness (on many levels, but particularly from a time-view) that defines normal business today.

Modern American business is focused on immediate profits, on the quarterly balance sheet. I think that at most, irrespective of whatever claims they may have regarding a 5-year plan or a 10-year plan, the average business may look at the yearly profit and loss statements.

This has been true for quite a long time. In the 80s (or it may have been the 90s) I listened to a radio broadcast that compared American (US) vs European (primarily German) businesses. It talked about the American insistence on showing profits every quarter where the Germans were willing to take losses for a year, maybe two in order to have a larger measure of profit over a 5-year period. Can you imagine an American business losing money for 2-years without firing it’s CEO (if not a goodly portion of upper management) and the new team coming in and scrapping the plan just as it’s about to turn the corner?

I believe that businesses would be better in the long run if they stopped sacrificing their future in order to preserve the quarterly profit and loss statement. Now this is an easy thing to say, but what is actually meant by this? There are two different parts to a correct answer to this. The first is it depends on the individual business and the second is that there are many different potential facets that need to be looked at.

But we have to start somewhere. It is an interesting question of balance, and probably one which has no correct answer. But what is the question? How much of an annual budget do we put towards present business and processes and making them grow; how much do we put to maintenance of the current infrastructure just to keep it running as it is, and how much do we need to invest in finding the next big thing (or little thing – or mode of doing business – or new replacement infrastructure)?

Sue's Sites: Wellington - New Zealand's Capital

By Sue Welch

How strange it felt to be once again squeezed into a city, with its fast moving freeways, tall buildings and people scurrying along the sidewalks! Quite a different picture from our time spent so far in the wilds of this beautiful scenic country. A little jarring to find our hotel room barely big enough for two beds, let alone our suitcases. Our tour guide, Margaret, had told us before leaving our bus that we had but 15 minutes to change into appropriate dress and gather in the conference room for a lecture on New Zealand's government. "Is she kidding?" I thought, "A nap sounds better after our long day of driving." However, we scurried and managed to appear as told. The next hour proved absolutely fascinating as the country's leading political analyst, Nigel Roberts, explained how the government works. It is my thought to convey his lecture as accurately as possible in the next three paragraphs.

New Zealand is ruled by the House of Representatives, often referred to as "Parliament". There are usually 120 MPs, as they are called, who are elected by universal suffrage, currently every three years. But the Maori party is guaranteed 5 seats; in case five Maori party candidates are not elected, then extra seats are added so that they get their five. (The Maori were the first people to arrive in New Zealand, about 1000 years ago. European immigration began in the mid 1800's; and unlike most other places, the rights of the Maori were recognized and respected from the beginning.) The top election vote getters of the Maori party are given seats until the quota of five is reached. Therefore, Parliament can be as many as 125 members. There are multiple parties; in order to get a ruling party different parties band together following each election so that a majority is created. The parties in the majority are the ones who control what happens.

The government is led by a Prime Minister and his cabinet, all of whom must be chosen from among the members of the House of Representatives. There is no overriding branch, such as our Supreme Court, that holds Parliament in check. Nor is there a constitution. All rights to govern such as states' and city's rights in our country, do not exist in New Zealand. Rights to oversee certain things, such as the running of Auckland, the biggest city, can be extended but they can as easily be taken away. In fact everything is only temporary. Laws are passed but just as easily are changed. In fact the rules forming the Parliament itself can also be changed. Confusing? It seems that way to me. But this is probably much more efficient than the US system. There is absolutely nothing permanent except -

New Zealand is ultimately ruled by Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of New Zealand. She appoints a personal representative, the Governor-General, to oversee her New Zealand in-

terests. It is only in recent years that a native New Zealander has been appointed to this position. The Queen's representative has the right to step in at any time and squash whatever Parliament has done. But the final authority is the Queen herself. In reality the few times a disagreement has occurred, a compromise has been worked out.

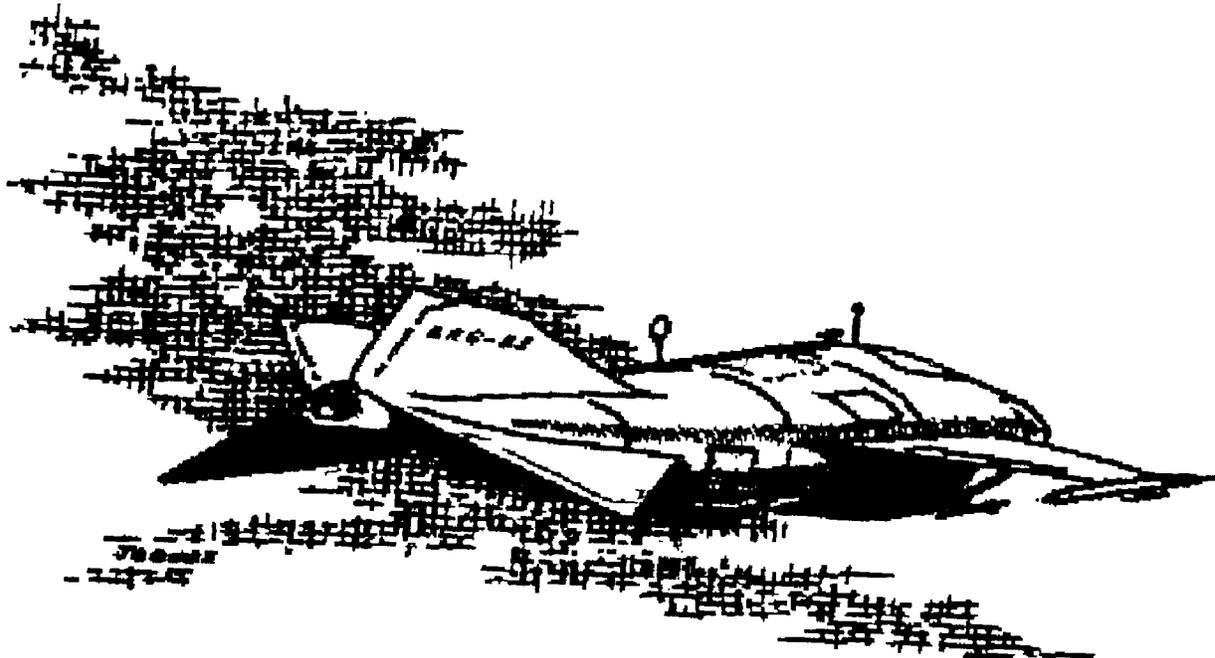
The Beehive, formally known as the Executive Wing, was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth in 1977 and completed in 1982. It is a modern circular structure with a weathered copper roof, a different and somewhat controversial look. The top (10th) floor is occupied by the cabinet room, the 8th and 9th floors are for the Prime Minister and his staff while the other floors contain cabinet ministers' offices. There are four basement levels, one of which houses the national crisis management center. Recently the Beehive was lifted up and placed on rollers to prevent its destruction from an earthquake. Part of the basement wall is open so that visitors can view how the building will roll with the quake.

A tunnel leads from the Beehive basement into the Parliamentary House, completed in 1922. The chamber in which Parliament sits is modeled after the House of Commons chamber at Westminster, England. The MPs also have their offices in this building. The third government building is the Parliamentary Library. Originally built in 1899, it was badly damaged by fire in 1992 but has since been completely restored to its original style. These buildings are open to the



public with guided tours available. These buildings are indeed stunning.

European immigrants first appeared at the site of the present day city in 1839 where they found Maori Taranaki Whanui and Ngati Toa tribes already living here. The following year a new city began to be built. Wellington's geography allows only for a compact city, the central city is only 2 km wide. The city is nestled between Wellington Harbor to its south and the Rimutaka Mountain range to the north. In 1865 Wellington became the capital, replacing Auckland, the capital since 1841. Parliament felt that the capital should be moved to the southern region where gold had been discovered so that this area would not decide to become a separate colony. Wellington's excellent harbor also played a role in its choice to become New Zealand's capital; today the harbor is still a big factor in the city's prosperity. The Harbor empties into Cook Strait, which in turn goes east to the Pacific Ocean and west to the Tasman Sea and Sydney, Australia (1384 miles away).



Editorial continued from page 3

the better part of two weekends to answer all the questions in TurboTax the right way so that I was making the correct filing. At the heart of the problem was our former home in Wisconsin that we sold early last year after using it as a rental for about 18 months. In the US, you can avoid most of the capital gains tax on your primary home as long as you've lived in it at least two of the prior five years. (There are other restrictions, but the two-of-five rule is the primary factor.) When I originally entered the data, I mistakenly told TurboTax that I sold this "business" property rather than simply taking it out of service and then including elsewhere as the sale of my home. You would think that TurboTax would know this as it had all the prior data from my prior tax years and knew when I converted the home to use as a rental. To make a long story short, I had to delete and reenter all the data at least three times, before I stumbled upon the correct set of check boxes

Today Wellington's metro area population is approximately 389,000 making it New Zealand's third largest city. Slightly larger is Christchurch (South Island) with approximately 389,100 people. The Auckland metro area (North Island) has 1,436,400 or 1 in 3 of New Zealand's residents. Total New Zealand population is approximately 4,315,000.

From the beginning Wellington set aside extensive parklands, which is still a high priority. On the hill west of the city center are Victoria University and Wellington Botanic Garden; a popular cable car carries visitors to these spots. The Harbor area features not only the Te Papa National Museum, but also many restaurants and a dinner theatre. The climate can be considered temperate marine; the city is notorious for its cold winter winds blowing in from Cook Strait. Rainfall averages 49 inches, heaviest in June and July, wintertime; and snowfall is rare. Wellington's latitude is 41 degrees south, similar to that of Chicago, Cleveland and Rome. It is both the southernmost and the remotest capital in the world.

that put the taxes in order. Once having taken care of that and a few other minor glitches I was able to finish the taxes and I now expect a significant refund this year. Much better news than last year and I should be able to take that nice 20th wedding anniversary vacation with Letha this year.

I continue to play hockey, but there are only two games left in the season. My team is the weakest in the league and we even had to play two games this year without a goalie. We did fairly well in both games, but I suspect the opposition dialed it back a bit as it isn't considered good form to tee-up slap shots against a skater who is not in goalie equipment. I still enjoy playing and find the one night a week game therapeutic.

I could probably ramble on some more, but in the interests of getting this issue our RSN, I'll sign off for now.

Until next issue...

INTERLOCUTIONS

Laurraine Tutihasi
PO Box 5323
Oracle, AZ 85623-5323
laurraine@mac.com
29 Dec 2010

Dear Henry and Letha,

I think you had plenty of legitimate excuses for falling behind with your publication schedule. Moving alone was enough of an excuse, though I guess it wasn't as big of a deal as your previous move. Moving within the same community is always easier. Sounds like you found a very nice place. I'm envious of your acreage; we only managed to get three.

When we are up in that area for Westercon next year, I'd love to see the place.

Congratulations on becoming a Prius owner. We are still enjoying ours after we replaced the battery. We hope the second one will last as long as the first—136,000 miles.

I'm still playing the eternal catch-up game. I've dropped two of my six APA memberships, but that may not be enough. Part of the problem is that one of our cats, Fluffy, has lymphoma that necessitates lots of extra vet visits to a vet almost an hour's drive away. Lately he also got an eye infection that uses up even more time. Somehow we're managing to limp along.

This year we humans enjoyed better health. I had a case of intestinal flu (unrelated to the real flu), but that was the worst.

Best wishes to your family for the new year.

R-Laurraine Tutihasi

☐**CKK**: *Visits are always welcome. Just let us know when you'll be in or near town and we'll see what we can work out. Sorry to hear about Fluffy. Vet visits are never fun, add in the drive and it doesn't get any better.*☐

Bob Jennings
29 Whiting Rd.
Oxford, MA 01540-2035
fabfcbks@aol.com
4 Jan 2011

Hi Henry and Letha;

Received my copy of *The Knarley Knews* #137 today and thought I would shoot off a letter of comment while it was fresh in my mind.

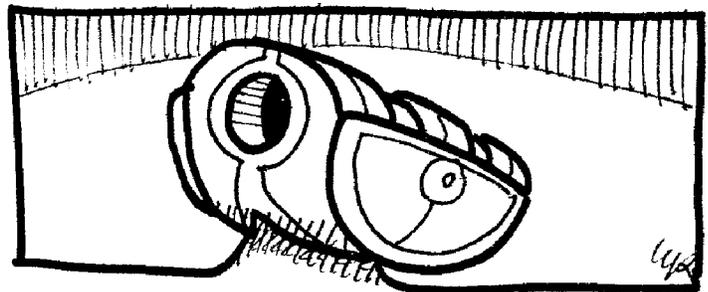
The layout and format looks extremely professional; it puts most fmz to shame. I'm not quite as thrilled by the very small typeface but wide margins help and my eyes ought to be used to teeny-tiny type by now after squinting thru the assorted weekly adventure publications in my dime novel collection. In ye olden days the dime novel publishers used super small

print in order to save on both paper and postage. What goes around comes around. Here we are back at the same place a mere hundred and twenty years later.

I was interested in your comments about OCR technology and wished you had gone into more detail. Back when I was operating my science fiction book store one of my more or less regulars was a guy who was almost completely blind. He used a sort of OCR reader that would read the pages of books and then convert it back to speech so he could hear the book. There were problems with voice inflections, obviously, but his main problem was that on almost all books the stupid reader would shred up and eat the first four or five pages of the volume so he often missed the beginning of a novel. He preferred hardbacks or paperbacks with lots of filler pages at the beginning. I used to give him copies of the paperbacks I stripped the covers for credit since he was always strapped for money. I've noticed a lot of books these days use quite a lot of filler pages at the beginning to make the books look thicker. They also use wide margins and large type to give the appearance of added value. A 17cm Ace paperback from the sixties that sold for forty cents now is four times as thick with no increase in word count and that title also costs eight bucks a pop. And publishers wonder why people are moving to e-readers in droves these days.

You lick the envelopes you send your zine out in? Why? I use tape for my mailing envelopes, but you can buy one of those ceramic liquid roller things business offices use to moisten the flaps of envelopes. Saves a lot of time too.

I am always amazed at the ballot proposition process in Calif. The real problem is that it is extremely easy for ballot initiative to get on the slate. If the qualification process were made slightly harder a lot of political fluff could be easily eliminated, and questions/proposals that a significant number of voters were honestly interested in would still make it thru the process with no great difficulty. Here in Mass. we get two to four ballot questions per election, which makes it much easi-



er to keep the public interested and informed on the outcome. Your description of trying to plow thru your pre-election booklet just underscores the problem with an initiative setup that is too easy. With large numbers of questions on the ballot most voters will not bother to examine most of the questions and they won't even bother to vote on the ones they don't understand. This seems pretty counter productive to me.

Gene Stewart's article on fragmenting SF was interesting, but I'm not so sure that hitting the mainstream shot-gun fashion is necessarily a good thing. I have no problem with science fiction now embracing chick lit fantasy/SF romance stories, or alternative history what-if scenarios, or SF pornography, or vampire fetish novels, its just that I have no interest in that stuff.

I don't want to go into Geezer Mode this early in the letter, but I do prefer traditional adventure science fiction, and I think a lot of the people who actually buy and collect the stuff prefer that material as well. There is a lot of experimentation in the name of science fiction and fantasy, but it seems to me that much of this experimentation, or fragmentation, or mainstream stretching, whatever you want to label it, much of it doesn't sell sufficient quantities to make it viable in the long run (or even the intermediate run). The growth of e-publishing, which is extraordinarily cheap and can be easily distributed for pennies as compared to dollars for printed works may change all that, but I'm not so sure. Selling 650 copies of a Regency romance steam-punk werewolf novel may seem pretty hot stuff to the person who wrote it, but in the world of real print publishing that doesn't even qualify as chump change.

Interesting article on the New Zealand trip but it doesn't inspire much in the way of comments, except to be mildly astonished that the practice of tipping hasn't caught on there. I just assumed natural human greed would have made tipping (or extortion, as I sometimes think of it) a planet-wide practice by now.

Facebook and the other social electronic sites bother me in that the whole phenomena illustrate how modern society has managed to totally isolate and dehumanize us all. People are so afraid/unable/unwilling to interact with living human beings on a personal basis that they must now resort of electronic contact and the illusion that total strangers are somehow "friends." I don't believe this is a good thing. People seem to be afraid of letting real people into their lives, even people they come in contact with every day. What does this say about our modern lives when the pressures of everyday life have virtually broken the basic bonds of human contact?

I note several letter writers had harsh things to say about the free enterprise system. You know, it's easy to harangue and scream about the horrors of modern corporation behavior, and the last couple of years have certainly generated enough headlines to keep even the most docile anarchist on the edge of hysteria, but if you step back and look at the big picture you'll find that most businesses and corporations are not out there destroying the environment, grinding their employees to dust or breaking laws right and left. The media has cast

corporations are the modern equivalents of juvenile delinquents back in the 1950s. Most teenagers were not switchblade toting punks, and most businesses are not Enron or Lehman Brothers. Obviously the bad guys need to be rooted out and punished, but let's get a grip on reality here. Screaming about how capitalism is universal evil strikes me as being pretty stupid considering that capitalism has been directly responsible for creating modern civilization and all the technological comforts we enjoy.

Massachusetts has the one day/one trial system here as well. Prospective jurors are called in for a one day seating. During the day the jury pool may be drawn on the trials set to take place in the courthouse that day. Trials typically last one or two days at most. I've been called for jury duty several times but never actually sat on a jury or even underwent questioning. In almost every case the prosecutors and attorneys were able to reach some sort of deal before the jury selection began. The one time I was almost on a jury, the defendant had a blood vessel burst as he was stepping out of his house and had to be rushed to the emergency room. Ironically this was for a fifth offense drunk driving charge, and the guy was in such sorry shape from those years of alcohol abuse that he died the next day in the hospital.

Everything I've heard says that e-zines get much less comment that actual print zines. I personally find reading e-zines kind of a pain, with the layout generally hard to navigate. Of course I have a dial up internet connection, so that may be a factor. Another thing I've noticed is that a bunch of the e-zines I've investigated do not have dates, so you don't know if the offering is fresh and new and deserves comment, or perhaps years old where the editor may not even be in the hobby any more. Still, I'd like to see somebody do some actual research on this subject to see if fans are more likely to react to print or e-zines. I'm a print person myself.

I don't know about other kinds of religious schools, (altho rumors abound), but Catholic schools in this area teach a normal range of subject matters, while also offering a religious course and school prayers. Catholic schools around here are all tuition institutions and although they do not pay property taxes, they don't get any other special benefits.

The towns and cities in this state are so strapped for money that they have taken to asking non-profits, particularly colleges, if they will contribute something to the city coffers even though they do not have to pay the local property taxes. Remarkably, many of these institutions are sending some bucks back to the town treasuries. I think the locals would do much better if they stopped offering tax deferred incentives to businesses to set up factories, warehouses and the like inside city limits. These businesses may hire local people to work there, but given them tax free status for X number of years and providing other incentives is counter productive in the long run and it's a clear slap in the face to local business people who are happy to establish themselves without any legal bribery.

Average income may rise over time, but so does inflation. Inflation under normal condition is about a three to four

percent upward shift every year. Sometimes it's higher than that. Given that inflation is a constant, is the rise in income an actuality or not? My personal opinion is that the rise in income is not a true increase in monetary worth, but simply an upward adjustment trying to keep pace with inflation. A candy bar in 1955 cost a nickel, today it's a buck. A comic book in 1955 cost a dime, today that comic book costs \$2.99. A few products and commodities have gone down or remained relatively constant in price because of dramatically increased production methods or intense competition in the marketplace. A ball point pen cost about a dime in the 1960s, and today it still costs about a dime, or even less.

I don't think income is actually increasing relative to the cost of living at all. Then there is the wild card that can kick the whole economic push-cart over. When a necessary commodity such as gasoline rises in price, everything else goes up to compensate. When the price of the commodity goes up too sharply in the short term, economic chaos can result. Check the economic downturn after gasoline leaped upward in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf, or bread riots in some foreign countries. Higher incomes mean that people have to spend more of their incomes on those volatile commodities just to maintain their same standard of living.

Good luck trying to fix bad schools by throwing more money at them. What is needed is a way to get bad teachers out of the system and also to move problem students out of the system as well. Unfortunately teachers unions are very strong and united in their goal of protecting every incompetent teacher in their group. A seniority system endorsed by these unions guarantees that almost nothing is ever going to change unless major intervention by parents and school committees occurs. And that almost never happens.

As a guy who ran a science fiction book store for twenty-three years before closing my brick and mortar store to go into mail order book sales, let me add my two-cents to the discussion. Books cost too much because publishers are not selling thru sufficient quantities on most titles to justify the cost to sales ratio. Returns on most books run over fifty percent. On some titles the return rate is seventy percent. That's why a hardback book now retails for \$26.00, and a paperback goes for \$8 or more. If the sell-thru ratio could be changed, even slightly, the cover price could be lowered or at least maintained. Publishers and retailers need to make a profit, and nobody that I know has any interest in seeing the cover prices of books go up. Working with specialty dealers such as science fiction or mystery book stores was once seen as a viable method of changing that ratio.

What has happened is that the public has shifted most of their business to mail order books. Internet sellers such as Amazon offer a tremendous selection and they offer new books at discount prices. I personally prefer to buy the book and take it out of the store right away so I can start reading it that night. But what is the local store doesn't carry the title or the author you want? More specifically, what if Barnes & Noble.com or Borders.com is offering that \$26.00 hardback for \$20.00, or the eight dollar paperback for \$5.50, and also offers free

shipping if you place an order for \$25 or more. Guess what, lots of people are willing to delay the reading experience to get the broad selection and save the money. That's what is killing physical book stores, and that's what is changing the business.

The sudden growth of e-readers is changing the picture even more, because e-books cost a whole lot less than physical books. Most people just want to read the books, they have no great desire to collect the things. That being the case, the that is why don't these folks just go to their local library and check the volume out? The answer of course, is that even big libraries can only stock so many copies of a book. If Stephen King has a hot new book out, and your local library buys twenty-five copies of that book, and fifty people come in wanting that book this week, then half of those people won't get to read the book for a few weeks, possibly not for a few months. Or they can pay a deep discount price and get the book on their e-reader and read it right now, while they have a burning interest in that title.

This is already changing the book business. How is it going to play out? Damned if I know. I prefer physical books printed on paper, and so do most people. But price and convenience are determining factors in most economic decisions. WalMart is successful for exactly that reason, and I think that as the price of e-readers goes down, (and some of the annoying minor problems with most e-readers get corrected), that a majority of people who read books are going to decide that low price and getting the text almost instantly will more than compensate for not holding that paper print volume.

Thanks for the mention of *Fadeaway* in your zine column. Actually *Fadeaway* is a genzine which is also distributed thru SFPA. I've changed the indentia wording to make this clearer. Issue #20 should be back from the printer in a week or so, and I'll zip a copy right out to you when I get the copies.

Bob Jennings

□CKK: I didn't know that 10 point type was a very small typeface. One of the complicating factors in California is the requirement for a ballot initiative to raise taxes. Ready availability of e-publishing is likely to render Sturgeon's Law as an under-estimate. The lack of comment is one of the major factors in my decision to stay a print zine.□

Joseph T. Major
1409 Christy Avenue
Louisville, KY 40204-2040
jtmajor@iglou.com
January 4, 2011

Dear Knarley & Letha:

And now the knews . . . OCR had its own lacks. I had to scan a mimeographed family newsletter from the 1940s. This was wartime paper, deteriorating in quality even then, never mind what happened in the intervening sixty years. When I'd get jumbles of incoherent characters, I figured I ought to just type them in. That was pretty tedious, too.

Saving time, I do each issue of *Alexiad* in WordPerfect, which has more than sufficient format and layout features. It also allows me to select line height, because I find the standard line heights to be a little too wasteful of space.

Were the two little girls wearing winter parkas in 50-degree temperatures also wearing safety helmets under the fur hoods? In this risk-averse, lawsuit-friendly society, there is a growing tendency to assume the worst and prepare accordingly.

Sue's Sites: I'd be interested to read **Sue's** response to the searing description of New Zealand portrayed in Robert Heinlein's 1954 travelogue *Tramp Royale* (1992; NHOL G.125). I'd thought it might be exaggerated in parts, but when I found out that Heinlein did call his wife "Ticky", as he has it in that book, I did reconsider.

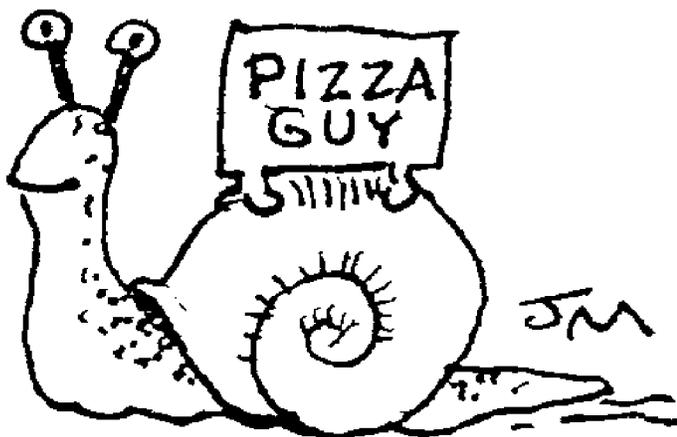
InterLOCutions: Me: In a world where a family of four can sit at the dinner table, all having cell-phone conversations, I'm not surprised that people in the same cubicle can IM each other instead of talking.

Alexis Gilliland: Not just subsidizing the criminal class in South America either. The most depressing thing about the murder of Nick Markowitz and the arrest of the man who ordered his killing, Jesse James Hollywood (yes, that really was his name), and of his father Jack Hollywood (who seems to have thought that having a son named "Jesse James Hollywood" was way cool), was that the arrest of the Hollywoods, big-time drug dealers, did nothing to restrict the availability. Nick was killed in order to frighten his half-brother into paying a \$1200 debt.

Eric Lindsay: Kindles have their advantages but I would want to see a better backup system. I mean, dropping one and breaking it could mean losing over \$10k worth of books!

Namarie,
Joseph T Major

☐**CKK:** *I can mostly control line height in InDesign. Sometimes I run into a stubborn formatting issue and have to get very creative by, for example, creating custom text boxes.*☐



A Slate
4308 Ridgepath Dr.
Dayton, OH 45424
alxsl8@yahoo.com
5 Jan 2011

Hiya,

Alexis Gilliland, Dave Szurek, and Milt Stevens: Just wait, my essay on economics is not a tip of the hat to Adam Smith and free market capitalism. It only seems that way to start. If you are going to discuss capitalism, you really have to start with Smith, though. The thing is, Smith, like any other theoretician is rarely completely taken in context by either side. Everyone takes just the portions that suit their argument. Monopolies are a good example, Adam Smith was opposed to them, but how often do you hear anyone talk about that? I did. What was in issue 136 was only part 1 of what will be a multi-part article that will pose some suggestions that go against what passes for free market capitalist theory today. I was just setting the stage – pay close attention to the last paragraph. Sorry if I mislead anyone.

Meanwhile, what **Alexis** said about capitalism is pretty much completely on target. A lot of what **Alexis, Dave** and **Milt** said sort of reinforce each other. I particularly like what **Alexis** stated when he said, "It may be that ... the formation of monopolies and oligarchies is inevitable... greed ... is a powerful force, like fire, and like fire is dangerous if uncontrolled." I agree, and it is why and what perhaps should be done within the system that my article is heading towards.

Jim Stumm: If what you were trying to say was your main point was your main point, then I can agree with you. However, what you said **appeared** to be that the discussion of ethics and philosophy is a waste of time because since it is an individual thing, and therefore any discussion could only be about the *one true way* (this is my paraphrase and not a quote of what you said). If I misconstrued your intentions, then I apologize, but I was reacting to your words, not your intentions.

You stated you were looking for pure logic (your words). I was not trying to present pure logic, it does not exist where individuals are concerned. I also was not trying to present the type of Golden Rule that you say I was trying to do. I did not present a one size fits all way to do charity. Never meant to. In other words, what I was ranting about was your misrepresenting what I was trying to accomplish. Get it? I am not trying to disprove your claim, because your claim didn't appear to be on target!

You say that you were talking about individualism, not situationalism. **Wrong!** You talked about both. Your own words, "I have long wondered how one might determine what is the right thing to do, not in particular cases, but in general." "[N]ot in particular cases" appears to me to be talking about situations. This saying of yours is also what I was upset about when I said "why then is it that people keep on looking for a one size fits all solution to every freaking situation." "[W]hat is the right thing to do... in general," appears to me to be look-

ing for a one size fits all solution. Thus we have situational vs the general rule. Therefore, quod erat demonstratum, and pardon my lousy Latin. **One more time** ... That's not what I was trying to do or will try to do, either with charity, or with anything else regarding ethics. Please understand that trying to set a framework for discussion is not trying to set up rules. When I look to set up a framework for discussion, I am trying to present point that others have made about the case, and also generally am trying to define the semantics.

While I will grant you your point about how comics present their point, re the use of humor, satire and exaggeration; the particular comics I am talking about are very pro the libertarian philosophy. I will also grant your point that children are not generally discussed in the terms that **Alexis** brought up, and that when they are discussed they are discussed in the terms you talk about. But don't dismiss that such discussion does exist, because it does. If I can ever find it, I will send you the source, but until then, let's let this particular topic die.

Free enterprise might be a better term, but capitalism is how Adam Smith and so many others refer to it, so I am going to stick with that term.

Meanwhile, Happy New Years to all. This past year had been a tough one for me. Many changes on the personal front and the professional front. I will most likely be moving in 2011. More on this as it develops.

Alex

☐**CKK**: *Monopolies are dangerous economically. While there is a certain efficiency in one bureaucratic infrastructure, there is too much risk of unfavorable price controlling by the monopoly as well as a general suppression of innovation.*☐

Ned Brooks
4817 Dean Ln.
Lilburn, GA 30047-4720
nedbrooks@sprynet.com
05 Jan 2011

Hi Knarl, thanks for the zine. I learned touch typing in the 50s, but it has long since degenerated into two-finger and the right thumb on the space-bar. Still, I type fast enough to keep up with composition – I don't think all that fast. But I hate having to copy anything. The last time I wanted envelopes, the cheapest available were white self-sealing – it used to be that the cheapest were always the kraft envelopes with the metal prongs that I had no use for. I had given up licking envelopes anyway, ptui! I was using a moist sponge on a stick, probably meant to be a disposable paintbrush.

Somehow I thought **Eric Lindsay** lived in the desert boonies, but his comment about the LaserJet printers not liking the damp makes me wonder if he's in the flooded northern part of Australia. Where I used to live in Tidewater Virginia on the Chesapeake Bay was notably damp, but I don't remember any problem. Of course the first PC printers I had there were dot-matrix, but I'm sure I had at least one HP LaserJet before I moved to north Georgia in 1998. I can see where excess damp would make the magic dust clot up (or is damp paper

a problem as well?) - maybe he could use a tent or booth and a dehumidifier. HP may have been looking at this problem when they made the toner - the original xerographic systems used carbon (essentially soot), but the MSDS for LaserJet toner indicates that it's about 50/50 iron oxide and the voodoo binder compound.

Funny cover! I have been doing fanzines for over 40 years but never a got that rude a postcard, at least not from a trufan – I did once get a nasty note from an Elvis fan who didn't like what I said about a review copy of his asinine book. From *It Goes On The Shelf* 15

Return to Sender / *The Secret Son of Elvis Presley* by Les & Sue Fox, Western Highlands Pub. (Box 4206), Tequesta (FL), 1996, 339pp, illus photos, \$21.95. This is a review copy of a book scheduled for release January 8, and the publishers rushed it to me as part of a kit that includes a b&w photoprint of the d/w art, a "reward poster" offering "up to \$100,000" for the discovery of the son of Elvis Presley, and an oval badge with the d/w art (which I can add to my collection of sf convention badges).

Frankly, this is a piece of crap – or maybe it's just that I never cared for Elvis. The characters are cardboard, the plot (Elvis arranges to have several blonde sons by in-vitro fertilization of unsuspecting married women) is silly, and the book wouldn't be half the length if the authors didn't feel they had to give up the full brand-name details of everyone's clothes, jewelry, furniture, and automobiles.

Best,
Ned

☐**CKK**: *I hated the Tidewater humidity, especially in the summer. I don't think I've ever gotten the super nasty LOC before, but I have been the target of some KCF reviews.*☐

Alexis Gilliland
4030 8th Street South
Arlington, VA 22204
January 5, 2011

Dear Henry,

You asked for a cover, enclosed is a cover, using a Rotsler-Gilliland collaboration from 1983. I had considered using a couple of Gnus, looking up images of Wildebeests for the drawing, and putting them in propeller beanies, with the caption "We are the Gnarly Gnus here at Worldcon." And the response "The hats are to get us into the Hugo Losers party." However, after 137 issues I would be surprised if you hadn't seen that one, already.

Your OCR technology is good, but not perfect. In my letter I see care for car and enforce for enforced, suggesting an intermittent problem with the last letter. Otherwise, **Alexander Slate** got an excellent response to his article, and you should have bugged him for the second installment. A case could be made that the Vikings were the prototypical Capitalists, which is to say, well organized thugs going out to exploit the exploitable by any means possible, even trade. The Romans had been much the same, Mafiosi with a knack for civil and

military engineering and conquering nations in order to rob and enslave them. The British? Consider the piecemeal annexation of India, and the Opium Wars in China, for instance. What was different was that the British got involved with the Industrial Revolution, which meant having expensive machinery that let them proclaim themselves the workshop of the world. In a touch of Liberalism, (once you start reforming government there is just no stopping) they abolished slavery, though Parliament didn't do much about providing for the poor until after the Empire had gone bye-bye. The record shows that making money is a powerful motive that will overcome most opposition, but at some point redistribution also becomes a powerful motive.

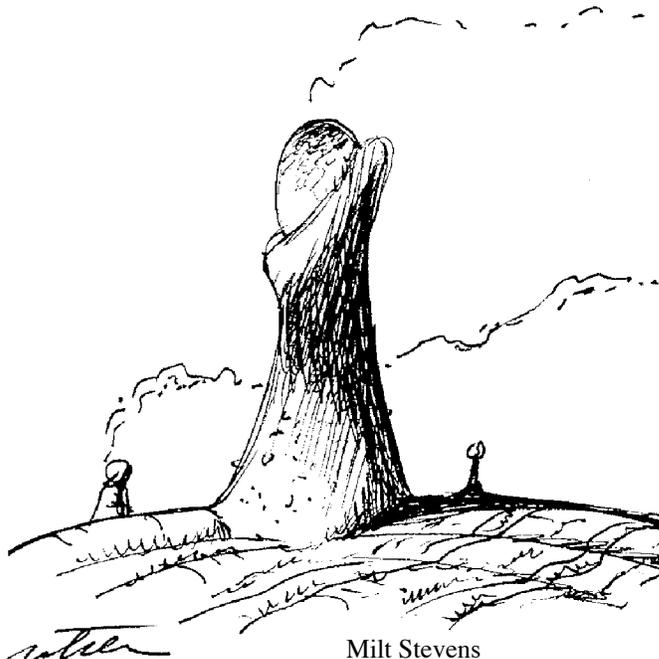
Jim Stumm suggests that private enterprise could ship mass to the Moon much cheaper than the government's \$25,000 a pound. Say the cost could be cut in half, to \$12,500 a pound, an extravagantly optimistic prediction. Guided by profit and loss, private enterprise might reasonably decide not to go there. Unless, unless ... **Jim** looks at a UN report predicting that incomes will rise so much by 2100 that we could maybe afford to go. He should look at the global warming reports, as well. A sea level rise of one or two meters would divert mankind's attention from the Moon like you wouldn't believe. On the question of whether children are in competition for their parent's resources, I doubt if **Jim** will find any textual support for the idea, but we note that it does cost about \$250,000 to raise a child from birth to age 18. We also note that Libertarians are mostly, indeed overwhelmingly male. From which fact one may deduce that most women, concerned with raising children, have voted with their feet. By and large male Libertarians are smart, handsome and rich, so how did all those women manage to go so wrong? Maybe by reading those underground comics or maybe by going out with a male Libertarian or two. I am open to alternate explanations for an observed fact, such as male Libertarians (skilled debaters that they are) refusing to let their date ever win an argument.

New Zealand. In the run up to the 1985 Worldcon, Dolly and I rented a car and drove around the North Island, which was in early spring and spectacularly beautiful. A street vendor's fish and chips were tempura and chips, as good as I've had anywhere, albeit at the one place on our last day. The only thing is that it is pretty much the end of the line from anywhere in the world, a long, long flight made tolerable on Air New Zealand by serving New Zealand wines. Alas, these days I hate flying, and even with a stopover at Hawaii, New Zealand is simply out of the question. That should do for now.

Best wishes,



CKK: *No one has done your proposed cover in any form that I know of. Typos are the bane of the zine editor. Past and future apologies for any typos.*



Milt Stevens

January 8, 2011

Dear Henry and Letha,

Marc Schirmeister's cover on *Knarley Knews* #137 offers an explanation for why so many neofans used to gafiate early. Lack of egoboo or possibly lack of egoboo combined with a fair amount of active hostility. Expecting much egoboo out of a new fanzine was always an unreasonable expectation. A few fans began publishing to general acclamation, but most didn't. Of course, most new fan publishers were teenagers back in the fifties, and their efforts were about what you would expect from a teenager. However, many of them improved remarkably when their work was subjected to public criticism. Within a very short time, they could spell and punctuate much better.

Egoboo is one reason why fans publish but certainly not the only one. I think the most basic reason is the desire to play the game. The other kids are playing, and we want to play too. The desire to get trades is another reason and somewhat related to the desire to play. There may also be a desire to communicate, but that is certainly the strangest desire of all. Express yourself at your own expense.

Henry's editorial discussed the how of producing a fanzine these days. Modern fanzine publishers have it easy. Back when I produced a genzine back in the early seventies, **everything** had to be typed. I thought typing a complete set of mailing labels for each issue was the most tedious part of the operation. Cranking and collating weren't all that much fun, and typing on a manual typewriter limited how many pages I wanted to put in a given issue. Also, I didn't like asking people for material, so I wrote the whole thing myself. Put it all together, and that's why I only published six issues.

I don't think Prohibition was the only amendment that limited rights. The one that limited a president to two terms limited the right of native born Americans over 21 from being president for as many terms as the electorate would bear, and it limited the electorate from electing any native born American over 21. This is not to say it was a bad idea.

The California initiative system can be pretty odd at times. However, you weren't around when Proposition 13 was instituted. The government was completely out of control and property taxes were going up several percent per year. My parents were in danger of being taxed out of their home which they had paid off years earlier. Prop 13 is the way it is partially to protect retired people from excessive property tax increases.

You probably will discover there are a wide variety of opinions on the subject of gay marriage. If it were up to me, I'd rule that marriage is a sacrament and should be left to religious bodies. The government can't regulate baptism and shouldn't regulate marriage either. The government can license domestic unions between any two individuals for the purposes of taxation, owning property, and other items traditionally associated with marriage. Render unto God those things that are God's and onto Caesar those things that are Caesar's.

Once you get past that point, you still might ask why domestic union should be limited to two people. Some religions already accept marriage for more than two people. Should an individual be allowed to form a domestic union with a corporation? Maybe that's still one of those detestable crimes against nature.

Yours truly,
Milt Stevens

□TKK: *I still publish as a mechanism for keeping in touch. I understand why Prop 13 happened, but that doesn't change the somewhat absurd results that exist as a result of it. The tax problem had more to do with the appreciation of real estate. In many markets the tax rate is often stable or declines to offset appreciation. Where it becomes a big problem is one neighborhood or another becomes trendy and appreciates faster than the larger tax base. In the 17 years I owned my home in Wisconsin, the net property tax went up the first year (to reflect the new appraisal) and then was stable or declined even though the house increased in value by over \$100k. The legal problem with marriage is ultimately due to the law co-opting a religious term.*□

Jim Stumm
PO Box 29
Buffalo NY 14223
Jan 14, 2011

Gene Stewart: I wish the term "science fiction" was analogous to "historical fiction." The rule with historical fiction is you don't change known facts of history. You write a story around these facts, usually inventing characters that could have existed, and events that could have happened, in that

milieu. If you change known facts of history, you're working in a different genre, alternative history.

A parallel science fiction would work within the limits of known science and a logical projection of that into the near future. If unscientific concepts are used, or if there is a slapdash disregard for scientific accuracy, that would be a different genre, and I wish it were called by a different name. Truth in labeling. But I realize it's a lost cause.

I prefer to read stories that are what I consider genuine science fiction. I like a story that describes a situation that plausibly could happen in the future. Any gross violation of science, or magic that works, cannot possibly happen. It may be an entertaining yarn, but I hope for more than that. One point especially stands out: There should be no faster-than-light hyperdrive, and that means no galactic empires. The story should take place within our own solar system which is room enough for a vast amount of great fiction. I'm always looking for that kind of story: realistic science, within our solar system, but they're very hard to find.

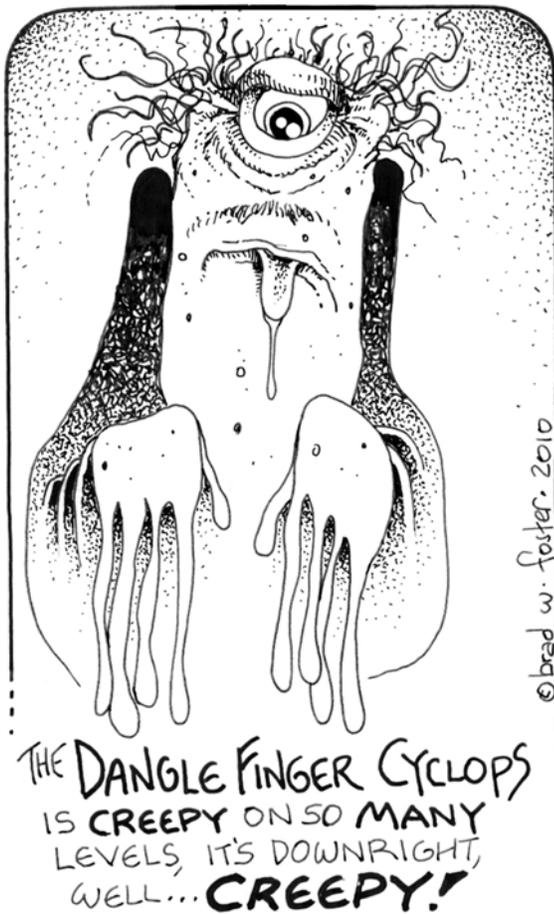
Alexis Gilliland: Re "the housing bubble burst and several trillions of dollars vanished into thin air." But those trillions of dollars never actually existed in the first place. It wasn't like bombing a country and destroying trillions worth of actually existing buildings and bridges and other facilities. The only thing that vanished were notions in people's minds, expectations of what they could sell their houses for. But your estimate of what your house is worth is merely a guess until an actual sale is finalized. With the bursting of the housing bubble, expectations changed, but no actual values were destroyed.

The same thing happens every time the stock market crashes. People talk about some trillions of dollars vanishing, but those trillions never really existed. They come from valuing your investments at the price of recent sales of similar investments. But you don't really establish the value of yours until you sell it, which may be at a higher or lower price.

Brad Foster: The one time I was interviewed for jury duty, I expressed my intention of doing some independent thinking, rather than accepting the recommendation of some expert. I was immediately dismissed. What they were looking for, apparently, were rubber stamps.

Milt Stevens, Capitalism: Libertarians do hold that most economic problems are caused, or made worse, by government interference. E.g., there would have been no housing boom and bust without the activities of the government entities Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. But the solution advocated by most libertarians is not to get rid of the government entirely, but rather to reduce it to a much smaller size. It should be devoted to suppressing common law crimes like stealing and fraud and murder, rather than intervening in the economy in a positive way, attempting to do what government cannot do, such as creating lasting non-government jobs.

TKK: I think prosecutors should more often go after the money made by fraudsters in civil actions rather than harder-to-prove criminal cases. Taking their money hits them where



it hurts. Of course, it's even better if you can do both, like Bernie Madoff, in the slammer and stripped of his assets. But the government causes much of this financial trouble by creating expectations of bail-outs. The speculator may reasonably calculate: If this risky investment works, I'll make big money, and if it goes bust, the government will bail me out, so I'll make good money anyway. That's called moral hazard. We hear that bankers made terrible mistakes. But from their point of view, most of the top decision-makers did just fine. Even if their firms went under, they walked away with bags of money.

TKK, Abandoning mortgages: But we're hearing about cases where the home investor doesn't negotiate with the bank at all. He simply stops paying his mortgage and moves out. He loses the house, and his financial investment, which was just a minimal down payment anyway, but apparently he has no further legal obligation. Or is that only according to the laws of certain states? I read that the housing bubble was really severe in only 5 or 6 states. Was that where state housing laws were particularly dysfunctional? We had no housing boom or bust here in western NY. Our housing prices have generally continued a slow, steady increase throughout the period.

Jim Stumm

□TKK: I think that in the recent crash that many of the victims were victims as a result of downstream problems. Certainly there is a societal interest in not bailing out the knowing risk takers who have been profit taking all along, but what about the person who cannot appreciate the real risk, because it is actively concealed from them, or who has risk indirectly as a fall out from a tangential market. This is where it is harder to justify a hard-line rule against bail outs. Unfortunately, bailouts too often go to those who are not as deserving. I am not aware of any state where a lender cannot get a judgment for the short-fall in a mortgage (based on shady memory from bar exam review). Irrespective of that, keep in mind that the bank took a risk too in issuing the mortgage based on an appraisal and in theory a down payment of 20% is supposed to cover the banks losses. When the down payment is below 20% the borrower pays an extra premium for primary mortgage insurance, *PMI*, that is supposed to cover the likely short fall. Unfortunately, this is exacerbated in an inverted housing market where the appraisals have significantly over-valued the property. □

Lloyd Penney
1706-24 Eva Rd.
Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2
Canada
penneys@bell.net
January 18, 2011

Dear Knarley:

Another *Knarley Knews* has arrived, and many thanks for that. I am sure issue 137 is full of good stuff; let's prove it and comment on it.

I think the flatbed printer I have had OCR capabilities, but I can't remember the last time I needed to scan anything out of a printed publication. So much is available as a file anyway. Same thing applies to burning a CD. Why do that when a little USB drive can hold so much more, and the contents can be loaded without special software.

Dressing for the weather...we do get our share of warm days in the late spring, and we often see immigrants from much warmer parts of the planet wearing heavy winter coats when I might be wearing a t-shirt and shorts. Looks odd, but it's a contrast to what I grew up with, and what they grew up with. Wisconsin and Ontario share some pretty harsh winters, so you know what it's about. California still requires you to have a warm coat at night. Yvonne lived in the far south end of California for a few years.

We see the Tea Party from a distance here, and I don't think they understand the damage they can do. I don't think they care, for they represent their own vested interest. I would like to learn more about their policies; I think they would prefer to remove rights from groups they don't like or approve of, and I think with the state of American politics, the more we know about this Tea Party (the creation of one small group, not a grass-roots movement) the more we'll know to avoid it.

Science fiction literature is much more than it was back in Gernsback's day, very true, and it has changed and developed continuously. We can't let the old curmudgeons, fan or pro, change that process. Today, one place where I see that change is in the steampunk sub-genre, where we speculate what the future would be like if we start in the Victorian era/the dawn of steam power, and go from there. As long as it exercises and stretches the imagination, I'd be amenable to reading it.

The local...I do enjoy what Facebook does for me, but I am not so new that I can't go back to the face-to-face ways of connecting. We do know our neighbours, and a lot of the people in our building. As technology changes and improves, there may be new social media websites spring up. Live-Journal and MySpace have their followers, but not nearly as many as before, while Facebook seems able to change to match technology.

I am learning to hate computers, though...we had problems with our dial-up that not even our ISP could fix, so they gave up on us, and we gave up on them. We've gone for high-speed, but the installation was incomplete, and we need a simple adaptor that will connect a high-speed cable to a phone jack. Half of the places we went to knew what we needed, but didn't have it, and the other half tried to sell us an Ethernet card. So, we are entering our second week of being offline, and Knarley, you should know that this letter was written some days before I got the opportunity to send it out. (Maybe it's not computers I hate...it's their complexity, and the expensive industry that has sprung up around them.) The adaptor we were told about was nonsense, other people have helped us complete the installation, and now we are online with highspeed. Our new address is above.

My loc... Yvonne has just started a new job with a local candy company. She is taking litigation classes at Humber College. I did apply to the Law Society for a couple of jobs, but did not get the chance of an interview. I've decided that I will continue to look in lots of places for work as I have done for far too long, but that I want to return to the Law Society. I can't think of a better place to work, and retire from.

We do none of this for the benefit of awards, but for the love of participation and communication. Still, when the awards and nominations come, it is easy to enjoy the egoboo. I think my peak with the Aurora Awards has come and gone, and there are new groups who have emerged onto the local fannish scene, so I doubt I will ever receive nominations again. So, I have volunteered my services to the Aurora committee for 2011, and will assist in the administration of the awards this year.

The afternoon continues, and so does the job hunt. Many thanks, take care, and see you next issue.

Yours,
Lloyd Penney.

☐*CKK*: I will be more than happy to give you a CD, but I want my US\$ drive back. I don't think the issue is that computers are so complex, but rather that we are too tolerant of

poor quality and incompetence. You'd never tolerate this in your car or the industry that serves it.☐

Joseph Nicholas
15 Jansons Road
Tottenham
London N15 4JU
United Kingdom
josephn@globalnet.co.uk
24 Jan 2011

Dear Henry and Letha

Thanks for *TKK* 137. A couple of quick comments....

You mention the Californian foible of people rugging themselves up in their winter gear when the temperature is around 50F; there are similar foibles in other climes and other countries. In Australia, for example, you will see people in Fremantle in their winter pullovers and whatnot when the temperature falls as "low" as 60F – the sort of temperature at which people such as myself start removing their pullovers. This sort of dissonance can reach truly silly levels elsewhere: in Brisbane, for example, in July, we met a woman who was complaining about how freezing it was...although the temperature outside was close to 70F, even though this was the Australian winter, and I was legging about in a mini-skirt. But one explanation for this is that one's internal thermostat is set when one is much younger, when still a child, and what is one person's extreme of temperature (either too hot or too cold) is another's idea of perfection. This is certainly the argument Judith uses: she was born in New South Wales, but spent her first ten years in the Bismarck Archipelago, because that was where her father (an Australian Navy officer) was posted, and therefore finds anything less than 60F to be a bit on the chilly side. I, on the other hand, can quite happily go out into the garden to replenish the bird feedery in the morning wearing nothing more than a pair of running shorts even where there's several inches of snow on the ground (as there was in December last year).

Sue mentions the New Zealand accent and its long E vowel sound, but I don't think this is quite accurate. The standard New Zealand vowel sound is the U, used in substitute for every other vowel sound, viz "fush and chups," "sux," etc... .except where an E is called for, when the vowel is replaced by an I, viz: "tisted." I know this because, at work, we used to have a New Zealander behind the reception desk who was responsible for various PA announcements, including the Friday morning fire alarm tests. Or, rather, tists.

Regards
Joseph

☐*CKK*: I don't think that cold tolerance is completely programmed in early. I've noticed that extended exposure to a new climate level will cause the body to adjust. My internal thermometer has certainly made adjustments from Michigan to Virginia to New York to Wisconsin and finally to California.☐

Dave Szurek
505 North F #829
Aberdeen, WA 98520-2601
January 31, 2011

Knarley,

I guess this is one of the two handwritten LOCS you got (or will get) this issue. As you counseled, though, I'm not going to be discouraged. I was a little while ago discouraged by one fanzine editor – I don't identify him by name – who announced that he was not even gonna read handwritten LOCs any longer, much less consider them for publication. But there was some "attitude" involved, mine for starters and if I perceived correctly, his as well.

I, not surprisingly, was dismayed although not surprised, by the Republican and especially the Tea Party victory. I was even dismayed and in this case a bit surprised, at their victory in Washington, which has traditionally been a Democratic state.

You state that many voters don't take even the three hours you did to familiarize themselves with the effects of certain propositions. I think that too many hardly even take the time to read their ballots before casting their vote. Forget about the three hours! In or last election, Washington's governor put on the ballot a heightened income tax proposition to combat the impact of the coming cutbacks, to very specifically benefit social services, medical care, and education. In case somebody hadn't read the newspapers, watched TV, or listened to the radio and wasn't even going to digest the campaign brochures like the ones you mention, the proposition's purpose was pointed out right on the ballot. But all the voters read was the anti-buzzword, **tax** so we lost out on taking a sad song and making it less sad. Afterwards, the same people who voted against the solution in the first place took to complaining about the cutbacks and actually blaming the meanness of the governor. Some swore they'd never even heard about the cutbacks until "the governor" stated leveling them. (The Tea Party types, of course, took advantage to tell people that the governor did this as a puppet to Obama and the mean-spirited Democrats.)

Regardless of what the Tea Party says, alongside its efforts at reviving Cold War era blurring of Socialism and Communism, I feel Obama isn't **enough** of a Socialist. I also do not vote for Socialist parties as I'm pragmatic enough to figure they have no chance of winning and in this society, can do nothing, but steal votes away from the lesser evil. I see the game as ultimately a choice between lesser and more frightening evil. One doesn't vote so much **for** one as **against** the other and not voting at all is just adding a vote to the party or proposition one supports the least.

I hope **Gene Stewart** wasn't being sarcastic because I couldn't agree with him more. Of course, once science fiction left the ghetto some readers were deprived of their "excuse" for being social outcasts (or basking in the glory of thinking they are social outcasts) i.e. **strictly** their choice of reading material.

Yes, I'm still well as of tonight.

–Dave

☐**TKK**: *A handwritten note is now often considered more formal than a typewritten one. It shows that the writer invested significant effort on the note.*☐

Murray Moore
1065 Henley Road
Mississauga ON L4Y 1CB
Canada
murrayamoore@gmail.com
25 Feb 2011

Hello! Henry & Letha.

A pleasure it was to see you, during Corflu, and to be passengers in your Pius, er Prius. The Pius nickname for the Prius I learned during our visit to Sunnyvale. I was interested to learn that hybrid car buyers in your state do not qualify for cash incentives to purchase a hybrid, as was the case for years here in Ontario. When we bought our Prius in 2004 we received money back from both the federal and the provincial government.

Marc Schirmeister, pigeon-hole buster. Even given 100 guesses I am unsure that I would have guessed **Marc** to be the creator of *TKK* 137's cover. The A Bas cover in the centre: A Bas is a 1950s fanzine by Boyd Raeburn. And I am wondering if the young man in the upper-right corner is a photograph of a decades-younger-than-present Taral. There are two gag photos, decades apart, of Taral and a mimeograph, and publishing is the theme of **Marc**'s cover.

How many *TKK* readers respond with a typewritten LoC? I will be surprised if the number is greater than five.

Gene Stewart in "It Wasn't Mars We Colonized" posits that SF has become too big to fail. Perhaps. Who reads Westerns today?

Sue Welch reports that possums and rodents are New Zealand's worst pests. The possums are of the Australian not American variety. We attended last year's New Zealand nation in Wellington on the way to Melbourne for Worldcon. In Auckland I bought a winter scarf made of wool and possum fur. Another possum item was a tail using which you could dust your computer keyboard.

In his LoC **Jeffrey Boman** says carrying his Aurora Award nomination pin attached to his key lanyard "doesn't look strange/pathetic like carrying around my trophy would." The Aurora Award trophy arguably is a better weapon than the Hugo and Nebula awards: they are blunt objects: using the Aurora Award trophy, you can stab someone simultaneously in several places. The trophy is two pieces of curved metal which fit together: when looked at from above, you see the letters S and F.

☐**TKK**: *The federal government did away with the tax incentives for the Prius; one of the interesting deductions that TurboTax suggested to me.*☐



Fanzines Received in Trade

“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. 9 No. 6 to Vol. 10 No. 1 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 #44 and #45 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.

Fadeaway #20 and #21 by Robert Jennings; 29 Whiting Rd.; Oxford, MA 01540-2035; fabficbks@aol.com; bi-monthly; \$15/year or the usual. Normally distributed through the Southern Fandom Press Alliance, this is never-the-less a fine stand-alone zine.

Feline Mewsings #42; 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.

Flipping Heck 2 by David Hicks; 23 Dorset Ave.; Glenfield; Leicester, LE3 8BD; United Kingdom; davidhicks746@btinternet.com; irregular; the usual. A short genzine published for distribution at Corflu.

It Goes on the Shelf 32 by Ned Brooks; 4817 Dean Ln; Lilburn, GA 30047-4720; nedbrooks@sprynet.com; annual?; the usual. A compendium of Ned’s eclectic reading which ranges across the spectrum to SF, fantasy, and genres I can’t even put a name to.

Journey Planet 8 by James Bacon, Claire Brialey, and Christopher J. Garcia; 962 West Weddell Dr. Apt. 15; Sunnyvale, CA 94043; JourneyPlanet@gmail.com; irregular; the usual. A nice genzine that recently won a Nova Award.

Littlebrook 8 by Jerry Kaufman & Suzanne Tompkins; PO Box 25075; Seattle, WA 98165; littlebrooklocs@aol.com; <http://www.efanzines.com/>; irregular; \$2 or the usual. A fine genzine with a broad range of articles.

Living Free 146 by Jim Stumm; Hiler Branch, Box 29-KK; Buffalo, NY 14223; irregular; \$2. An interesting zine dedicated to living independently.

Lofgeornost 102 by Fred Lerner; 81 Worcester Ave; White River Junction, VT 05001; fred.lerner@dartmouth.edu; irregular; the usual. This is Fred’s FAPA zine.

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

Nice Distinctions 20 by Arthur Hlavaty; 206 Valentine St; Yonkers, NY 10704-1814; <http://www.maroney.org/hlavaty/>; hlvaty@panix.com; annual; \$1 or the usual. A small perzine with wide-ranging discussions.

Opuntia 70.1C, 70.1D, and 70.1E by Dale Speirs; Box 6830; Calgary, Alberta; Canada T2P 2E7; irregular; \$3 or the usual. One of the most prolific zines with lots of interesting content.

Random Jottings 6 by Michael S. Dobson; 8042 Park Overlook Dr.; Bethesda, MD 20817-2724; michael@dodsonbooks.com; <http://efanzines.com/RandomJottings/>; irregular; \$12.95 or the usual. A treatise on cognitive bias.

The Reluctant Famulus 79 by Tom Sadler; 305 Gill Branch Road; Owenton, KY 40359; tomfamulus@hughes.net; irregular; the usual. This is a great genzine. Lots of SF and other interesting things along with a good letter column.

Trap Door 27 by Robert Lichtman; 11037 Broadway Terrace; Oakland, CA 94611-1948; locs2trapdoor@yahoo.com; irregular; \$5 or the usual. An interesting fanzine dedicated to fannish anecdotes.

Twilight World #9 by Don Fields; 266 Ramona Ave.; Grover Beach, CA 93433; oddlystupid@yahoo.com; irregular; \$2 or the usual. An interesting zine with mostly review pieces.

Vanamonde No. 858-867 by John Hertz; 236 S Coronado St No 409; Los Angeles, CA 90057; This is John’s APA-L zine with interesting tidbits.

We also heard from ...

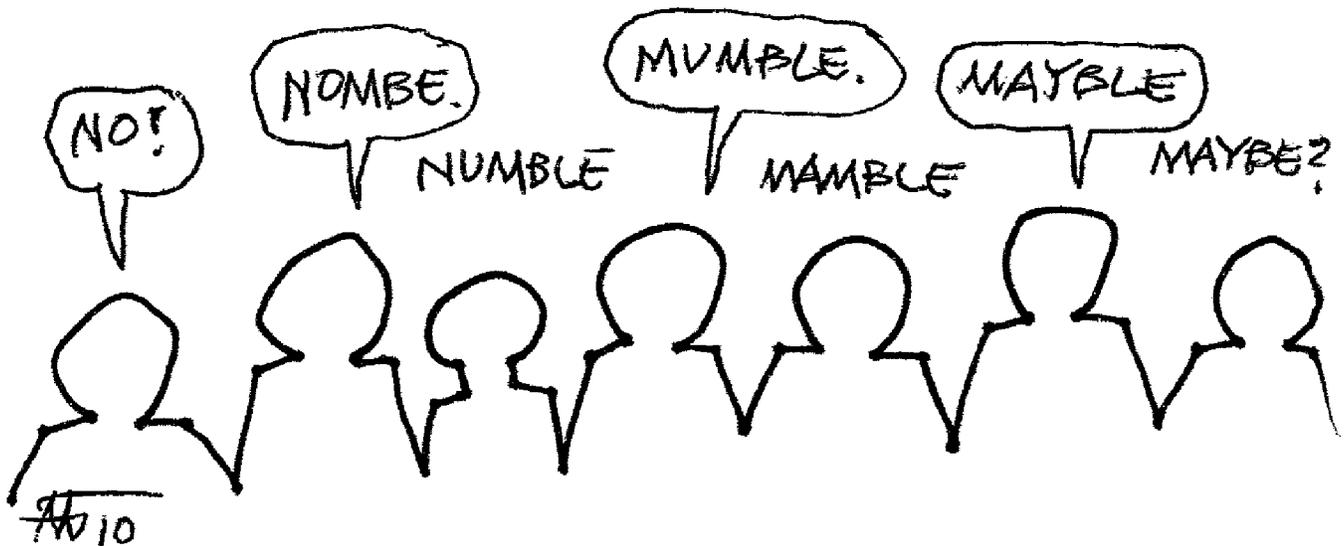
Sheryl Birkhead, Megan and Al Bouchard, Todd Bushlow, Lysa DeThomas, Brad Foster (who loved the **Schirm** cover), Chris Garcia, Hope Leibowitz, Rodney Leighton, Guy H. Lillian, John Purcell, Jose Sanchez, Alexander Slate, Joy V. Smith (COA: 404 E. Beacon Rd.; Lakeland, FL 33803), Gene Stewart, Sue Welch

Knarley's Planned Con Attendance

Mars in 2095 (Worldcon 153) Marsport, Mars

Labor Day, 2095

THE AYES HAVE IT!



You Got this Issue Because ...

___ Now all six chickens are laying eggs. Some of them even twice a day.
The thought of it causes me pain.

___ The devastation in Japan is harrowing. My understanding is the whole
country moved 8 feet to the east.

___ 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.