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**KNARLEY
KNEWS**

139

The Knarley Knews -- Issue 139
Published in July, 2011

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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.
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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.
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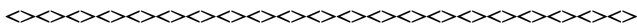


Next Issue Deadline: August 31, 2011

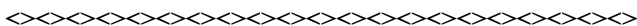
Editorial

(In which Knarley gets to spume!)

Time can certainly fly when you aren't paying too much attention. This, more so than anything else, explains the continued off-pace schedule of *The Knarley Knews*. I made a tentative plan in numerous weeks to get to this issue on a weekday evening or on the weekend, and like most plans they didn't survive contact with reality. It is not that each issue takes an inordinate amount of time, but little things get in the way. One factor is that my laptop is ancient and decrepit. I think it is now over eight years old and other than a lot of sucking wind (I often have to wait a minute or two when switching applications) the only thing that has failed is the Ethernet card, so I do all my networking with an old plug-in wireless card. This restricts me to operating only within the office due to the ancientness of that equipment as well. On top of that, I normally backup my *TKK* files to a USB thumb drive. This, unfortunately, went through the laundry and didn't survive, and I found out it was my primary copy of the LOCs file. No huge loss as it took me only about 20 minutes to get that back to current, but yet one more reason I postponed the issue. All of this is now moot as you now have the issue in your hands.



It has been a busy time in the Welch household these past few months. Letha and I celebrated our 20th anniversary. Sometimes it seems like we were married not that long ago, but the proof is in the children. Kira got promoted from middle school and will be moving on to the high school next year. This means only one school stop in the morning, that can be avoided if we get Kyle a car. We'll have to see how the budget holds out. Kyle is entering his senior year and is debating between the military and studying architecture. Connor has transferred from DeAnza college to Cabrillo, so he's moved from a city school in the valley to a smaller school located near Monterey Bay, just south of Santa Cruz. Both schools are about the same distance from home so he is nearby, but it is no longer convenient to stop by on my way home from work as work and Cabrillo are now in opposite directions. He still wants to move to Japan and teach English or do something similar. Kira has also taken up field hockey. Her middle school had a team this year and they split between an indoor and an outdoor season. She has since participated in two camps offered by the high school coach and she not only enjoys it, but has some decent talent.



We have been making slow, but measured progress in the yard. The two big projects this year, after getting Letha's mother's trailer parked behind the house and getting it wired, etc. have been the redefinition of the chicken yard and deer fencing. We adjusted the chicken yard so that it is now separate from our gardens and also allows the chickens to get under the trees during the heat of the day. We can't watch the

chickens as much from the house, but they are happier as are the plants in our garden. We also installed deer fencing from one corner of the house; around the sheds, pump house, and water tanks; to along the driveway; and eventually up to the garage on the far side of the house. In total, about 400 feet. This will allow us to finally plant our berry bushes and to move the kumquat trees so they don't get eaten by the very brazen deer. Deer fencing is a bit simpler here than it was in the Midwest, as the deer are not known for doing much leaping, so you can get by with a shorter and less stout fence. We now have an approximate six-foot high plastic mesh fence with pressure treated poles about every eight feet. Preparation for the fence was extensive as we had to clear some small trees and brush from the fence line. Far more frightening was the poison oak. Our woods are full of it, and there are many "trees" of the stuff that are at least 20 feet tall. I am only mildly allergic, so I simply cover up from head to toe and tape my sleeves to my gloves and pull up the vines. I do not believe that I got any poison oak from this activity, but I did get a minor case from doing some weeding along our private road. Letha also got a few small blisters. This is remarkable given the amount of it that was removed. It was also quite a bit of work to pound in all the posts as the dirt is typically quite hard this time of year. We also discovered a yellow jacket nest the hard way. We didn't actually disturb the nest, but the yellow jackets objected to the vibration from the post pounding about six feet away and let me know they weren't happy. Fortunately, I was the only one stung. Clearly a bit more painful than the poison oak, but only slightly more annoying after the first few hours.



The pet landscape has changed somewhat as well. Kyle brought home a new kitten who is still quite the terror. He has needles for claws and hasn't learned the proper etiquette of not using them every time he climbs in a lap or wants to play. On a sadder note, Kira's rat passed away and was buried in the yard with his brother.



Work has been fairly busy. My main project is a large multi-patent case where I am coordinating the team of lawyers and experts reviewing the patents as well as helping out with the other aspects of the case. I also do quite a bit of patent prosecution work that helps even out my workload. I am certainly much busier than I was at this time last year. The downside is that the deadlines in the court case keep changing, which has made it difficult to plan a family vacation this summer. We are still hoping to do something in the second week of August. Letha and I also have some vouchers through Delta that we have to use before September, so we are looking for some city to visit for a long weekend. Does anyone have suggestions?

Where You Hang Your Hat

by Chris Garcia

The key to sleeping in the backseat of a 2003 Toyota Corolla is wise pillow-placement.

Let me start from the beginning: my apartment is full of mould. A few weeks ago, I discovered an unusual smell around my house. We'd had heavy rains, so I thought it might have been coming from outside and since I tend to leave my windows open to circulate a little air. It helps, I think, to keep that "living in a cave" feeling away when you're living in a space of less than 300 square feet. The breezes are nice, this one just had a musty odor.

Or so I thought.

I went away for a bit and when I came back, there was a leak in the bathroom, just about 4 inches in front of the toilet. This leak wasn't normal, it was dark water. I put a bucket down every time I turned the combo light/fan on, water would drip down. This made it difficult to use the toilet because stuff would drip on you. Not fun.

One day, my Mom came over and smelled the smell. She took a look and found a massive mould bloom behind the drawers in the kitchen. She cleaned it out a bit and put a fan on it to start to dry it out. James Bacon arrived the next day and we were off to the Nova Albion Steampunk Exhibition, so I was gone for three days. During that period, the landlord came over because one of the neighbors was complaining of water seeping into their rug. He believes that a pipe burst under my apartment, which it apparently did. While I got no rug soakage, he found the mould bloom. I told him about the leak, which he didn't seem to take seriously, but with the mould, he had to jump to take action. That's when things started to really suck.

You see, there's nothing a landlord hates more than a mould bloom, it costs them a lot of money and too often landlords find themselves sued if health problems arise. Also, they are legally bound to fix it and environmental contractors are the biggest bunch of money-grubbing crooks you are likely to find (as was told to me once by an Environmental Contractor) and that makes it hard. My landlord said that there was an apartment opening up and if it was cool, I might be able to move into there once the folks were gone.

But the apartment was right next to mine.

And it too ended up full of mould from the leak and that apartment too had to be torn up, all the sheetrock taken out and replaced. This is a long-term project, especially since it'll require permitting and the like. And it's not something you can do with a tenant still living in the place.

And I'm the tenant of just such a place.

Now, my Landlord has been very nice. He initially offered to give me back the rent check I had just sent in and my full deposit and waive the 30 day notice that's usually required. I said I'd think about it, hoping that the place next to mine

would be freed up and I could just move there. Then he found that he'd have to work in there too. As things started to look more and more dire and they found that the bloom was The Mother of All Mould Investations!, he offered to put me up in a near-by motel for two weeks and pay for a month at a storage facility. This sounds like a great offer, no?

Well, I can't bring myself to accept it.

Why?!?!?! I hear you screaming at my damn fool pride. Well, it's not pride, it's my survival instinct. You see, if I accept a short-term solution, and use the time to find a place but don't find one, I'm well and truly screwed. Not just in a tight spot, I literally will have nowhere to go, no way to pay for a storage facility and still be able to manage to put a payment on a place. If I had a place lined up, say for May 1st, then I would have no problem accepting the offer of two weeks because I would know that there's a future solution and all I have to do is make it to that point. I need a long-term solution, and if there's a gap, I'll need help to bridge that span, but without a long-term solution, I just can't do it.

Then there's actually finding a place. So far I've put down two deposits: both were returned. One was with a very standard note saying they'd gone with another renter and that they'd keep my app on file if something else turns up. The other one called and said that they couldn't rent the place to me. I asked why and they said that my credit score was too low. Now, 623 ain't a huge credit score, true, but it's not that bad. I've got a steady job, I've never been late on the rent, my bills are all current, so I'm screwed if it takes more than that. Last time it took me three months to find a place, I had a few fall through, and now I'm up against a wall with no real options.

That's where the pillow-placement comes in.

I'm not dumb: mould is bad stuff to be breathing. I really don't have a choice but to stay at my place right now, but staying in the house is a really bad idea. So, I took my CPAP machine, ran a 100 foot extension cord out to the car, and slept in it. A parking spot is included in my rent, which I've paid, so I can stay there, no?

And you know what? It wasn't that bad!

At first, I felt cramped into this tiny area and especially my feet which were cramped against the door. I went back into the house and grabbed a couple more pillows, piled them against the door and that was perfect! Yeah, it was a little cramped, but I slept as well as I had since this whole situation started! Now, the only times I'll be going into the house will be for baths, to change clothes, and maybe to watch *Archer* on FX (and if you're not watching *Archer*, you're in a worse place than I am!).

So, this thing's happening, and who knows how it'll end up, but I'm not in that bad a spot. I just gotta find a sucker who is willing to take in a guy like me, and if Mr. Barnum is correct, there's one of those born every minute.

Sue's Sites: Queen Charlotte Sound – South Island, New Zealand

By Sue Welch

This is easily my favorite place in New Zealand. It is awesomely beautiful with its sparkling green and blue water, surrounded by lush coastal forests, secluded bays and skyline ridges. A true paradise. Queen Charlotte Sound is part of a larger area known as the Marlborough Sounds (Northeastern corner of the South Island). It is filled with small islands that give protection to the many inlets from the harsh climate of Cook Strait to the north.

James Cook, the famous English captain, must surely have shared my opinion of the place. On January 15, 1770 his ship, the Endeavour, anchored on the Sound at a spot today known as Ship Cove. Cook stopped here to overhaul his ship as well as replenish his supplies. He planted vegetables and built enclosures for his pigs, the descendants of which, long abandoned, roam freely. Cook stopped here five times during his first and second world voyages. This area now encompasses 1700 acres protected as a Scenic Reserve and includes a commemorative monument to Cook.

Queen Charlotte Track, stretching from Ship Cove to Anakiwa along Queen Charlotte Sound, offers hikers and bikers a 45 mile well maintained trail. It goes from sea level to 1300 feet and back again many times. The weather here makes for a year round pleasant journey. And what's even nicer are the many accommodations along the way including those of the water taxis that transport you and/or your luggage from place to place. And if you change your destination during the day, whip out your cell phone, which seems to work even in the dense forests, and have your water taxi pick you up somewhere else.

Our trip itinerary scheduled us for two days of hiking along Queen Charlotte Track: Day 1 from Ship Cove to Furneaux, about 16 km/10 miles. From our hotel a 5 minute van ride took us to the dock where a water taxi transported us along the Sound for about half an hour, picking up/dropping off others along the way, depositing our group at Ship Cove. All taxi drivers (water and motor) in New Zealand give a running commentary of wherever you happen to be and if I could remember all of what they said I would be an expert on New Zealand. Today was a leisurely walk following the curves of many inlets. The sky was robin egg blue with puffy white clouds, the temperature was in the 60s, the views were spectacular, not only was the bay water sparkling but everywhere your eyes went spring flowers were in full bloom. How perfect I kept thinking the entire day. For tea time we were



Map Courtesy of Critchlow

invited into the home of local John and Judy Hellstrom, who revived us with water, tea, coffee and those wonderful little cakes and cookies that appear with each meal in New Zealand. Following refreshments we walked down to the beach where John gave us a history of the area. For those European immigrants who came here to be farmers, it soon became apparent that the soil wasn't good for growing food. Many families had to leave to find other ways to support themselves but the descendants of those who were able to hang on to their land are today owners of very expensive land. These same parcels that couldn't grow food in the 1800's, and were thought worthless and left to revert back to their original forests, today command exorbitant sums. Following our many questions to historian John, our guide called the water taxi to pick us up at John's dock for return to our hotel.

Our second day here we were dropped farther along the Sound at Mistletoe Bay and we walked to Anakiwa, the other end of the track – about 13 km/9 miles. By this point in our trip we were all in great shape and moved along at a good pace. At the end of the trek we enjoyed our packed lunch on the grounds of an Outward Bound School and watched the opening ceremony of an incoming group of students.

New Zealand is made up of two islands: the North Island and the South Island. The country is still working on more suitable names. The body of water between them is Cook Strait which connects the Tasman Sea to the west to the Pacific Ocean to the east. At its narrowest point, 14 miles separate the two islands. Cook Strait Ferry is the commercial ferry connecting the islands. It goes between Wellington Harbor,

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Dan Brown Cooties

by Gene Stewart

Dan Brown cooties continue to flourish as the arch sneering at his success increases and the disdainful dismissal of the “facts” he gets “wrong” reaches a crescendo.

We’ve heard the denunciations. Brown gets “all his facts wrong.” Writes middlebrow fiction “very badly”. And he “fools” readers.

He writes fiction yet is held in contempt for not being “historically accurate.” Yes, like *Gone With the Wind* or *Ben-Hur* or *The Man In the High Castle*.

The howls are ludicrous. Do they surround any of literally thousands of other books more deserving of scorn?

Brown weaves fiction from story points. Some are facts, some speculations, others imagined fillers. This is not a daring new technique pioneered by Brown, nor is he at all bad at it. It is, in fact, the way most fiction is written, and Brown’s work is downright Classical in its basic structure while being, to account for our audiovisual culture, cinematic in execution.

Citing his “poor” prose is an exercise in cherry picking Dave Langford, in his estimable and award-winning zine *Ansible*, calls “Thog’s Masterclass”, an ongoing collection of amusing infelicities in what ever book he’s been reading at the time. Most writers are guilty of lazy sentences, poor construction, or unexamined phrasing that makes for a smile. “His eyes were all over her.” Gee, could he see many images of himself?

A recent Salon.com article, perhaps excreted by its owner Rupert Murdoch himself, even gleefully listed Brown’s ten “worse” sentences the further to mock him into an even higher tax bracket.

WTF?

What is this but piling on what they must see as a vulnerable target? Brown was marked “unclean” by the church during the *Da Vinci Code* frenzy, which was arguably worse than the anti-witch hysteria the Harry Potter books engendered. Can this explain the vituperation, the near Birther craziness, of the attacks on Brown’s new book and, be it noted, on Brown the writer and man himself?

One is put in mind of the GOP’s baseless, bitter hatred of Bill Clinton, surfacing again in its mindless, racist hatred of Barak Obama.

That there is personal animosity must not be overlooked. Brown may well be at physical risk from one of these sulking Brown-baiters should he decide to do a book-signing tour.

A similar set of detractors and detesters, with equally empty reasons, accreted around the work of Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, who was at least mercifully dead before it all began. In a literalist, willful misunderstanding of an irony, on top of which was globbed a mess of modern standards misapplied to times and references gone, morons found the phrase beloved by cartoon dog Snoopy, “It was a dark and stormy night,” hilariously “bad” and instituted the Bulwer-Lytton “bad writing” contest.

The only bad part of all this mincing fun and delighted belittlement, if we set aside the fact that Snoopy was satirizing all Great Authors whose ego far outstrip their ability, is the dim failure to grasp that, in days before electric streetlights and 24-hour cities, the nights were light or dark depending on the phase of the moon and the extent of the sky’s cloudiness. Far from bad or funny, the phrase is accurate.

It is undeserving of the uninformed scorn heaped on it.

Brown, with the misfortune still to be alive, is today’s Bulwer-Lytton misapprehension, a scoff grown to public stoning by the eagerness of the uncultured to get their licks in. Because Brown’s research threatened religionists and exposed many of their secrets, doubts, and idiocies, Brown found his novel *The Da Vinci Code* buzz sawed from all sides. Worse, he bore *The Scarlet Letter* now, forever marked as Fair Game, in the Scientologist’s dark lexicon.

Controversy fueled popularity by arousing curiosity – let’s see what all the shouting’s about – and the truth is his research proved of tremendous interest to the general irreligious public anyway, which only stirred up the swarming hornets further.

Years passed between that novel and this latest one, and times have not changed for the better. These days we see town hall meetings, public discussion, and even Presidents’ speeches short-circuited by furious bigotry. Is it any surprise this American taliban mentality would devolve onto Brown’s latest book, which focuses on that perennial bugaboo, those pesky Freemasons? One recalls the fatwa placed on the head of Salman Rushdie for writing a charming, funny, and insightfully satirical novel, *The Satanic Verses*; his crime was to offend a mullah who had not even read his novel. Rumor and innuendo brought down the wrath of Islam due to blind faith and categorical thought. And in the intervening years we saw mere cartoons used as an excuse to stir up the easily-offended, humorless seekers of total control, resulting in murders and death threats against cartoonists or even newspapers that dared print their work.

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INTERLOCUTIONS

Brad W Foster
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28 Mar 2011

what actually is benevolent, just as they disagree about how to actually implement **all** the forms of government, and that is where the problems come in. So we all muddle along.

stay happy~
Brad

Greetings Henry ~

Awright, *TKK* getting back to showing up more regularly again, so guess you're getting settled in to the new digs, which is good to know. Clearly, still lots going on, as your Editorial explains. But, not so much that *TKK* has to be set aside. Remember: Publish or perish!

We got hit with a nasty surprise on our income tax this year. For most of my freelance career I've been able to pretty well estimate what tax I will owe, and pay it throughout the year, so that usually I get a few bucks back with each return, and just apply that to the next year's estimates. **This** year, however, clearly I was way off, plus Cindy had some unemployment checks that had tax owed on (So, the government sends you money, but then wants some back. Why not just keep that amount, and send you what you are actually allowed to keep? What a big tease!), and then found out her new job was deducting a smaller percentage than the last ... anyway, long story short, we'll be eating water sandwiches for a while to try to cover this. Ah, fun.

Regarding **Alex's** latest column, when got to where he noted: "The real problem isn't capitalism as a theory, it is capitalism as it is practiced." Yeah, you can apply that statement to just about any theory of government. If we could keep the greedy bastards out of the equation, capitalism would work. So would communism, socialism, monarchy, tribalism ... hell, even a dictatorship would work if the guy wasn't a jerk.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again, my own choice for best type of government is Benevolent Dictatorship, emphasis on the Benevolent. But then, everyone will disagree about

☐*CKK*: *I feel your tax pain. Now all I have to do is wait to find out if this year's raise is appropriate to my increasing level of responsibility.*☐

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March 29, 2011

Dear Knarley & Letha:

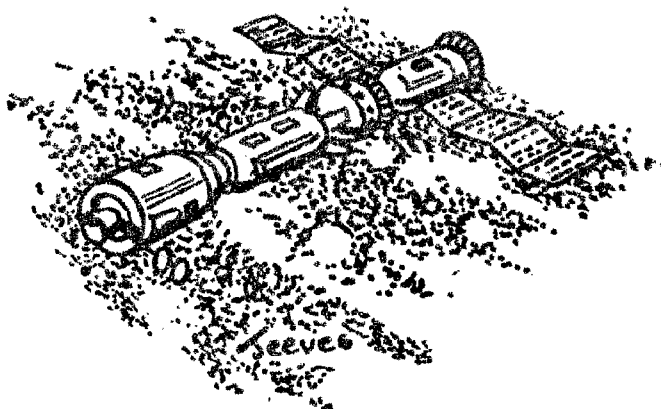
And now the knews . . . When one of my cousins got very old, his youngest son moved into a trailer on his farm. He was supposed to be looking after his father, but he had his own job and other things. This being a Kentucky family, the youngest son had a nephew who was his age.

I've been using TurboTax for several years without any such matters, but then all we have in the way of income is wages and a little interest. I also use electronic filing and deposit. There had been this one time in my struggling days when I moved and they didn't forward my refund check.

Toward a New Theory of Capitalism: As **Alex** points out, the immediate profits model is very common. As opposed to the dotcom bubble model, which was that profits were irrelevant since the real marker was increased shareholder value. And when the venture capitalists quit shoveling in new capital to cover the losses, the dotcom would evaporate, leaving a host of unemployed web coders on the streets. ("Previous experience?" "CEO of a \$10B dot-com corporation." "Sorry, we already have three ex-CEOs of dot-coms working as baristas.")

InterLOCutions: **Bob Jennings**: "In ye olden days the dime novel publishers used super small print to save on both paper and postage." And the people who complain also want their ish free.

Licking envelopes . . . I am reminded of the Dilbert cartoon where Dogbert broke into the post office, licked the stamps, then hung by his tongue from the wall. Which is why I welcomed the self-sticking stamps and envelopes. The direct-mail part of my family newsletter has declined as more of the recipients want it email, but 440 envelopes with 440 stamps, and my tongue would stick to the roof of my mouth.



“Selling 650 copies of a Regency romance steam-punk werewolf novel” and worse yet most of the buyers would also have just written a Regency romance steam-punk werewolf novel, and would be glad to boost yours in return for a boosting of theirs. After which they would all chime in on the Twitter feed about how other authors Just Don’t Understand.

Facebook and isolation. Go dig up a copy of “The Machine Stops”. This was all foretold in 1909.

Me: There’s a new example of risk-aversion at work. I’ve been reading of a case where the parents of a child with a peanut allergy have not only got the school to ban all peanut products, they now require the other children to wash out their mouths. How long before the other children will be required to dress in full-body HazMat suits?

Ned Brooks: All the cool writers bulk up their books with “the full brand-name details of everyone’s clothes, jewelry, furniture, and automobiles” ever since Jay McInerney kicked off the trend.

Namarie,
Joseph T Major

☐**CKK:** *The quarterly bottom line is the root of much evil. A suitably large glass of ice tea is sufficient to get me through my comparatively smaller print run.*☐

Alexis Gilliland
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March 29, 2011

Dear Henry and Letha,

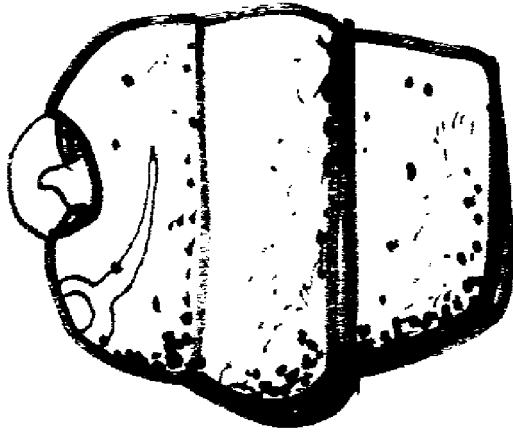
Thank you for *The Knarley Knews* #138 that arrived due to your noble and extraordinary persistence in pubbing yer nicely laid out ish. Indeed, the only fault I would find is that half your illustrations are from dead fan artists.

Jim Stumm takes issue with my assertion that “the housing bubble burst and trillions of dollars vanished into thin air,” claiming that those trillions of dollars never existed. Alas that this should not be the case, since currently about a quarter of the nation’s houses are under water in the sense that they are worth less than their existing mortgages, which both banks and mortgage holders understand to be real rather than imaginary. One consequence is the current wave of defaults by those unable to pay for whatever reason, another is the so-called “jingle mail” referring to strategic defaults; owners still able to pay who are cutting their losses by walking away from their grossly overpriced mortgages as they mail their house keys back to the banks. What happened? The housing bubble drove the housing market to build far more houses than could be legitimately sold, because the mortgages—no matter how shaky, were being bundled into securities which were then sold with a bogus AAA rating when they were paying far higher interest than any genuine AAA security. After the bubble burst, **Jim** supports his case

by saying that “expectations were changed, but no actual values were destroyed.” While technically true, in the sense that no earthquake or tsunami destroyed all those surplus houses, this is incorrect in that actual values were destroyed. For example, Lehman Brothers had been heavily into those securitized mortgages, and when the bubble burst, when the expectations changed, when the scales fell from the eyes of the investors, those securitized mortgages became illiquid if not totally worthless, meaning that Lehman Brothers had a ton of paper that they couldn’t sell, and a ton of debt that had to be rolled over ASAP. In the fiscal fiasco of 2008 Lehman Brothers went bankrupt, new construction stopped dead, the price of houses went down all over the country, and housing prices have continued going down, albeit more slowly, ever since. This resulted in protracted hard times, with high unemployment and a bear market on Wall Street. Reflecting the disparity between rich and poor, Wall Street has bounced back, but unemployment remains high. This is partly because banks were undercapitalized, stuck holding unproductive real estate instead of income producing mortgages, and thus unable (or unwilling) to lend money to get the economic good times rolling again.

Alexander Slate promises to discuss capitalism, and by extension a system of government better able to harness capitalism so that it works for the good of society. A big order, that, but some attributes of the system (society-capitalism-government) seem fairly obvious, such as transparency and honesty all around, and in the case of government some mechanism to maintain optimum size. The Libertarian prescription of “smallest” won’t do because the problems, such as wars or fiscal fiascos, keep changing, meaning that government must expand to deal with them, and then shrink back afterwards. **Jim** suggests that government should be “devoted to suppressing common law crimes like stealing and fraud and murder . . .” and not trying to create “lasting non-government jobs,” by promoting a healthy economy. Well no, there are lots of examples of corrupt governments creating unhealthy economies, usually for the benefit of their ruling class. Therefore it is not unreasonable to imagine an honest government that enables capitalism to flourish within limits, the only question being how such a thing might be done. Begin by admitting that the best minds of this and every other generation don’t know how, so it is well to move cautiously, taking two or three steps back for every three steps forward. Since the passionate embrace of an infallible Karl Marx or Ayn Rand won’t do, we must grope forward with questions rather than charging ahead with answers.

In some cases religion and secular education need to embrace the same end, such as the promotion and indoctrination of honesty. An honest society should welcome reinforcement by arms of government, such as the inspector general and the auditor general. In other cases, capitalism and government need to cooperate to produce better statistics, so that the murk of numbers becomes more transparent and therefore meaningful. With honesty and transparency it may be that a consensus can be reached on questions such as the proper size of the



ALLEN COIN WRAT

state. Or maybe not, but at least everybody will be arguing about the same thing. As a guideline, the government should consume no more than $(X - Y)$ percent of the Gross National Whatever, where Y is the percent returned to: $Y1$ the rich, plus $Y2$ the middle class, plus $Y3$ the poor. Again as a guideline, the government should have operating expenses kept separate from capital expenses. Capital expenses, including the maintenance of existing infrastructure, may be funded by borrowing. Operating expenses, such as salaries and debt service, must be funded out of current tax revenues.

What about social issues, such as abortion, gay marriage, and subsidies to rich farmers? In theory at least, honesty and transparency might improve the quality of the discussion, or at least make it a little more rational. On the question of abortion, the right of the unborn to life would be connected to the right of the newly born to life support. This, in turn might require an increase in $Y3$, which would have to come at the expense of $Y1$ or $Y2$, or the taxpayers, by increasing X . Thus the argument that my tax dollars should not be used to fund something abhorrent meets the counter argument that accommodating my wishes will increase taxes on someone else. Could the unborn's right to life be disconnected from the newly born's right to life support? I don't know, but it might put a different spin on a familiar argument. On the question of gay marriage, we might stop talking about the sanctity of marriage and concentrate fiscal issues, such as survivor's rights and pensions. Once we stop talking about God and start talking about money, things should become a little more manageable. Payments to rich farmers illustrate the axiom that you can't do only one thing, since farm policy is often food policy, maximizing the production of food in order to keep food prices down. On the other hand, biofuels, making corn into alcohol to keep the price of gas low (or promote independence from imported oil) might be shown up as bad policy if not an outright swindle.

Eventually there is the question of moral hazard, lacking which our hungry capitalists will take unreasonable chances in the hope and expectation that if things go wrong, the government will bail them out at the expense of society. Since

Western Civilization has been having financial crises rooted in the abuse of credit for the last 800 years, I suspect that those hungry capitalists are with us to stay moral hazard or no moral hazard. Given that the perfect is the enemy of the good, given our flawed knowledge of our subject, and given the nature of muddling through any sort of economic minefield, my opinion is that attempting to address moral hazard is overreaching. Or maybe not, maybe education would help. To get an MBA one might have to take this course in which one dials the magic number, to get the recorded message: "I'm from the Government and I'm here to help you." The point of the course being the lack of help delivered. The class could take turns playing the hungry capitalist and the unhelpful bureaucrat screwing him over. That should do for now.

Best wishes,

☐CKK: *It distresses me at times to realize the number of good and friendly fan artists we've lost over the years. I'd like more diversity in my artists, but there is no otherwise sane reason to dispose of my large archive of art from those no longer with us just to keep up some kind of average. I don't think that people or politicians are truly capable of separating issues from each other. Some of it is due to a lack of knowledge and understanding, but much is likely related to bias. The marriage/domestic partner issue is really rooted in the co-opting of a religious term "marriage" to describe a related, but different legal concern. Now when society has evolved to understand that there are healthy adult relationships that go beyond the traditional religious ones we find that many can no longer separate the one issue from the other at a rational enough level to even have a healthy debate about the subject.*☐

Gene Stewart
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2 Apr 2011

Dear Henry,

An interesting, and sadly oh-so-accurate, cover on issue 137.

I've experimented with OCR technology myself, with less success than you report. I'll have to look into Acrobat.

As to handwriting, for the late, unlamented *Fantasy Rotator* I once pubbed my ish entirely handwritten by me. I transcribed every submission into my best script, and it came out remarkably clear. Even got a few compliments. The trick is white space in your vowels, I find.

I'd be glad to send along fillos and potential cover art. Do you announce themes for the latter?

Sounds like you doubt democracy, given what you say about California's plebiscite approach. It amuses me to think of being Propositioned each election cycle.

Uh, Henry, don't look now, especially at Citizens United, but the Roberts Court is political (right wing) to the max. So much for SCotUS not being politicized, and the fact those reprobates are in for life only worsens things. There needs to be a recall provision, other than mass uprisings and lynchings I mean. (Yes, I'm ever hopeful.) You're quite right about mean-spirited. I frequently go so far as to say nihilistic.

Your lament about a lack of sportsmanship echos many, at all levels of what was once sport. The intervention of street rules, along with rampant gambling, leads to cheating and tantrums, it seems.

Sue Welch's excellent discussion of New Zealand has me jonesing to smell Kiwi shoe polish.

Alexis Gilliland is right, regulated capitalism is the only way to go. Monopoly without rules is no fun and only the bullies "win."

Brad Foster's method for getting out of jury duty is telling: Ask questions. They don't like people who ask questions. Those people might be able to think for themselves. They want nice complacent submissives who'll do as told. And people think our legal system's broken.

What **Milt Stevens** forgets is that our current form of unregulated capitalism is working out fantastically well for the top one percent rich, and, really, don't we all know, deep down inside, they are the only ones who count even slightly in the scheme of things?

Lloyd Penney asks whether ezines or zines on paper get more LoCs. I'd guess, these days, the former, simply because I meet more and more people who have no clue how to mail something that isn't a Yuletide package or some form of smuggling.

Dave Szurek needs to stay well. That's what the spirits are telling me, and we don't want them riled, do we?

Rodney Leighton's remarks lead me to suggest, Henry, that you make *TKK* the first POD zine. Why ever not? Save you money and effort and still please those who haven't a computer handy.

Point of order: **Hope Leibowitz** never said *The Time Traveler's Wife* was better reading than *TKK*, only that it had blocked her view for a bit.

Jim Stumm seems to think Libertarianism is a political system. Given Tea Bagger derangement, this is understandable.

I agree with **Eric Lindsay** that books no longer offer value-for-money. This makes us buy much more selectively. It also paves the way for ebooks, which tend to be cheaper, although

still unconscionably over-priced now and then. What does it say about our society that books are becoming affordable only by the wealthy again? That we're being forced back into the Bad Old Days, says to me. Electronic formats may yet save us.

Mr. Lindsay is also correct in saying publishers sell books not to readers, but to book-buyers for huge chain stores, or distributors. Again, electronic formats can change that, and drastically. Right now, a writer can sell books directly to readers. A new approach, especially in fiction, is developing, one that cuts out the middle man and gatekeepers. For awhile at least, quality of copyediting and presentation will separate the pros from the slags. Then software will let everyone produce professional-looking manuscripts and we're back to tastes, standards, and cliques. Fandom: Resistance Is Futile.

Joseph Nicholas brings up a lamentable homogenizing of Blighty to parallel the rest of the so-called developed world. WalMart is but a start, sadly. And of course we're all going to end up not in Mallworld, but Disneyworld's Hell Exhibit. I am reminded of the fake town in *The Truman Show*.

Jeffrey Allan Boman's had a run of sad luck with friends succumbing to life; condolences to him.

A good issue. Hooray for *TKK's* return to form.

Love Prince Namor's beanie on the cover of 138.

Seems as if you're patently valuable to your employer, Henry. Good deal.

My wife gets migraine too. She often works through them, too, unless and until they require her to lay down.

My mother-in-law will be here at the end of May for my middle son's wedding and I can only hope she then returns whence she came.

Alexander R. Slate confuses me. Why can't we go back to the good old theory of regulated capitalism? No invisible hands or other imaginary deities, and no free-for-all greed fests.

Did the Beehive sustain damage during the quake, one wonders.

Laurraine Tutihasi congratulates you on your Prius ownership. My Californian aunt and uncle drive one, too. Is a percentage of cars mandated to be hybrids there?

Bob Jennings has a point: Print does look generally smaller these days... Well, to me, anyhow. He goes on to discuss sales of traditional vs. mainstreamed SF, stating the mainstreamed hybrids don't sell as well. He should check steampunk's dominance sometime. And the rising influx of romance into SF. Both have boosted sales remarkably in a time when traditional SF, beloved of the Geezer Corps, is merely selling what it's supposed to.

Publishing uses genre for reliable sales. If a typical SF book sells 5000 copies, fine, they think, we can do four a year for 20,000 sales and break even, even profit some. They then train editors to train writers to write to what ever genre format sells so predictably. If one dares to write a mainstream-ish novel, with potential for break- out sales, publishers get nervous. They don't know what to do with a writer who won't do the same book over and over. It's not predictable, and, while one might earn millions, another might flop. Scares them. They much prefer modest-but-predictable.

I've seen this in action with a friend's book, which was selling too well, and sabotaged. No kidding. Believe it or slurp it.

More grousing about how FB isolates and dehumanizes us all be reducing our interaction to ... writing. Also ignores the fact that it is the quality of communication, not even vaguely the medium, that counts. Ah, technophobia, thy name is SF fan.

Any defense of corporate mentality is like saying, "But, but Hitler made those beautiful Autobahns ...". Yes, he did. And I'm sure Exxon and BP give big money to various green charity causes, too.

Everyone's strapped for money quite literally because the top percent rich is hoarding it and their skills are "defunding" left and right in an ideological auto-de-fé.

Blaming bad teachers and problem children is absurd when the process itself only churns out finely-ground shit. GIGO, basically. We need education reform focused not on quantitative proof so much as qualitative results. How to do this is the debate. Studying systems that work better would be a good start. The prison model does not work, for example. Only makes kids hate being there, and wastes huge time marching them around and controlling herds. My eldest son made a graph proving his grades improved dramatically the fewer days he actually attended classes. Why? Way fewer distractions, way less time wasted schlepping room to room, and way less time spent on making sure the dolts in class "got" it to the quantitative level required by law.

Obviously, there are much better ways. We fear kids and don't want to find those ways, is the thing.

Back to ebooks a second: They are not intended to replace hard copy books. They are an enhancement. Collectors and Luddites will still be able to get a unit to sample and hold, don't worry. It'll cost them, is all. Think \$50 a copy is steep? Just wait a few years.

As to the idiocy of thinking that breaking or losing one's Kindle automatically means you've "lost" all the thousands of books you had on it, uh, no. See, Amazon archives all your purchases, and those copies on your Kindle are just electronic files. So if your Kindle is eaten by your rapacious Martian terrier, you replace the PLATFORM DEVICE and simply download the files again. Zeus's balls, that such idiocy pre-

vails. "Where'd the picture go?" the slack-jawed yokel asked when the TV was turned off momentarily. "We'll never get it back again."

The assertion, too, that capitalism's excesses are all a choice is willful blindness. Corporations are, by charter and often also by law, obligated to increase profit for the investors. Period. Increasing profit trumps all other considerations. If one increases profit, one is rewarded. Decrease it, you're toast. So this not only encourages but mandates sociopathic focus on profit increase. Hence excesses. Hence drugs that kill and maim but make more money for the drug company than the eventual lawsuits will cost. Cost/benefit analysis is a tool for evil, in this sort of mentality. Detroit skips a safety feature that would cost them more to produce each car, knowing not every car sold will lead to injury or death, and of those that do, not all will sue. Done deal: Fuck the public and we'll profit.

Q.E.D. indeed. Corporate mentality = sociopathy if followed to logical conclusions.

Ned Brooks brings up a chilling thought: There must be scads of Elvis by-blows walking around in spandex and sequins.

Alexis Gilliland raises the issue of whether private enterprise will bother going to the Moon or beyond, given the cost/profit analysis. Good question. What company is going to risk a single disaster causing deaths? It would blacken the company's name. Oh, wait, Halliburton would revel in that.

Milt Stevens says many zine eds pub their ish not just for egoboo but for the fun of playing the game. I concur and would add they also wish to communicate, even if it's just a murmur of common ground about to give way under us.

Marriage a sacrament? Only to property lawyers.

Jim Stumm solves my problem in one swell foop: making Science Fiction analogous to Historical Fiction would indeed make things clearer, with, I suppose, most of what has been published as Science Fiction suddenly becoming Science-y Fantasy. This is persuasive. Otherwise *Braveheart* would count as historical fiction instead of hare-brained diversion for the sassenach.

This also, however, brings up my pet peeve about SF's fetish with either "science" or "plausibility.". Uh, like hell, boys. You can get all hard and leaky you want about how "scientifically accurate" the so-called Hard SF is, but in truth this is like saying, "Oh yeah, well, **my** religion is no sillier than **yours**." Why this hang-up on whether a story adheres to scientific plausibility or not? Yes, the challenge of writing such works is high, and when it works, it can be wonderful, but in truth, it's rare, too. It's like saying all mysteries should be locked-room mysteries, because the others are cheating. No, they're just good stories told well, the ones that work, and the whole question of scientific plausibility should come into question only if it matters to the story, and if we're discuss-

ing verisimilitude. Making a proposition plausible for the duration of the story is, after all, a mark of a good writer. So all these impossibilities that make the tight-assed among us clench even harder are simply examples of good or indifferent writing skills. Some writers are so good they can make you believe **anything** as you read. That's skill.

So it seems to me the whole fetish for hard SF is just that, a fetish, and one shared by very few, even if lip service is given by a larger group.

If real science, which constantly changes its skin, is a vital component needed to qualify a story as Science Fiction, then only qualified, working scientists would be able to write it, and even then most of their efforts would be disqualified by the time it got into print because the science on which they're based will have changed.

As William Gibson pointed out, you can't write SF anymore because you can't extrapolate fast enough. Reality outstrips fiction now.

Lloyd Penney's manifesto makes sense: As long as it expands imagination, I'd read it. Amen.

Dave Szurek can rest assured I was not being ironic or sarcastic in my article, "It Wasn't Mars We Colonized."

Murray Moore should know there is actually a greatly diminished but thriving market for the Western genre novel. And the cowboy aesthetic has spread far and wide, for better or worse.

And with that, another fine issue is completed. Bravo, Knarley.

--Gene Stewart

☐**CKK:** *I generally only do themes for large anniversary issues. Draw away! There have been two very high profile failures to get out of jury duty recently. One involved an NFL owner who tried to rely on the draft and lockout. Another by a juror who filled out the information card in a blatantly racist way. Neither judge let the juror off the hook. I still get considerably more LoCs from my print run. When I was teaching at the university-level, students missing my classes generally ended up with lower grades.*☐

Lloyd Penney
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April 7, 2011

Dear Knarley:

Many thanks for *The Knarley Knews* 138...we all know life gets in the way of a finely honed schedule, so we should all thank Murphy for making life interesting. A smooth life with

PUNCH
LION



no sudden interruptions might get a little dull after a while. More to say once I finish this paragraph, and start planning the next.

Yvonne's mother Gabrielle used to live just up the road from us, but she was living by herself in a very roomy three-bedroom apartment. Yvonne would go and check on her, once her health started to run down, and it got to the point where the whole family would have to check on her nearly every day. She'd have minor illnesses, she was depressed, her memory is nearly non-existent, so the big decision was made to have her move into a retirement home. The family found a French-Canadian retirement home near the lake's edge. Yvonne's mother is kind of celebrity in the local French-Canadian community, so when she moved into the home, most people knew her, she had an instant bevy of friends and admirers, and there was someone there to make sure she was healthy. I hate the idea of putting anyone into a home they don't want to be in, but moving Gabrielle into this place is the best thing that could have happened.

Yvonne's law studies continue. She is now taking litigation classes, and still quite enjoying it. I am trying my best to get back on with the Law Society of Upper Canada, but there seems to be an austerity programme on there. I also know that the Society has outgrown their own building, and have been looking elsewhere for extra office space.

New Zealand is a beautiful country; at least, from what I've seen on television and online. I imagine it's a real contrast to

the way Christchurch looks right now. The horrific devastation of Japan right now, with an earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis, took the earthquake in Christchurch right off the front page. The damage from both earthquakes will take many years to fix.

I read recently that one reason some people do not like electric cars is that while there are savings to be had in recharging the car regularly rather than putting gas in the tank, those savings are eaten up and then some by replacing the large power batteries when they start to fail to hold the charge. Not sure this is true, but for some right-wing groups, this is a good enough argument to do away with rechargeable cars entirely.

Bob Jennings, I'd never heard of your zine until now. If you don't mind mailing a copy of your latest *Fadeaway* up to Toronto, I will promise a letter of comment, much like the one I've written for Knarley. I had thought that most e-books you might download to your Kindle or Kobo were downloaded via your computer, and perhaps loaded onto your reader via an SD card or USB drive. As you can tell, I don't have an e-reader, but I think it would be smart to have back-ups on the CPU.

I can imagine there's lots of zines out there that did receive a KTF review, but fortunately, they seem to have outlasted the KTF reviewers. Could it be that even they are pleased there's fanzines at all? Past generations of fans were never all that friendly to neofans, so we reap what we sow. I am fairly forgiving about typos, mostly because I have often made my living as a proofreader. As long as the typos isn't so bad that I cannot understand what's being written, I'm okay. A good proof and double check on what you're intending to say before you print it or put it on your website or send it to eFanzines.com would be the best, though.

My loc...every so often, I see something here about a Tea Party North, given how extreme right the Tea Party is, I have doubts anything like that would spring up here. For anyone here who uses that label, they're just trying to look fiscally tough to the voters, and most of us just roll our eyes at them, anyway.

Today, Japan suffered yet another huge earthquake, 7.4 on the Richter scale. A tsunami warning was issued and then lifted, but still, there is residual damage. Mother Nature, hasn't Japan suffered enough? Leave them alone, and you can go back to selling vegetable juices and hair coloring on television.

I shall get this out to you, and then resume packing for Ad Astra 2011. It's this weekend, and it is also the 30th convention in the series, so there's some big celebrations this weekend. It's also 30 years on the committee for both of us, and we will celebrate because we have decided to hang it up for our conrunning careers. It's been fun, but there are other things we'd like to do and need to do, and 30 years is a nice, round number. And, we do feel that our ideas are a little old and outdated, so others with fresher ideas can come forward and

do the job, and we can enjoy more convention fun each time. Take care, see you next issue.

Yours,
Lloyd Penney

☐**TKK**: *We have a significant gas savings with the hybrid that is not "consumed" by having to recharge with an electrical receptacle. I am proof that you can survive a KTF review (and so is Guy Lillian and Challenger), but I haven't outlasted the KTF reviewer who is still in the fanzine business.*☐

Milt Stevens
-
-
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April 10, 2011

Dear Henry and Letha,

In *Knarley Knews* #138, the part of the editorial on using TurboTax relates to **Alexander Slate**'s article on a new theory of capitalism. The legal adage that ignorance of the law is no excuse is a familiar one. I don't know whether it has been established that ignorance of your software is no excuse either. At times, I've wondered what TurboTax was doing. Usually, when the results were strange I found I had put something in the wrong place.

Every year, TurboTax comments that I'm not charging enough for my rental property. The rental is a house I inherited, and I'm renting it to my nephew. I don't need to make a fortune off it. Rentals are a quite good deal taxwise, and I'm satisfied with the money I've been making. However, there apparently was a change in depreciation for last year, and I'm now showing a loss. I've double checked, and it's the governments rules not my rules. I'm losing money, but I've got \$12,000 cash left over after expenses. Fascinating.

TurboTax is based on the dark arts of accountancy. Robert Sheckley did a story in which there was a demon of accountancy. That's a disturbingly believable idea. Now we come to **Alexander Slate**'s article. Profits are the purpose of business, but profits are whatever accountants say they are. There are some rather large concerns that have gone broke while showing a profit.

I should state that I feel no moral imperative about capitalism. All politico-economic systems look great on paper, but none of them work worth a damn in practice without constant diddling. Capitalism says profit is just about all important, but is it? I am not making a profit on my rental property, but I am making money. Making money is an important aspect of business. In some cases, people want to do the things they are doing and want enough money to continue doing them. There are people who build rockets, or publish books, or make movies because they really, really want to do those things. There are a fair number of similar cases in the world.

In our own field, we have an unusual economic situation. There are some people running conventions for money and others who run conventions because they want to run conventions. Both ways of doing business seem to be working for the moment. The world won't end if both types of conventions continue. In the long run, the amateur conventions can function under far worse conditions than the for profit conditions. That may be the most important difference.

Yours truly,
Milt Stevens

□**CKK**: *Rental properties look great until you sell them. Then often the depreciation recapture and capital gains tax can bite you. I have simply used them in a past as an expedient to avoid selling my primary residence right away and as a mechanism to delay the taxes.*□

Bob Jennings
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29 Apr 2011

Hi Henry and Letha;

Received *Knarley Knaws* #138 awhile back, and had the best of intentions of zipping off an LOC immediately, but my ancient computer finally coughed and had to put to sleep permanently, there were problems with transferring the files to a couple of new computers, and what with one thing and another I haven't gotten around to it till now.

Better late and never, or some such worn out slogan. The oldies are still the best.

I was a bit intrigued by your nattering of how you managed to end up owing the government 13 thousand big ones last year. Yes, yes, you said you'd rather not get into all that, but you brought it up when you typed the words into your editorial. Never commit something to paper (or pixels even) these days unless you are prepared to go into some details. This sounds like the kind of story you could milk for a page or two in your next issue, and I for one would be intrigued to learn about your fall from the path of upright law abiding citizen into the abyss of tax delinquency.

I don't think your associates and friends are ever going to thank you for going in and working and probably infesting the rest of them with some loathsome plague symptoms. As a fan producing his own print zine I have to assume you could find plenty of things to do around the house on your infrequent sick days, if you would rather not lay around in bed. Showing up when you are really sick does not make you look better in the eyes of your bosses and the other barons of industry. Instead it makes you look like a saboteur. I worked for a retail company once that initiated a policy of firing people who came into work while very ill. It was a threat that only had to be enforced once or twice every five years or so, but they figured it was better to lose a valued, already trained em-

ployee rather than having that person infest a whole hoard of other people and thus cost the company that much more lost time due to an illness spreading among people that should never have been exposed to it in the first place. Quite honestly, this logic makes perfect sense to me.

Alexander Slate's series of articles on a new theory of Capitalism seems to me more about ways of destroying the free market capitalism system. I've already made comments about this previously, which you ran in the letter column, so I don't have much more to add here. I will, however, note that there are any number of businesses who invest capital and energy building the company, expecting to make little or no money for awhile until the company can establish itself. Skipping obscure outfits he might not know, I call his attention to the *USA Today* newspaper, which when it was first founded, figured on losing money heavily for the first five years of its existence before being able to generate a profit. Many tech companies face the same uphill battle. It is quite simplistic of **Slate** to assume that the goal of business is always to generate short term quarterly profits and demonstrating steady stock growth to their investors.

I think he also misses the obvious point that in the corporate world today there are far too many companies with management teams whose primary interest in enriching themselves thru bonuses and self-paid incentives. They care about developing the company only so far as it relates to their own short-term finances. These are the kinds of abuses that boards of directors are supposed to curb, but management has figured out that by paying the Board members extremely generous incentives themselves, that they can by-pass what is supposed to be a rational control and balancing system.

Still no real comments about **Sue's** travels thru New Zealand. Nice photo.

Milt Stevens' comments about fanzine publishing rang a bell with me. One of the main differences I notice between cranking out zines by mimeograph in the late fifties-early sixties (besides the expense) is that many more people back then were actively involved in fanzine fandom. Fanzines were more the center of fannish activity than conventions were. Back then I had not trouble lining up plenty of material for my zine even tho I was a newby in the zine pubbing biz. Nowadays it is harder to get folks to write for fanzines. I think a lot of that creative energy may be dispersed over the Internet with chat rooms and bulletin boards. I still prefer printed fanzines myself.

Jim Strumm's comment about wishing for more hard science in science fiction is not likely to come true any time soon. By it's very nature science fiction expands concepts into areas where science had not yet gone. The other problem is that if we stick to what is known about science and can be reasonably extropolated, then a lot of future fiction is going to never get published. Science fiction is remarkably inefficient when it comes to predicting the breakthroughs in the world of

science, and I'm not sure we should even be concerned about that sort of thing at all.

Call it science fantasy if it makes you feel better, but adventures using faster than life star drives, dimension doorways, time travel, molecular regeneration and dozens (hundreds perhaps) of other science fiction themes have been part of the genre almost from the beginning, and I don't think anybody is going to be willing to change all that backdrop at this late date.

His comment about the housing bust not actually destroying trillions of bucks of net worth only makes sense if these paper holdings in his example did not represent real holdings in real housing markets. When stocks take a sudden nose-dive it's fashionable to say that the loss exists on paper only, because if you don't sell the stock you don't actually "lose" anything.

On the other hand with the housing crisis, millions of families bought houses at one price, took out mortgages based on that price, and suddenly found themselves being told that their home was now worth considerably less, but, by the way, you still had to pay the mortgage on the higher price.

When the economy shuddered and people were thrown out of work, even temporarily, many of those people were not able to pay their mortgages, and they discovered that it was difficult, often impossible, to sell their houses even at the sharply reduced new evaluation price of their property. When you can't pay, after a time, the bank forecloses. Then you lose your property, and whatever you've paid on that mortgage, and the value of the property often goes even lower. This has a domino effect which causes even more economic contraction, more layoffs, more tight money, less consumer spending, more fear, even more property forced into receivership, so yes, the housing crisis was a genuine economic disaster with trillions of dollars lost forever and a world of human misery following in its wake.

His comments about allowing prosecutors to go after money generated by fraud thru civil legislation, because that might be easier to prove than criminal cases, is just plain wrong. As the past fifteen or so years with the RICO legislation has clearly demonstrated, prosecutors will use these easy steps to pound on poor people and trivial cases in order to boost their conviction scores rather than tackle the big guys the legislation was intended for. So some young guy selling comic books in his small store gets nabbed and prosecuted under the RICO guidelines because he happened to sell a comic book title the prosecutor claims was pornographic, and now the defendant has to prove his innocence while his funds and property are tied up and will be likely confiscated if he loses the case or even if his lawyer makes a misstep. Haven't we already seen plenty of evidence of malicious human nature in action thru fascist and totalitarian regimes without making those same bullying tactics available to headline hungry prosecutors in this country as well?

I don't know about other people who write LOCs, but I send in my comments by email because it's cheaper than printing out the letter and sending it by snail mail. At 44 cents for the stamp plus another penny for the envelope, I figure I've covered the cost of my computer just from the postage savings alone. There are still some people who do not have email (for reasons I find difficult to understand---often these same folks have and use a computer, but refuse to try out email. The twisted logic here is beyond me). These people obviously will get a printed-out LOC in an envelope with a stamp. I try to comment on most every printed fanzine I receive, but it's much easier with email.

Thanks for the mention of *Fadeaway* in your zine review column. Once again, *Fadeaway* is a general circulation fanzine which is also distributed thru SFPA. It is not primarily an apazine. I have a separate zine that only circulates thru SFPA for that. I find it somewhat gratifying to see that the number of fanzines you are receiving and reviewing has grown in the past few months. Maybe print fanzines aren't a dying breed after all.

---Bob Jennings

☐**CKK:** *The short version of my 2009 taxes was that I never adjusted my withholding after changing jobs, despite moving from an owner to a renter. On top of that I got poor tax advice, that I did not confirm, when liquidating some of my assets to purchase the new home and got stuck with some penalties. Your sick day logic makes sense to a point. I spend most of my day isolated in my office, and while I could do some of the work at home, I typically need access to files in the office or more effective access to the computer networks. Most of the businesses today are "limited" by the fiduciary duty the executives have to the shareholders. If they do not maximize shareholder value, as defined somewhat differently by each shareholder, they face shareholder derivative suits. I have some colleagues who are trying to get a new statutory class of corporations that can balance shareholder value and philanthropic goals without having shareholder value the dominant metric.*☐

Murray Moore
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8 May 2011

Hello! Henry.

My mother-in-law lives close to us but not as close as lives your mother-in-law to you. My mother-in-law, age 89, and a widow, lives in the family home on a double, corner, lot, located two blocks from us. One of her three sons and his wife lives in a house a couple of blocks distant in the opposite direction.

Mary Ellen's mother (yes, you spelled Mary Ellen correctly) is doing well for her age but she recently vacated her home's second floor, turning a downstairs room into her bedroom. She has no desire to move, apparently missing the television commercials in which the actresses declaim that their mistake was not moving sooner into a retirement home,

I second your statement that Corflu is a social event during which you can meet people as well as reconnect with friends. Names of fans who I met for the first time this past Corflu which come immediately to mind are Mike Deckinger, Gary Hunnewell, Gary Farber, Dave Hicks, and Kat Templeton.

My understanding of Maori-British history with the Maori coming out in a good position is 1) due to the British newcomers not outnumbering the Maori in a big way and 2) the Maori being well supplied through trade with muskets.

☐**CKK:** *My wife's aunt did something similar to Mary Ellen's mother except the second floor got turned into student bedrooms that were rented to students attending the college a few blocks away.*☐

Sue's Sites continued from page 5

New Zealand's capital (the North Island), and Picton, a small town in Marlborough Sounds, (the South Island), and back again. Service runs more or less 24/7, weather depending. Loading and unloading of motor vehicles causes extensive delays as well. The actual trip takes 3+ hours, most of it in the Strait, considered one of the most dangerous and unpredictable waters in the world. I can attest to that. During our crossing (from Wellington to Picton), when I went outside for pictures, the sky was black and the wind fierce and it was freezing cold even though summer was but weeks away. I took two pictures and then quickly retreated inside to a glass of wine, French fries and, of course, a delicious pastry.

Tired after the long boat ride our guide had told us we still had to take a water taxi to our hotel. This did not sound fun to me as it already seemed way past dinnertime. As we collected our luggage, our water taxi driver guided us to our small taxi, loaded us and our stuff, on top of the boat, and within minutes we were traveling past small islands and inlets. Sheltered from the wind of the Straits, the weather suddenly got a lot better – As with the usual New Zealand efficiency it did not take very long before we were in our hotel rooms.

The Portage Resort Hotel, nestled into the hillside above one of the inlets of Queen Charlotte's Sound, offers 41 suites with water views and a 22-bed backpacker bunkhouse with its own kitchen. There is a restaurant, bar, swimming pool, beach, and beautiful landscaping in every direction. This is typical of many similar accommodations throughout Marlborough Sounds. It is easy to see why Marlborough Sounds is one of New Zealand's top tourist destinations.

Dan Brown Cooties continued from page 6

Such methods, and hatreds, are common now, everywhere. Is it any wonder categorical "thinking" trumps mature, restrained, rational responses to Brown's entertaining thrillers today?

Sadly for literary discourse, one of the biggest thrills Brown's new book offers is to constipated little literalists eager to squirt their smeary marks of envy, resentment, and foolish consistency onto a writer's huge, and harmless, nonpolitical, uncontroversial success.

Rather than applaud any book that gets people reading and even talking, if not quite thinking or researching; rather than be positive or constructive, the martinets and bullies of LCD culture seek to tear down as they preen for ego points among themselves and snicker and sneer and point and make rude gestures like the dolts huddled around vaguely dirty stick figure drawings in the back corner of the classroom during sex ed.

They'd be the ones burning art museums, lynching targets of opportunity if anyone had the rope. They'd be the cowardly church burners and public place bombers.

Meanwhile miniature storms break out over YA novels dominating the Hugos and the Stokers are put down as mere popularity contests; the Harold Blooms of the world have conniption fits over Stephen King gaining National Book Award recognition, and King himself, perhaps with his inner ambitions stirred, has now publicly sneered at not only Stephanie Myers but, yes, at Dan Brown, too, as if by joining the snobs in spitting on the sin of success, he will be able to slide his own millions of sales past the lit crits' gimlet gazes and win a Nobel before he croaks.

It's all antidemocratic, as if popularity equates with lack of quality automatically, or storytelling's mass appeal counts for less than tortured artificial style appreciable by only tiny prepared audiences educated into acquired tastes for the obscure, the oblique, and the *récherché*.

Will books comprehensible by only a sliver of the reading populace last? Did Homer or Dante achieve immortality by offering stories no one could relate to, in language no one could possibly remember as they fished the wind-dark open sea or toured Hell in search of lost love?

Genug.

If success offends you, or if you're too insecure to join the crowd in enjoying the latest popular entertainment nit; if escapism and thrillers bring out the slide rule and pocket protector in you, or kick in your itch toward skeptibunkery; if you're a categorical thinker or otherwise revel in Puritanical bigotry, have at it, but remember one thing:

Toddlers can call cooties all they want, but there are no rules in art but what works.



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. 10 No. 2 and 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 #46 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.

Challenger 33 by Guy H. Lillian, III; 8700 Millicent Way; Shreveport, LA 71115; <http://www.challzine.net/>; GHLIII@yahoo.com; irregular; \$6 or the usual. This is a fine genzine with good articles, lots of photos and letters. This was a military-themed issue.

Ethel the Aardvark #153 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.

Fadeaway #22 and #23 by Robert Jennings; 29 Whiting Rd.; Oxford, MA 01540-2035; fabficbks@aol.com; bi-monthly; \$15/year or the usual. A fine general interest zine that is also distributed with SFPA.

Feline Mewsings #43 and #44 by R. Lorraine Tutuhasi; 2081 W. Overlook St.; PO Box 5323; Oracle, AZ 85263; <http://homepage.mac.com/laurraine/Felinemewsings/>; Lorraine@mac.com; irregular; \$3 or the usual. A nice personalzine normally distributed as part of FAPA.

Living Free 147 by Jim Stumm; Hiler Branch, Box 29-KK; Buffalo, NY 14223; irregular; \$2. An interesting zine dedicated to living independently.

Lofgeornost 103 by Fred Lerner; 81 Worcester Ave; White River Junction, VT 05001; fred.lerner@dartmouth.edu; irregular; the usual. This is Fred's FAPA zine.

Luna! #9 by Christopher Carson; PO Box 1035; Fort Worth, TX 76101; <http://www.lunarcc.org/>; monthly; the usual. A fanzine dedicated, to you guessed it, lunar exploration.

MarkTime 101 by Mark Strickert; PO Box 1051; Orange, CA 92856; busnrail@yahoo.com; irregular; \$2 or the usual. Travel updates and general nattering in this issue.

A Meara for Observers #6 and #7 by Mike Meara; meara810@virginmedia.com; irregular; the usual. A nice zine with many fine color pictures of Mike's recent visit to the US for Corflu.

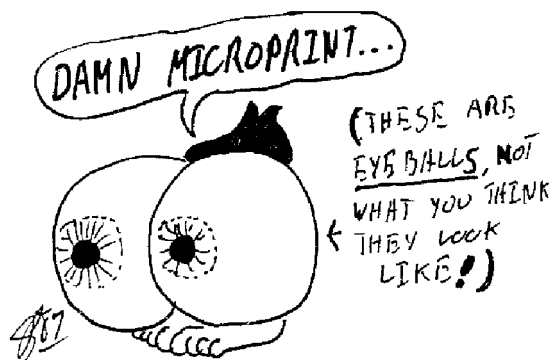
Nacrolepsy Press Review #7 by Randy Robbins; P.O. Box 171311; Anaheim, CA 92817-7131; irregular; \$2 or the usual. A collection of capsule fanzine reviews interspersed with art, pictures, and other clippings.

Opuntia 70.1G, 70.3, and 70.5A 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. Dale chronicles his transition into retirement.

The Reluctant Famulus 80 and 81 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.

Vanamonde No. 868-882 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 #158-165 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.



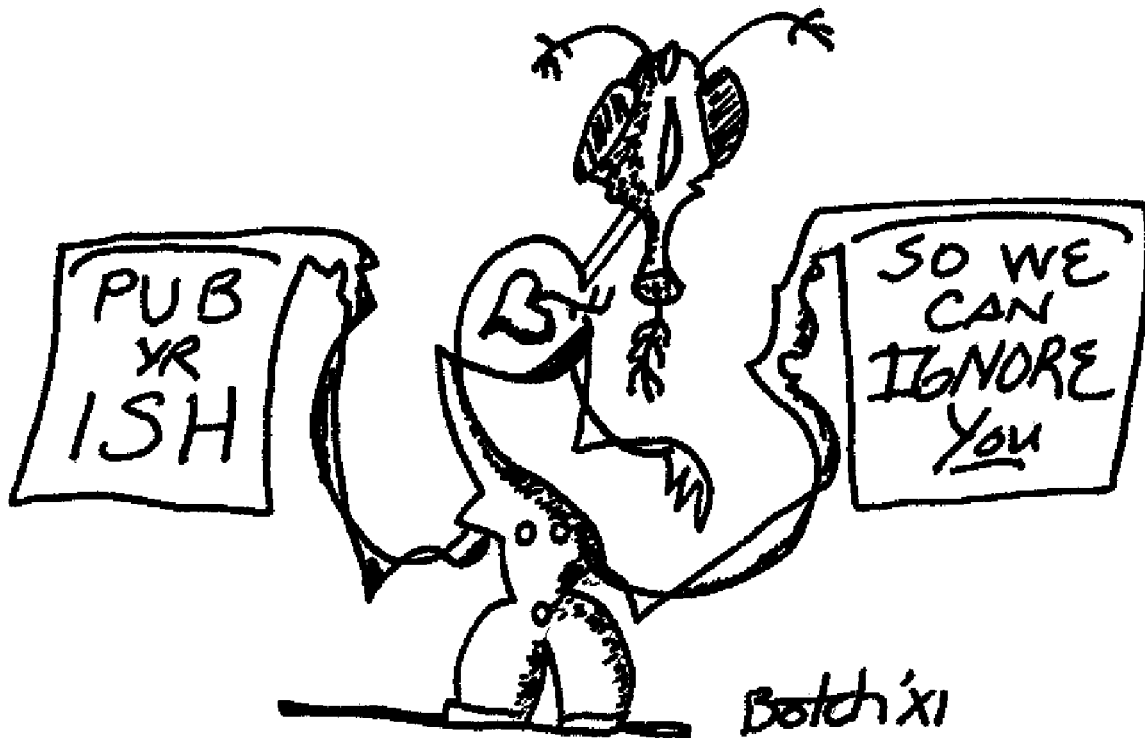
We also heard from ...

Sheryl Birkhead, Megan Bouchard, Ned Brooks, Todd Bushlow, Clint Marsh, Frederick Moe, Drew Murphy, Randy Robbins, Marc Schirmeister, Joy V. Smith (who was glad a picture of the Beehive was included and announcing her new ebook *Remodeling: Buying and Updating a Foreclosure*), R. Lorraine Tutuhasi, Sue Welch

Knarley's Planned Con Attendance

Mars in 2095 (Worldcon 153) Marsport, Mars

Labor Day, 2095



You Got this Issue Because ...

___ It is still foggy most nights and our tomatoe blossoms are not setting properly, so no fruit yet.

___ You are not a deer, you do not eat our flowers and plants; you do not leave little piles of oily black pellets in the yard.

___ 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.