

THE GEIS LETTER

P.O. Box 11408 · Portland, OR 97211

Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror Commentary & Review

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THE EYES DON'T HAVE IT

I have seven pairs of glasses around the house and not one of them, anymore, fits my deteriorating eyesight.

In the past year I've gone through two new sets of prescriptions for new glasses. And now I need another new exam and new glasses.

What I'm building up to is that I can't go on like this. Priorities beg to be set and accepted. In short and therefore, because and Harrumph!, note and underline, caps and stet., "Get on with it, Geis!", the harsh realities, the cold equations...

THE GEIS LETTER as an sf, fantasy and horror review letter is dead. *Sob!* (Please, don't all of you suicide at once.)

I didn't expect this to happen. If I had I wouldn't have started to advertise the Letter. And I wouldn't have ordered a lot of additional letterheads and envelopes.

But my eyes won't focus properly no more, for very long, and print blurs with increasing frequency and my eyes feel weird and tired and strained and itchy and... And it takes longer and longer for them to recover enough to allow me to read again for a while.

So I have taken (with a cup of anguish) the advice pill of my doctor and decided to stop reading so much. In fact, I'm going to stop reading fiction for what may be a long, long time.

I have to hoard my "eye time" for the morning paper and whatever is possible at this word processor. I still think I can write fiction when the moon is in its fifth quadrant and the hummingbird sings.

I hope THE GEIS LETTER till now has been of some worth to some of you, and I'm sorry I can't continue it. I regret most not being able, now, to read the novels and anthologies I had lined up for reviewing, and all those in the pipelines of the publishers.

As my 87-year-old aunt says, "Never get old!" Because from 40 onward life becomes a chronicle of bodily failings and betrayals. Living with mortality becomes--- But that sort of musing has been said before. Almost everything has been said before.

Hail and farewell to most of you. I doubt I'll be publishing a sf fanzine again.

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THE CIPHER By Kathe Kojas, Dell paperback, Feb. 1991,
\$3.95, ISBN 0-440-20782-7.

This is the first novel in the new ("cutting edge") Dell horror line, Abyss. It's a winner on several levels.

Told from the first-person ravaged, down-and-out failed poet male viewpoint of Nicholas, who lives in a low rent apartment in a crummy New York building, CIPHER tracks his growing involvement/enchantment/en-trapment with an anomaly---a bottomless black other-dimensional hole---in the floor of a never-used storage room in the building.

This is a tough, savage, uncompromising "Fuck you" novel with fine, battle-scarred characterization of idealistic, life-defeated, depressed Nicholas and his maniacal, self-centered, cynical, mystically-driven black woman friend, Nakota. And their few terrified, fascinated, horrified friends and hangers-on.

There's something in that damned opening... And Nakota experiments: bugs in a jar lowered into the hole come out warped and horribly mutated; A camcorder pointed down into its depths produces a video so riveting and gripping and Strange that it makes devotees and followers of all who view it---except Nicholas, who is afraid of its images and apparently doesn't see the same things as the others.

Nicholas briefly drapes his arm in the hole and is "gifted" with a hole in his palm which grows progressively larger and which leaks a weird, non-human fluid...

Down and down into degradation and desperation and despair sink Nicholas and Nakota as the hole claims more and more of their lives and their selves.

Until Nicholas locks himself into the storage room for long, supernatural days and nights and the fluid from his ruined hand covers him and is changing him and he is being Called...

It's a hell of a read.

But what is most astonishing to me (pardon my awe and chauvinism) is that apparently Kathe Koja is a woman, which makes her male-viewpoint stream-of-consciousness writing so great because it is so real and acute and accurate.

THE RACE FOR GOD By Brian Herbert, Ace sf, August, 1990, paperback, ISBN 0-441-70283-X.

Brian very kindly sent me a copy when, intrigued by the title, I expressed an interest in reviewing it, and I'm consequently unhappy to give it a bad review.

THE RACE FOR GOD could be called an absurdist science fiction novel, since it opens with the promoter of a satirical religion who is given an important, real, direct message from God.

God has provided the exact location of his home planet in the 'barely discernible galaxy 722C12009' which is an inconvenient several trillion parsecs away.

Evander Harold McMurtrey, self-proclaimed Grand Exalted Rooster of the Interplanetary Church of Cosmic Chickenhood who walks around with a rooster perched on his shoulder and who has a mantra which goes: 'O Chubby Mother,

Let me rubba your belly...

Let me rubba your belly.'

goes to the offices of a major media outlet and is treated predictably irreverently.

However, God magically provides a lot of self-contained, computer-operated super-spaceships and various and sundry other world religious leaders and reps arrive...

So they all board the ships and they are in a race to reach God first.

The trouble is (or perhaps the virtue is) that this is set initially on the planet D-Urth, the religions of D-Urth are thinly disguised renamings of old and current Earth religions: Zillasterism, Middism, Krassianism, Isammedanism, Nandus... The Bible on D-Urth is The Babul...and the Koran is named the Kooraq. And so on. Santa Claus is mentioned, as are current American figures of speech: "We aren't an item..." He would not pussyfoot around. ... He would kick ass!

McMurtrey is the central character, and is

clearly not an imposing person. But he does gradually change for the better.

During the long voyage much ado is made about religious dogmas and conflicting beliefs, and there is an atheist on board to make trouble (to say nothing of a deranged ship's computer or two, a disguised robot mass killer agent of the D'Urth Inner Planets Govt., and other Types). In addition the passengers are forced to deal morally and judicially with an executioner from D'Urth who likes to have sex with corpses who arrived mysteriously during an inter-universe spaceship accident... They shout and scream and use force a lot. Children, they act like children!

I tell you, this is a mish-mash of absurdities and authorial conveniences hard to equal.

They get to God's planet (the other ships had to turn back, fortunately for the author) and find that God is a small, crew-cut, big bellied, old man who is dying from ennui and depression. He wants to find a replacement God from among the one ship's remaining pilgrims (the robot killer had gone on a berserk killing spree and wiped out hundreds of the other voyagers, leaving only eight or nine candidates, again conveniently for the author) and guess who is finally chosen/volunteers?

I could detail more and more things I found ridiculous and irrational and stupid and impossible and sloppy and... But there is a gem of a cosmological idea in this novel: the concept of universes existing like bubbles with conjoined "skins", and each universe ruled by a separate almighty God/creator.

I noticed that in this "D'Urth" universe there is no afterlife---even God dies. Wouldn't that lack diminish and undermine most organized religions?

Brian Herbert wrote when he sent this novel that he tried to present comparative religion, normally a complex subject, in an entertaining package ---sprinkled with humor.

Okay, but the humor skidded the novel into the absurd, and it all seemed too divorced from a coherent universe; if anything is possible, then nothing is believable, and if there is a serious intent beneath the humor, it is lost in the crazy yuk-yuk and anything-goes.

I don't think this novel was thought out thoroughly enough.

NIGHTFALL By Isaac Asimov & Robert Silverberg, Doubleday/Foundation, Hardcover, November, 1990, \$19.95, ISBN 0-385-26341-4.

They have expanded and padded Asimov's original 1941 short story to novel length. The emotional impact is diminished by the added preamble events, characterization and love story, and

by the long after-the-Darkness-&-Fires survival stories.

The description of the night of ultimate disaster is very well done as Kalgash, the planet with six suns, is suddenly plunged into utter darkness by a once-every-2049-years eclipse of a one-sun-in-the-sky "night"...and people behold thousands of powerful stars.

They had thought themselves the center of a tiny universe. And most of them go mad and burn anything at hand to regain light, to blot out the night and the terrible stars!

Asimov and Silverberg deserve great credit for making the reader feel the horror and disorientation and terror of people in these circumstances.

(But wouldn't the other suns be shining on the other side of the planet? The collapse of civilization wouldn't occur unless for some reason the civilization of Kalgash was limited to this particular hemisphere of the planet. An old criticism of the story, and I don't recall that in this version the authors addressed it.)

The novel is hurt mostly by the ho-hum, nothing-new struggle-to-survive stories of the major characters after the Night of Stars which destroyed civilization again (for the tenth time in a row?). The novel is divided into three sections: Twilight, Nightfall and Daybreak. It seems to me that Daybreak is mostly padding to bring the story to novel length.

So it goes.

THE HOBBIT: Or There and Back Again By J.J.R. Tolkien, Adapted by Charles Dixon, Illustrated by David Wenzel, Ballantine trade paperback, November, 1990, \$12.95, ISBN 0-345-36858-4.

It's a nice physical package: 152 6-5/8 x 10-3/8" pages on matte-coated stock with a film-laminated cover. Full color all the way.

It's the first authorized graphic adaptation of **THE HOBBIT**, timed for Christmas.

But even with the remarkably fine water color paintings---maybe seven hundred of them!---by David Wenzel, this rendering of **THE HOBBIT** by means of pictures somehow diminishes the story by "dumbing it down" and by eliminating the full impact of the writing of Tolkien. The basic story remains, but as such it isn't all that great.

Still, a collectors item.

MEMORIES AND VISIONS—Women's Fantasy & Science Fiction, Edited by Susanna J. Sturgis, The Crossing Press, Freedom, CA 95019, \$9.95, Trade Paperback, ISBN 0-89594-391-3.

Talk about alien worlds! To most male readers of sf and fantasy, most of these 15 stories will be Different in ways unexpected; there is an alien value system embedded in this feminist sf and fantasy which will likely rattle the mind of most males.

"Womankind" by Rosaria Champagne is bizarre and blithely terrifying as a woman passing-as-a-man casually snaps off a man's penis and uses it to break a window... The story becomes surrealistic and loses its credibility, but the first two pages are as wild an opening as I've ever read.

There are several literary-type stories I frankly cannot remember (and refuse to reread), and several well-written woman POV stories of commercial structure which were superior in technique and which could see print in the better-known sf and fantasy mags/anthologies: "Signs of Life" by Barbara Krasnoff, and "A Token for Celandine" by Laurell K. Hamilton. Especially Hamilton, who has fine skill and a tough twist on magic I like; her story could be and should be the basis for a novel.

Susanna Sturgis is a fine editor. By the way, I love the inverted, wide-open vulva beast on the cover.



LETTERS

DARRELL SCHWEITZER November 6, 1990

'Your review of PATHWAYS TO ELFLAND strikes me as most unfair --- to Lord Dunsany. He was not a one-note writer; he was a three-note writer. The reason he lasted so long was that each time he exhausted a vein he could go on to something else. It is true that he usually did his best work in any given area first, but that doesn't mean he did the best only at the beginning of his career. Thus he began with the vein of THE BOOK OF WONDER, which lasted roughly 1906-1916. This material is unique, brilliant, and of enormous influence on later writers. This sort of "wonder" also re-emerged in THE KING OF ELFLAND'S DAUGHTER (1924). Then (phase two) he perfected the folksy, slightly sinister tale-through-dialogue, as exemplified by the Jorkens series, which ran, with very little diminution of quality from the '20s into the '50s. He also wrote some very good fantasy or near-fantasy set in the present-day. "The Return" (1936) and THE CURSE OF THE WISE WOMAN ('33) are outstanding. His detective book, LITTLE TALES OF SMETHERS made the Ellery Queen 100 Best Books list. It contains the classic "Two Bottles of Relish." A 1955 Jorkens story, "From the Back of Beyond" is a vicious and effective horror story. So Dunsany never really lost it, and he did write excellent work in every decade of his career. He also wrote a lot of fluff, it is true. And, yes, his poetry is mostly junk. The rest of us should hope to do half as well.'

((Okay, and thanks for the extra input on Dunsany. I yield to your expertise and judgement in this area.))

BUCK COULSON November 6, 1990

'For your Poe sub-sub-genre, add "No Spot of Ground" by Walter Jon Williams, a novella in the 1989 ASIMOV'S. An alternate world in which Poe becomes a C.S.A. brigadier general. I enjoyed it very much. (THE BLACK THRONE wasn't quite as good as the Williams, and I haven't read THE HOLLOW EARTH, which sounds very much like a satire---another one---on the early science fiction writings.)

'Err...DARKOVER LANDFALL was the first Darkover book if you're talking chronology of the stories, but it was the third or fourth Darkover book that Marion wrote, and had published. I liked it better than any of the others, but I read the entire series until Marion started writing thick novels that filled in the historical gaps. Even for a friend I won't read a 400-page book that merely provides details of a career already covered quite sufficiently in other books.

'I doubt that ecological catastrophe will come

in ten years, though twenty-five is possible. So I probably won't live to see it. Science fiction always tends to be dramatic, so I don't recall any book that was set in a world going gradually downhill. The cyberpunk writers and a few others make the setting much worse than today, and the space-opera writers make it much better or change it entirely.

'Recycling is moving along; we're no using recycled toilet paper, among other things. (A bit smelly, but what the hell.....)'

((I don't think there'll be a significant general decline in living standards until the Oil Era shows signs of ending; when gasoline becomes too expensive for Joe Sixpack and the masses lose their cars, then the long, bumpy slide will really hit home.

((Of course an enormous weather change may come first, generated by excess CO2 and Earth's forced compensations. An English scientist is positing the beginnings of a new ice age in ten years or so, helped along by the insane destruction of the Amazon rain forest. Will the United States and the United Nations one day mount military campaigns to stop the ruining of the Earth's ecology by "irresponsible" nations? I can see a new felony: Earth Crime.))

ORSON SCOTT CARD November 5, 1990

'In your review of Michael Collings's book IN THE IMAGE OF GOD: Theme, Characterization, and Landscape in the Fiction of Orson Scott Card, you seem to have reached some conclusions about me and my work that I was afraid readers of Collings's book might reach. Like any good critic, Collings has seen my work through the lens of his own experience. It happens that along with his thorough grounding in such literary areas as the hero monomyth Collings is also a well-educated Mormon. Furthermore, he first became aware of my work because I am a Mormon. Therefore it is hardly surprising that in reading my fiction, he finds an extremely powerful Mormon influence at work.

'That influence is there, of course, but in reading Collings one can easily come away with the idea that having understood much of the Mormonness in my writing, one understands all that I'm doing. That is simply not the case.

'First, most of what Collings discovers in my fiction, while I believe it is real, was not put there deliberately. I was as surprised as anyone else to realize, in reading Collings, how many unconscious Mormon elements there are in my stories. I do not write fiction in order to spread Mormon beliefs. In a very few of my works, some Mormon ideas were deliberately explored. For instance, in my Folk of the Fringe stories I am obviously looking at the way the tight, closed Mormon society deals

with people who, in one way or another, are outsiders. However, this is far from being all that I'm doing in those stories.

'Likewise, in the Alvin Maker stories, I'm playing the game of allegorically linking the character of Alvin with the historical figure Joseph Smith, the founding prophet of Mormonism. There is a double purpose for this: I can explore the way a frontier American became a charismatic founder of an enduring visionary community--- without requiring non-Mormon readers to decide whether they believe in Joseph Smith, while at the same time the allegorical disguise gives me the freedom to seriously consider Joseph Smith without mortally offending my fellow Mormons.

'However, exploring Joseph Smith is only one of many things I'm doing with the Alvin Maker books, and I must say that I've found that Mormons are often the poorest readers of those books, because, having caught a few LDS references, they immediately think they know all that's going on in the books, and thus miss most of what I'm trying to do.

'What am I trying to do? Certainly not preach the gospel of Mormonism. Not that I don't do that in other forums --- I was a fulltime missionary for a couple of years, after all! --- but when I'm trying to persuade somebody to believe in Mormonism, you'll know it because I'll tell you. What good would it do to convert someone who didn't know he was being converted, even if that were possible? When I write fiction --- even my most explicitly Mormon fiction, which has been published only inside the LDS community --- I am never trying to convert people to a Mormon worldview. I am always trying to tell a story that feels important and true to me. Because I am a believing Latter-Day Saint and have been from my childhood on, this means that I will inevitably ---and unconsciously --- include elements of my worldview that are recognizable Mormon. But I am also an American, a westerner, a reader of many genres, and --- above all --- an individual who grew up in a particular family with a particular set of experiences and a particular complement of genes ---and so the Mormon element in my worldview is only a part --- though an important one --- of that self which is inadvertently revealed in my fiction.

'So just as Collings is right when he finds strong Mormon influences and equally strong repetitions of the universal hero monomyth in my work, so also are readers who find that I'm exploring politics and community formation and the nature of humanity and a lot of other stuff that I still haven't noticed myself. My allegorical references to LDS history in the Alvin Maker books are no more the key to understanding them than my twistings of American history; there is no one key to understanding those or any other honest fictions by any writer who is trying to tell true stories.

Storytelling is a dialogue between author and audience; there is no fit mediator but the text. I reject the idea that any one critic can establish the "correct" reading. When you read the first Alvin Maker book, Dick, and reviewed it, I personally thought your reading of the books was closer to the way I experienced them than Collings's reading ---though his is also valid and was, to me, quite illuminating.'

'You brought up an interesting question: "The catch-22 of the arrogance of intending to change people is that the changes, if accomplished, will inevitably be far different than those intended. And how would Card react to someone who is intending to change him?" The answer is easy: I intend to change people, but I haven't the faintest idea how they will be changed; I can only trust that if I am a decent human being and I write honestly what is important and true to me, the changes will be, in balance, benign. The very act of telling a story, even an angry, hate-filled one, is on balance positive and constructive, for the act of telling a story to an audience by its very nature creates a community. And I believe that many stories have changed --- indeed, have helped create ---who I am, and I am still thrilled with those stories that have the power to make me see the world through different eyes even now, jaded as I am.

'Indeed, Dick, you demonstrated the fact that my stories have, to some small degree, changed you, because you have seen for a time through my eyes, even though I showed you things that you disliked seeing. For when I say that I aim to change the world, my goal is never to transform my readers into little carbons of myself --- I don't have such a high opinion of my own character that I would particularly enjoy spending much time in the company of my clones. The kind of transformation I'm talking about is the opening of possibilities, the experience of strangeness. My world is foreign to you in some ways (even as I hope that it is familiar to you in ways that you might be glad of), and by living in it for a time, you see your own world with clearer eyes. This is the same gift given to me by many storytellers that I admire, including you. But I don't believe that the transformative power of stories can ever change the reader into someone that he is not --- it can, however, open up to him the possibility of discovering aspects of himself that he never before recognized.

'In short, I reject the characterization of myself as a "conflicted religious, moralistic author who is compelled to spread his message in most of his stories, especially in his novels." I am not particularly "conflicted" --- that is the kneejerk assumption of non-religious persons when they encounter someone who is both intelligent and religious. Nor do I think my stories are moralistic except in the sense that all stories are

moralistic --- for, like all authors, I have decided what to include and what to leave out of my tales, and those decisions, however we might cloak them in the language of aesthetics, are always fundamentally moral ones: This matters and must be shown, while this can be left out because it doesn't matter, and this must be left out because it is false or bad. The fact that most of these choices are made without conscious thought on the part of the author only guarantees that even writers who try to lie end up telling the truth. In fact, if I tried to "moralize" then chances are my stories would become deeply conflicted, as readers encountered the inevitable contradictions between what I believe that I believe and what I actually believe so deeply that I can't conceive of the possibility that it might not be true.

'We are not as far apart as you think, Dick. You have devoted much of your writing life to defending the individual against the pressures and demands of communities; and yet by the very act of writing and publishing, you are engaged in the constant effort to create a community of people who agree with you at least enough to, perhaps, make the world --- or those readers --- a little freer than they might otherwise have been. The sacrifice you ask of them seems small to you --- a hours of reading, and giving up a few long-held but limiting beliefs.'

((I have to break in at this point. My writing and publishing is some kind of relief valve/ego trip mixture combined with some degree of talent. I've never knowingly tried to form a community of readers in any political or moral or ethical sense. And I do not ask any kind of sacrifice from readers; I expect readers to skip my stuff if it doesn't stroke their needs, as I skip over others' writings if they bore me or I know I won't agree with or vibrate with their opinions or attitudes. People used to keep reading my SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW because on balance it gave them what they wanted.

((I believe that readers sample a lot and thus discover what they "instinctively" need and want from the menu of writing available to and from the human psyche. A reader who goes ape for a given writer or field of thought is one who has suddenly found in pure form what he has been unconsciously seeking. The formed, hungry mind seeks its "fix". The author is seeking readers who will like his outlook/style. The author will turn off those readers who don't have a complementary mental/emotional slant. An author cannot really change people except by discovery by those who needed/wanted his point of view. And our emotional/intellectual/reading needs change through life, obviously.))

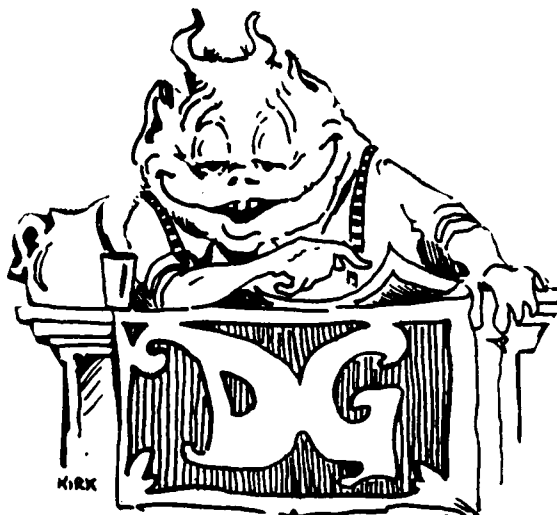
'And yet for some readers, that "small" sacrifice can be as emotionally painful as the loss of a limb.

Yet I, who write a bit more (I find in retrospect) about the value of sacrificing individual goals for the sake of a community, when the stakes are very high and the community is worth the sacrifice, nevertheless find in my own stories the almost despairing belief that the person who performs such sacrifices is almost never recognized or rewarded for it, and in fact may not even be able to take part in the community whose existence he has saved. I didn't know that I believed this until I found it in my fiction, but since then, in looking back at my own life, I can find the incidents that taught me to believe that way, that put that story so deeply into my worldvision. In short, I think my stories clearly reveal a belief that you would not, I think, find absurd: that the person who wants to be happy would be well-advised not to give his whole allegiance to any community, because they can then take the person that they so wholly own, chew him up, and spit him out.'

((Unless happiness for some people is being owned, is giving total loyalty, is being sacrificed.))

'That communities can only survive when they have such heroes is as natural and unpleasant as the fact that "higher" organisms like us can only live by killing "lower" organisms. The moral implications are ugly in the extreme, and the struggle is to find some moral equilibrium, some path between the quicksands. If my fiction is "about" anything, I think it's about that --- though the very fact that I now see this trend in my fiction probably means that it will stop showing up, just as my fiction immediately became less violent as soon as I understood why, in my early work, I made such heavy use of cruelty in my stories.'

((I suppose the most cruel analyst would expose all the hidden streams in your fiction and thus render you incapable of creating anything.))



Thought Crime

COMMENTARY

BY RICHARD E. GEIS

THE REAL WORLD BLUES

PARANOIA IS ITS OWN REWARD

THE DISMAL PSEUDO-SCIENCE

Or HOW TO MAKE THE WORLD INTERESTING

Brace yourselves; this is going to wander all over the landscape as I try to reveal some of my thought crime...and that of others.

How to explain the economy of the USA lately? Let's try the most popular hard core conspiracy thesis.

Is it the fault of our foreign-controlled Federal Reserve System and the big international banks (and those who control them?). Are **They** running the ages-old international financiers' con game? That is: over decades promote vast debts in a country, trigger a collapse by suddenly withholding loans, cause a liquidity crisis and deflation, then buy up bankrupt companies, dirt-cheap property and politicians with saved, inflation-puffed dollars (which, in this case, have been diverted to England, Europe and Japan).

Or is this current scenario a beginning of a replaying of the 1930s and all is the result of immutable human nature: long-wave cycles of blind greed, sloth and wishful thinking by almost everyone? And no conspiracy required?

I frankly and realistically opt for human nature. It all has the majesty and inevitability of a Greek tragedy, with the smell of spoiled hubris (and rotten loans) covering the land.

But Old Money is wise and has a thousand-year perspective. The men who manage trillions of dollars and "suggest" government policies and recruit and promote "suitable" leaders for nations and empires know history like their hands; they have the knowledge and skills to foresee and manipulate and profit from the long-wave economic forces which always have swept through the affairs of men. They know they can't oppose a tide, but they know how to use one.

There probably is a tactical, short-term conspiracy to put off bad economic news and the war in the Middle-East until after the 1990 Christmas selling season. But after that... It's 10% unemployment by July and no end in sight.

Federal deficits will balloon, anguished cries will rise toward heaven, desperate measures will be taken, and riots maybe will happen in major cities.

Some of the desperate measures I fear will be an eventual implementation of the Rockefeller Plan which was worked out in one of the Oregon universities in the Sixties (as I remember). It will involve the carrot and stick movement of peoples to different parts of the country to meet the job needs of vast new government projects. In short, the New Homeless will be recruited and coerced into moving to the jobs. They then may become a permanent class of workers utterly dependent on govt. jobs/welfare who will be moved from place to place by the hundreds of thousands, and a major new govt. function will be to provide work for them.

If the American world policeman role is successfully continued in the Middle East, a good portion of these rootless workers will be enticed/forced into the armed forces to provide a very large permanent army for the world empire...the New World Order.

As for Operation Desert Shield--- (Image is Everything!)

All we can do is hope and pray that the gutless wonders of congress will understand the fundamental importance of stopping George Bush from making idiotic macho overseas war with Iraq with nearly half a million American soldiers who have a limited supply of ammunition and spare parts, to say nothing about at least a seven-month gap in replacements for the dead and wounded (because without a draft, the expeditionary army in Saudi Arabia will be in deep shit a month after full combat operations begin).

We either live with a binding Constitution, or we die with a de-facto Caesar and ever-more contrived, manipulated and dirty elections to amuse us and make us feel more helpless to control our country and our fate.

I expect our noble senators and representatives to do as they always do: take the money and run. If there are secret masters (if they have such fine-tuning control) they will get their way, congress will become more and more impotent and cowardly, and the American people (called sheeple in some parts of the freedom press) will finally become totally cynical and careless about politics and government.

SIGNALS and PORTENTS:

Watch for David Duke to be promoted to legitimate third party magnitude---he'll be useful to swing a given presidential election this way or that. (Also the same role for Jackson, from the Left.)

Final words? Hey, let me indulge in paranoid reality supposition for a few minutes. It's one of my favorite passtimes.

Suppose there is a super-rich, almost invisible establishment which chooses presidents, arranges elections and sets major national and international policies. But it isn't Jewish. They use Jews. They

use Christians, Moslems...whites, blacks...

"They" are very old money centered in Western Europe and England.

How do I hypothetically, conspiratorily explain Japan? I say after Japan was defeated in 1945, English and American money went in with MacArthur and became hidden, secret seed money for the planned rebuilding and flourishing of Japan; the major Japanese banks and corporations are secretly controlled by Western financiers and families. That's why the Japanese are allowed to run such enormous trade surpluses. But they live or die at the option of their secret owners. The Japanese and South Koreans, et al. are self-propelled slaves.

Note how much bribing and threatening is going on by Bush and Baker in order to control the votes in the United Nations Security Council? The USSR is promised food, then threatened with the withholding of that food if the USSR votes wrong on Iraq.

Note the loans promised to Russia by Saudi Arabia and the oil Emirates.

Note how Egypt was push-pulled (\$3.5 billion in foreign aid and \$7.5 billion of military aid "forgiven") into sending troops to give Desert Shield a patina of international support, as were other countries---Turkey, Syria...

Note who gets paid off in the coming months for services rendered in the Security Council---notably China.

Note that nobody says a thing about the United Nations General Assembly----it's too big and too anti-American to bribe or threaten on an each-country basis. So now the Security Council is in effect all there is to the United Nations.

Note that in the "use of force" resolution likely to be passed by the UN Security Council, the use of nuclear weapons will not be specifically forbidden. If Iraq stalls the ground attack and inflicts unendurable American casualties, tactical nuclear weapons may be used to break the back of the hard core Iraq armed forces and force surrender---"in order to save American lives." That's what "any necessary means" means.

How do I explain the collapse of Communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe? The Communist Menace was promoted to loot the US taxpayers of trillions of dollars worth of incredibly profitable "defense" systems which were almost never used and had to be replaced with newer, more expensive weapons.

The Russian socialist empire was a fraud, kept propped up and barely breathing by the Western elite for strategic geo-political and financial reasons. But finally it collapsed, the sham could not be continued, and now that vast area---and all its peoples---will be suckered gradually into the big bank debt game, to be looted by compound interest and the wonderful business cycle inherent in Capitalism.

Long range, think of the masses of India and China being "kept in reserve" until a new billion or so debtors are needed. They will endure socialism until their time comes. And beyond them in time, the raddled and AIDS-riddled African masses.

I can't prove this theory of a vast control conspiracy by a long-standing, publicly invisible money elite. I suspect there may be evidences of it buried in obscure books and back issue magazines in large libraries, but my life-circumstances prevent me from doing all that digging and reading. Besides, this is paranoid playtime, isn't it? Are you taking this seriously?

Yet it stands to reason that big fortunes in the 15-16-17-1800s have endured and grown incredibly huge and powerful in this century. And it stands to reason that such vast networks of investment and control will always seek to protect themselves, and that implies/demands political control of governments and peoples.

But of course needing and wanting control doesn't mean such control and power is effectively possible. But I'm sure such an elite would be always trying, would have some degree of control, and would always be trying for more and more control, and would use levers in the arts and sciences to effect the changes desired in institutions and remnant opposing power structures.

I don't really believe any one man or woman could change this supposed money elite system. What if John Kennedy tried to oppose the elite's desire for a war in Vietnam and was assassinated. What if, when his brother, Robert Kennedy, seemed likely to win the Democrat nomination for president and win the election, he was assassinated because he intended to use the power of the presidency to "get" those who killed his brother...and They got him first.

Tempting what-ifs. But True Reality asserts itself. I think of the dominance of human emotion in human affairs, and how screw-ups always happen, and how blunders occur in spite of so-called meticulous planning...

If an elite exists, it must weep at the weak, imperfect tools it must work with. George Bush was supposed to be the best of the lot.

So how to live to best personal advantage in this supposed paranoid worldview?

Always look under the bed.

Don't believe anybody who says "I never lie."

Don't buy anything advertised on TV. (Especially politicians.)

Always ask: Who profits?

Use Their weapons against them: save money at compound interest, and avoid debt as you would AIDS.

Take care. And remember: The supernatural (including God) is beloved self-delusion, inflation is always government created, and death is the end.