

Madison FOURSQUARE

This issue of *Madison Foursquare* is brought to you by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, who live at 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704.

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Scott: Road Trip to Vermont

[SC with a few JG interjections] I have long wanted to go out to visit an old college friend of mine, Mitchell, especially after he retired, married his longtime partner and moved to Vermont. Mitchell and I were discussing this visit around December, but decided that coming in the winter was not the best plan, so we delayed our plans until spring. I had originally thought of just flying out for a long weekend or something, but as time went on Jeanne and I realized we could make it a driving trip and add a couple stops going out and coming back. So that is how the plan came together.

Day 1. We left home on Sunday, April 22 around noon. I had thought we would get an earlier start, but the day before we left our water heater stopped working. This delayed us because we had to add in time in the morning to go the YMCA to shower, also the departing breakfast we planned and bought supplies for resulted in a slower clean up, because we had to heat water on the stove to wash the dishes. I was a little concerned because our route the first day took us around Lake Michigan through Chicago (the Lake Michigan ferry does not begin running until May 1st) to our first stop in East Lansing, MI. I was afraid that the later in the day we got to Chicago the worse traffic would be. As it turned out, traffic was not too bad and we got to our hotel in East Lansing by about 7PM.

Day 2. The purpose of the stop in East Lansing was to drop off about 4 boxes of books to the Michigan State University library. They have created a special James Tiptree, Jr. Award



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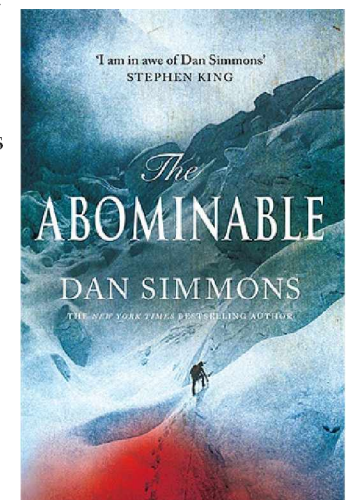
collection and Jeanne and I took the opportunity to donate all the copies of award winners and honor-listees that we owned as a way to insure the books ended up in a place that would benefit others. We are both starting to think long term about our stuff, especially our books, and what we would someday like to see become of them.

Jeanne was set to meet with the librarians in the early afternoon of day 2, Monday. We drove over to the Spartan's campus in the morning to scout out the library's loading dock. The weather was sunny and warm and the campus area was turning green even though the trees were still mostly bare. While Jeanne met with the staff, I took a stroll around campus, sat outside and read or watched the pedestrian traffic. Afterward we had very good sandwiches and soup for dinner at a friendly, modest local place called the Soup Spoon Cafe.

Day 3. Tuesday was spent travelling to our next stop, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. It was a good day for driving as it was overcast and only periodically rainy. On this part of the trip, Jeanne was reading aloud the end of Dan Simmons' *The Abominable*, which is a thriller about a fictional, secret 1925 expedition up Mt. Everest to solve a possible murder. We have both been strangely drawn to mountain climbing stories (especially if they involve Everest) ever since we got caught up some years ago in the real life tragedy on Mt. Everest depicted in John Krakauer's *Into Thin Air*. We even went to a couple movies about the incident. Simmons' book was fiction but was also strenuously researched and the author spent a lot of time on technical climbing



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Niagara-on-the-Lake B&B



detail that would probably bore most people but interested us. This is all particularly weird since neither of us have ever had the faintest interest in actually doing any mountain climbing ourselves. On this leg of the trip, we were nearing the end of Simmons' tale, so the miles went by quickly.

We checked into our bed and breakfast place, the Bernard Gray Hall, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, the same place we stayed when we last attended Shaw Festival plays with Julie Gomoll in 2007. We turned out to be their first guests of the season, and their only ones over our two-night stay. Henry and Gloria seemed much as I remember them from our last trip, only this year they had to break in a new Border Collie, Jenny, with their guests. I thought Jenny did quite well. Our room was cozy and comfortable.

Day 4. The next day was rainy so after our delicious breakfast we mostly hung out at a Starbucks until our play at 2PM in the very nice Royal George theater downtown. *Stage Kiss* by Sarah Ruhl is about two actors with a personal history who get thrown together as romantic leads in a play. We had seen another play by Sarah Ruhl at APT a couple years ago—*Eurydice*—which we liked quite a bit. *Stage Kiss* is very funny as we follow the actors in both their onstage and offstage personas, but the story becomes deeper than just the farce it started out looking like and Jeanne and I both enjoyed it. The play was followed by drinks at an Irish pub and an excellent sushi dinner at the small but classy Masaki.

Day 5–8. Thursday was travel to western Vermont, specifically Manchester, on the western edge of the Green Mountains National Forrest. Even though the trees were just beginning to bud out, the scenery was still beautiful. My friend Mitchell and his husband, Kristian, are longtime New Yorkers. Mitchell, a former V.P. at Deutsche Bank, retired a few years ago and they bought their dream home near the Green Mountains. This is clearly a year-round tourist

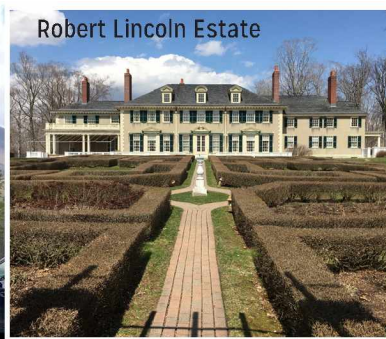


area. Manchester is a small, but prosperous town that would feel a bit like Door County except that the town hosts more high end outlet stores such as Coach, Armani, Brooks Brothers and many others. Jeanne and I did some shopping at one point and she bought me my birthday present at the Orvis outlet, a very nice shirt and vest.



Vermont

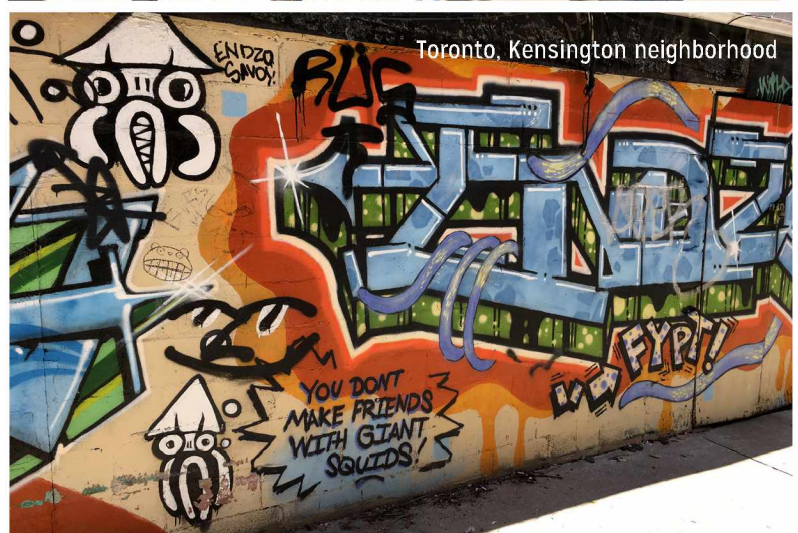
We were very comfortable at Mitchell and Kristian's home with their two cats George and Gracie for the next couple days. We were in the mood to relax, so we talked, hung out and went out for dinner at some wonderful restaurants. We had a rainy day on Friday but Saturday turned out to be beautiful. We attempted to drive up to the summit of

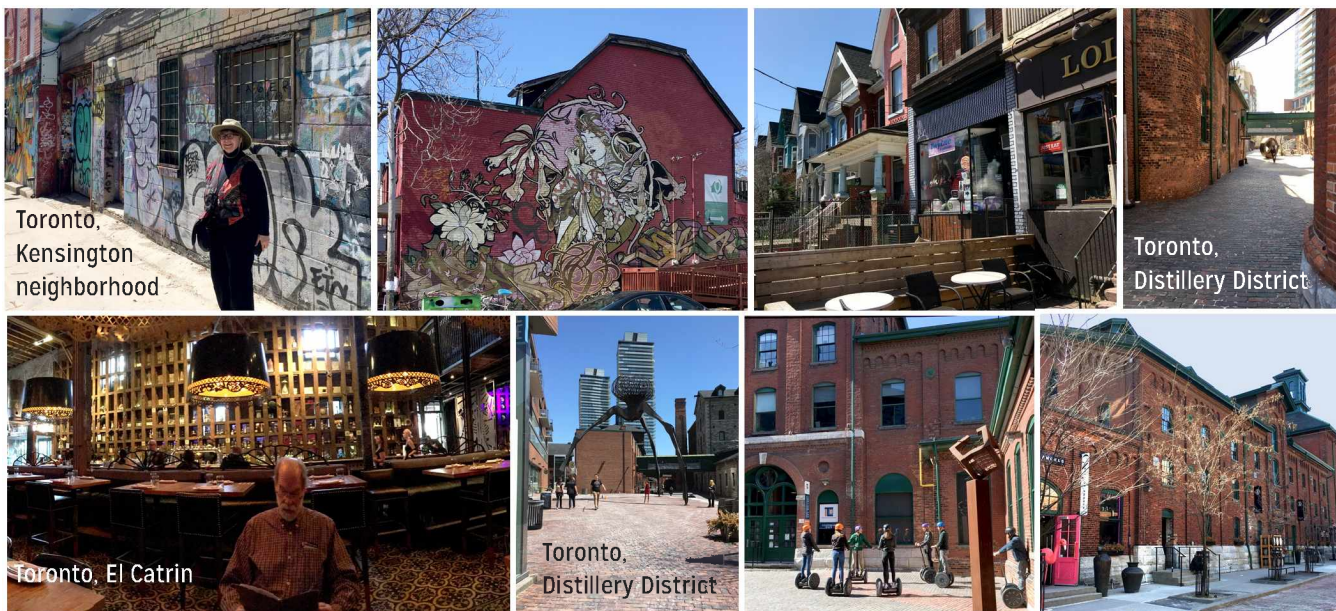


Mt. Equinox, but the road was closed, so the four of us spent most of the day touring the Robert Lincoln estate, Hildene. Robert was the only surviving son of Abe Lincoln, he became a lawyer and was later president of the Pullman Railroad Car company. A restored Pullman car is part of the tour. The mansion was nicely restored and the grounds are extensive including a working farm, formal gardens and an observatory. We strolled down to the farm to check out their latest batch of goat kids. We enjoyed an excellent dinner that night at the Dorset Inn. Wherever we went for dinner, Mitchell and Kristian seemed to know the staff, the owner or the chef. Getting great food was never a problem.

By phone, Jeanne arranged for a plumber to come over to our house on the following Friday, which meant we needed to get back home by Thursday night, which left us about 5 days for the rest of our trip. We decided to start back on Sunday morning about 9:30 am for the long drive to Toronto. We did not check into our hotel in Toronto until about 6 pm. Neither of us had ever really been to Toronto (beyond the airport) so we wanted to spend a day there.

Day 9. Monday was a nice day so we decided to be bold. After a truly mediocre hotel complimentary breakfast and armed with the NY Times article "36 Hours in Toronto", we took a cab to a nearby subway station and made our way into town via mass transit. We bought one-day transit passes that were good for the subway, trolleys and buses. We rode the Green





line subway downtown to the Spadina stop, then switched to the trolley taking us just south of the University of Toronto to Chinatown which was next to the 10 block Kensington Market, a wonderfully bohemian shopping area. It was full of funky shops, cafes, coffee shops, specialty grocers, vintage boutiques, art spaces and more. It made me a bit nostalgic for what Madison's State St. was once like long ago, only Kensington is much bigger and far more ethnically diverse. We wandered around for a couple hours stopping once for coffee, tea and chocolate rugelachs. I could have spent days exploring that whole area with a great mix of people, students and shoppers from seemingly everywhere, but we jumped aboard the trolley again to go east and south to the Distillery District. Once an old declining factory area, it has recently been revitalized and redeveloped into another kind of housing and shopping area, but retaining the cobblestone walkways and old brickwork buildings. This was much more high end than Kensington, with shops, a chocolatier, more coffee places, restaurants, a craft brewery and a new distillery. We tried the chocolate at Soma. I tasted a flight of three liquors at the Spirit of York distillery and a beer at Mills St. brewery. We also had an amazing dinner at a Mexican restaurant called El Catrin. After all that and the trolley, subway, cab ride back to our hotel, we were bushed.

Day 10. The next day, Tuesday, we left Toronto after a very good breakfast at a local chain called Cora. It was a clear day as we headed out of town to drive up the Northern shore of Lake Huron to Sault Saint Marie. By now we had finished the Simmons book and started listening to the audio book of our next SF discussion group book, *The Traitor Baru Cormorant* by Seth Dickinson. Planning ahead, we booked our next hotel, in Sault Saint Marie before we left Toronto. This seemed like prudent planning on our part, but it also meant that we were deciding not to stop for a day along the way. At this point I was thinking more and more about wanting to get back home.

The actual drive along Lake Huron was very lovely. It was rocky and hilly with frequent picturesque views of lakes and streams on both sides of the highway. Fir trees and rocks crowded right to the edge of the water, giving us frequent glimpses of wilderness vistas. The route was dotted with small towns and little parks. A very nice drive. Clouds and periodic rain moved in later in the afternoon and it was gloomy by the time we got to Sault Saint Marie. When making our hotel reservation, we did not notice that we picked a hotel in Sault Saint Marie, MI instead of Canada, so we had to cross the border at the end of our drive. The bridge at the border was backed up for about an hour so we did not get to our hotel until around 8 pm.



Day 11. Headed home on Wednesday, May 2. Our hotel, a Ramada, was a restored older building. We had a comfortable room featuring skylights, which was nice. Breakfast was just okay, but on the way out of town I stopped for coffee at the cool and laid back Superior Coffee Roasters. The morning was rainy again, but now also foggy. It was a pretty drive anyway, but hazardous as I twice avoided hitting deer. Gradually the sun burned off the fog and the day turned warm as we closed in on Escanaba. Again we decided not to stop along the way to sightsee as we were ready to get home. We made it around 6 pm.



Comments

Cover

[SC] Ruth, I thought your cover photos and sentiments about spring in Madison were lovely.

Jim Hudson

[SC] Nice trip report and pictures (my favorite is “Ariel and a cat”). It all sounded like a fine time. I’m glad that Ariel is doing well in NYC. I frankly envy your getting to see *Three Tall Women* with Glenda Jackson. I read at least one story about that show in the NY Times. I think you made a good decision to add *Stage Kiss* to your Shaw Festival show list. That was the one play we got to see on our way out to Vermont and we both found it surprising and enjoyable. It was not what I expected, which is often a good thing. I wish we were going back to the Shaw Festival to see more this year. We made it to the Farmers Market on May 5 after returning from Vermont. The weather was beautiful and the market was jam packed with people. We walked slowly and signed lots of candidate nomination forms. Our big success was to score some morel mushrooms, which were not available at the market yet. We happened to drive down Willy St and up King St to the Square and we noticed a guy selling morels on the outer loop. We made a spontaneous decision to swing around the block, park and check him out. Turns out he was the only guy with morels because it was still too soon in Wisconsin. He brought his up from Illinois, and had to sell them away from the Capital Square market because they were not local. His prices and quality were good so it was an early season steak and morels for dinner for us that night.



I’m sure you are right, in your comment to us, about compact SUV’s vs. regular SUV’s. Only recently have I even been paying attention to the fact that SUV’s come in different sizes these days. I think we will be looking at these options closer, and checking some of them out as test drives or rentals in the coming months as we grow closer to making a change.

[JG] I hear that there is a new drug, just approved by the FDA, that supposedly helps mitigate migraines -- Aimovig. I sure hope you are one of the people this helps Diane!

Kim & Kathi Nash

[JG] Jim reminded me that I didn’t respond to your suggestion of a Space Babe calendar. Sorry about that. I think it’s unlikely to happen unless I am convinced that there would be

enough people who would want to buy one that would make the work worthwhile. My impression is that there aren’t a lot of people who rely on a wall-hung calendar anymore. But I could be convinced otherwise!

Greg Rihn

[SC] Dr. Faustus, the Winslow Homer exhibit and Cirque de Soleil are the items I think I would have most wanted to see from your regular report on cool stuff seen or done. We also saw and liked the movie *Ready Player One* which I actually liked better than the novel. I remember being kind of overwhelmed by the conclusion of the novel and not really connecting with it at the end, though I liked the first two thirds of it well enough. On the other hand Spielberg’s confident hand on the movie was evident throughout and I got pulled along willingly. You said it perfectly, a good movie not a great one. But I would add that it is the kind of movie that makes great use of the big screen in a movie theater.

Nice reprints on the Homer art, thanks for including them.

[JG] As I said in the last issue, I very much enjoyed *A Wrinkle in Time*. Part of the reason may be that I perceived the real moment of Meg’s victory, not when she was struggling against IT in her final confrontation, but in the moment after she acknowledged to Calvin that he had also sacrificed much to join in the battle with her. That was the moment that she tossed aside selfishness and began understanding the viewpoints of people around her. She began her final ascension to hero at that moment. I SO much appreciated that the turn-around moment was an interior, self-recognition, rather than a fist-fight. As a result, the actual confrontation with IT was meant to be, I think, a bit anti-climactic to Meg’s more important victory. But I will not be disappointed if there is no sequel. I didn’t think any of L’Engle’s sequels were anywhere near as good as the first novel. Certainly they got much more religious which turned me off even as a young girl.

Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] Good comments on *Ready Player One*, Georgie. I especially liked your Fisher King insight.

Marilyn Holt

[SC] Congratulations on the progress you are making on your novel. I’m excited that it’s a thriller. I like thrillers. Is it SF? I read lots of non-SF, too, just curious.

Clifford R. Wind

[SC] Welcome! I was thinking instead of “farmer” maybe you’d prefer “landed gentry.” Sam Drucker seems like a wise and wily character to choose for your zine title. *Green*

Acres was easily my favorite of that genre of sitcoms from those days.

[JG] Your protestations against being called a farmer remind me a bit of Scott's protestations against being called a fan, in spite of his being OE of an apa, co-chairing a convention, and working on a fanzine. Happily, you will not be dragged to a fannish court to defend yourself as Scott did many years ago. It will be nice to hear your voice again!

Walter Freitag

[SC] What a mad scientist you must have been as a kid. I liked your piece on old toys. I may have heard of perhaps one or two of these machines, but I really had no idea there were so many of them. And you had all of them and got to burn your fingers and inhale plastic fumes from them all. You must have had a blast, despite the injuries. I was not so much into "hands on" stuff like this. I was more interested in TV and comic books.

I also really enjoyed your new lyrics to Mclean's "Vincent". I hesitated to read it at first because "Vincent" has usually turned into a pesky earworm for me whenever I hear it, but your lyrics were great and well worth having that tune in my head for a day.

Lisa Freitag

[JG] I enjoyed hearing about what its like being the lighting technician for a play. Thank you!

Andy Hooper

[SC] We also loved *Isle of Dogs*. One of the criticisms of the film I have heard is that it's an example of racial stereotyping or cultural appropriation partly because the dogs are speaking in English while the Japanese humans are not subtitled. We only know what the Japanese are saying via machines, narration or translation by an interpreter. I thought the point was that the dogs understand each other, but not the humans they mostly interact with and director Anderson was trying to give us a sense of the dogs' viewpoint without completely losing the audience. Anyway it was certainly one of the best films I have seen this year so far.

So did you stop as *Turbo* OE when you and Carrie decided to move to the West Coast? I moved to Madison in the summer of 1987 just before we left for the WorldCon in Brighton and Jeanne's TAFF trip. Had you and Carrie left town by then? I'm kind of amazed that apazines can bring in so much money in online auctions. I still have all the issues of *Turbo* from our original time in *Turbo* in the eighties and nineties as *Union Street*. Not sure what to do with them, but I think selling them online is not going to happen.

[JG] Scott and I have been jokingly accusing each other of behaving in a pointlessly ___ manner (filling in the blank

with various adjectives). Thank you for such delightful and pointless fun.

I think you are right about the way apazines chronicle historical and individual histories. My own apazines certainly do that for me. When I've needed to refresh my memory of what happened at a con or among a group of friends, my old apazines and perzines are likely to hold the most information, that is, if I was publishing during the period in question. I can see why apazines might now be valuable to fan historians and academics. Several folks writing about feminist fandom have asked for copies of *Janus* and *Aurora* over the years, but I think they might find copies of *A Women's Apa* a more rewarding source of information.

Patrick Ijima-Washburn

[SC] Things seem to be going very well for you! Starting a film festival is a great idea, giving Skype lessons is a good thing along with doing paid lectures plus the cool martial arts event. I hope you succeed in making time for more writing and art. I wish I could attend your lecture on sound effects in comics, interesting topic.

Darlene Coltrain

[SC] Nice photo of your studio and work in progress. I hope you have enough time post-surgery to get ready for WisCon. I will look for you in the Dealers room. I hope you have a successful convention.

[JG] It's so nice to hear that my drafting table still lives and is useful to someone! If I recall, it's main purpose by the time I got rid of it, was to provide a surface on which to spread out the Sunday funnies.

I am also on a regimen of full thyroid replacement. It took many many months to finally settle on the right dosage, but I haven't had any problems. Sadly, I haven't noticed any change from before the thyroid surgery either. Apparently my symptoms weren't very obtrusive.

Cathy Gilligan

[SC] You have had a pretty impressive run of bad luck and problems. This must have felt like trouble was coming at you from all directions. I hope that dark cloud has passed and life has gotten back to something more like normal.

Jeanne: What's New

[JG] *The Space Babe Coloring Book* has been published and if you went to WisCon, you have had a chance to see it. So I'm including some, very small, difficult to-color images. My obsession with drawing Space Babes hasn't quite ended, though it's gotten less intense. I'm working on a new drawing now, with no idea what I'm going to do with it. I guess I will have a better idea when I see how the coloring



book and art show images are received. Available here:
www.lulu.com/spotlight/TiptreeAward

I'm still not retired, though I've had a long, detailed discussion about the process with a lawyer. There a lot more complications and paperwork than I expected, but I am determined to sell my business this year. The complications mostly stem from questions of copyright: Many of my clients will want (or demand) to be able to get revision on jobs I did in the past and won't mind that their graphic designer has access to them. Other clients may be uncomfortable with the discovery that they don't in fact own the designs for work they hired me to do. This all needs to be laid out clearly so they can make a choice about what to do when

I am no longer available to them 24/7. Rather than sell the business and THEN breaking the news to my clients of my impending retirement, my lawyer has recommended that I do the reverse. That way I can be very clear about what files I will be transferring to the new designer or agency. But it will require some careful communication.

My last couple weeks before WisCon have been filled with preparation for the Tiptree Auction. I think this may be the last year I coordinate the auction. It's been a long run: I've been involved at some level in every Tiptree Auction that's ever been held. My role was much smaller during the couple years when Nevenah ran the Tiptree auction at WisCon (brilliantly). But I've worked on 25+ auctions, and this year, I wasn't really looking forward to it and realized that it was probably time for me to hand it over to new, preferably younger hands. Pat Murphy has worked on the auction with me for the past 3 years, and she also wants to move on from this responsibility. So we'll have to see what happens. I will probably be willing to train someone next year if they commit to taking it over. But it may be that the auction will have to transform radically to match the amount of volunteer work that's

available. On the bright side, the Tiptree Award will be able to transition fairly smoothly because we've been able to diversify our fund-raising efforts since Ellen Klages retired as auctioneer. The Space Babe Coloring Book, the new edition of *The Bakery Men Don't See*, the various "products" based on my Space Babe art (t-shirts, mugs, etc.), together with our year-end fundraising letter, are doing well for the Tiptree Award. So it may be that we will gradually put less emphasis on the auction for our fundraising. We will see.

I have volunteered for a fairly major piece of work this year. I will be designing campaign literature for a Madison Mayoral candidate—Satya Rhodes-Conway. I worked on her City Council campaign in 2007. I like her a lot. If Mayor Soglin does indeed run for Governor, the mayoral race is going to be wide open. I think Satya has a good shot at winning. I will be busy doing stuff for her, especially this coming fall and spring. It will feel good being involved in some progressive political work, this year especially.

Jeanne and Scott, 19 May 2018

Space Babes

by Jeanne Gomoll



Change the world!



Change the world...Explore!



Change the world...Teach!



Change the world...Take care of the Earth!



Change the world with chocolate chip cookies!



Change the world with friendship!



Change the world with love!



Change the world...Be yourself!



Change the world...Build for the future!



Change the world...Compete!



Change the world...Challenge yourself!



Change the world...Resist!



Change the world...Break that glass ceiling!



Change the world...Investigate!



Change the world with science and facts!



Change the world... Let Ursula K. Le Guin inspire you!



Change the world...Organize!



Change the world with music!



Change the world with art!



Change the world...Read!



Change the world...Imagine!



Change the world with stories!